

LOCKDOWN SEMINAR – TUESDAY, 26 MAY 2020

DOUBLES OF STAYMAN AND TRANSFERS

BY NICK WOOLVEN

Assuming the bidding has gone:

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2D (transfer to hearts)	?

If you were **West** what would you bid with each of the hands shown below, playing with your preferred (or any!) partner? Do you have any agreements?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1) ♠J75
♥Q62
♦AQJ106
♣9 | 2) ♠Q842
♥7
♦AKJ83
♣Q95 | 3) ♠A4
♥54
♦KQJ1074
♣Q83 |
| 4) ♠A62
♥A9
♦AKJ106
♣J42 | 5) ♠AKQJ7
♥5
♦AKQ106
♣43 | 6) ♠Q654
♥8
♦AKJ105
♣843 |

Doubles of Stayman and Transfers

The normal approach to the doubling of Stayman and transfer bids is that the double shows the suit that has been bid. If the bidding round the table was 1NT-P-2C (Stayman), a double would show clubs and similarly 1NT-P-2D (transfer to hearts), a double would show diamonds. You would expect your partner to lead this suit but would you expect your partner to know how many points you have or how high to compete/sacrifice if that is what they decide? Does it show a very good 5-card suit or could it be AKQ10? What would an overcall of 3D be and how does this differ to doubling 2D?

These are questions you need to discuss with your partner if you adopt this approach which is a perfectly playable method. However, the seminar offers an alternative system which you may like to adopt, the advantages being that partner will have an idea of how many points you have and a better idea of your distribution.

So:

1NT – Pass – 2C/2D/2H (Stayman and transfers) – Double = 16+ points and a hand that would have doubled a 1NT opening bid.

1NT – Pass – 2D (transfer to hearts) – 2H = Take-out double of hearts, usually with 4 spades and 11-15 points

1NT – Pass – 2H (transfers to spades) – 2S = Take out double of spades, usually with 4+ hearts and 11-15 points

1NT – Pass – 2C/2D/2H (Stayman and transfers) – Overcalls = Hands that you would have overcalled a 1NT opener with a natural bid - usually a 6-card suit and 10-15 points

1NT – Pass – 2C/2D/2H (Stayman and transfers) – 2NT = Minors or game-going 2 suiter. Partner should bid their better minor. If the over caller continues bidding, they have a strong hand.

Obviously, partner is in a much better position now to judge the auction, knowing the approximate point count of the hand. One question that is often asked is what happens if opener completes the transfer (or bids in response to Stayman) after we have doubled. This is an area you really need to discuss. The method I use with most of my partners is that a second double by either of the partnership is take-out and a third double penalties. However, it is up to you how to play them.

Examples of Second Doubles

Example A

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2D (transfer to hearts)	X (16+ points)
2H	Pass	Pass	X is take-out, 2S/3C/3D natural, 2NT natural 19-21 points. With hearts, you have to pass. (Your partner may have doubled for take-out ahead of you.)

Example B

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2D (transfer to hearts)	X (16+ points)
2H	X (take-out of hearts). Other bids by East could be natural bids of 2S weak, 3C/3D forcing. 2NT- (Lebensohl) asking partner to bid 3C.	Pass	With hearts you have to Pass then North would pass and N/S would be in 2Hx for penalties.

It is perfectly acceptable to swap all these around. You just have to agree with your partner so you can extract good penalties every now and then. Similar agreements apply over a Stayman response after your intervening double. Another way to look at this is to assume that the doubler has 16+ points and a strong NT type of hand. You then play as though the opposition has overcalled 2H (in this instance).

Doubles of Stayman

Assuming the bidding has gone:

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2C (Stayman)	?

If you were **West** what would you bid with the following hands?

1) ♠J7
♥Q62
♦AQJ1064
♣9

2) ♠AKQ983
♥75
♦AK4
♣Q9

3) ♠A4
♥KQ43
♦A74
♣KJ82

4) ♠A62
♥65
♦A3
♣KQJ942

5) ♠AKQJ
♥A65
♦KJ5
♣K63

6) ♠3
♥Q654
♦AKJ105
♣843