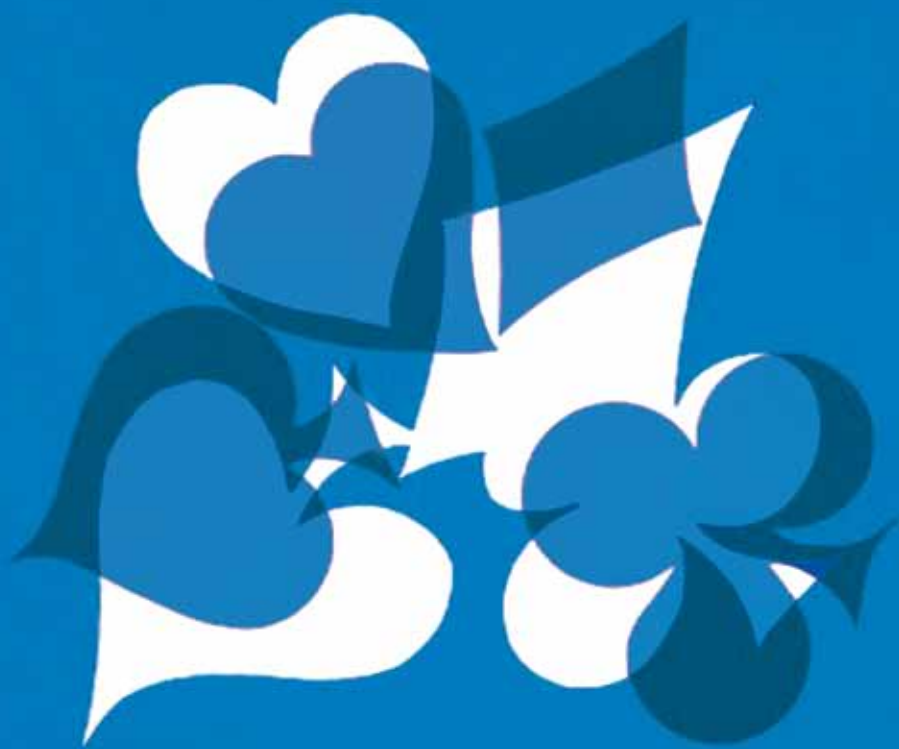


WINNING BRIDGE CONVENTIONS

STAYMAN

Patty Tucker



An Honors eBooklet from Master Point Press

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Texas Transfer

Smolen

Four-Suit Transfers

Three-level Responses to a 1NT Opening Bid

Three Spades over 2NT

Lebensohl

These booklets may be purchased as a single volume in digital or paper format under the title *Competitive Bidding*, one of eight books in Patty Tucker's Winning Bridge Conventions Series.

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Introduction

There are several different conventions that you can play in response to a one notrump opening bid or overcall. Conventions that will allow you to show:

- Weaker hands;
- Stronger high card point hands;
- More distributional hands;
- Hands with a four-card major;
- Hands with a five-card or longer major; and
- Hands with a six-card or longer minor.

There are tools that allow you to force the notrump opening bidder to become declarer, thus allowing responder to more fully describe their hand and conceal the stronger hand. They allow the opening lead to be made by the opening notrump bidder's left-hand opponent, in and of itself, a valuable advantage.

Some of those conventions and tools are discussed fully in this book. As you might expect, they are the conventions and tools I have found most useful.

Always remember that every time you add a convention you expect to lose some other bid AND that the additional conventions that you choose to adopt influence the rules of other conventions. You might ask, "Why would I do that? Why should I lose a

natural bid, to add an artificial bid?” The answer is simple...because it is valuable. As you work your way through this book you will find that the rules of the simplest and most common conventions – Stayman and Jacoby Transfers – will be adjusted as you add other conventions.

For example:

If you choose to adopt Smolen, then responder’s rebid after the initial Stayman bid, when he holds a five-card and a four-card major suit changes; or

If you choose to adopt Texas Transfers, then responder’s rebid after the initial Jacoby Transfer shows a different strength of hand; or

If you choose to adopt Four-Suit Transfers, then responder’s rebid after the initial Stayman bid will change on one specific type of hand.

As you add conventions to your toolbox, you and partner will need to decide which “tools” work best for you. What bids you are both willing to “lose” in order to better describe your hand when you decide to adopt different conventions.

I’ve included the conventions that I believe are worth the extra effort to learn and are worth the few bids that are lost.

Stayman

Stayman

The Stayman convention was invented by George Rapee but first appeared in Bridge World in 1945 under Sam Stayman's byline and so the convention was named after him rather than Rapee.

As we all know, a four-four card fit in a major suit is one of the most sought after contracts in bridge. A major suit contract scores more points. A four-four card fit usually plays at least one trick better than a five-three card fit, six-two card fit or even (sometimes) a six-three card fit or better. Stayman is the convention that allows you to discover your four-four card fit after a notrump opening bid.

Over an opening bid of 1NT, a bid of 2♣ by responder is Stayman. Responder may not have any clubs, the bid is completely artificial. It simply asks a question - "Partner, do you have a four-card major suit?" It promises **at least 8 HCPs and at least one four card major suit**. Responder may also hold a five-card or even six-card major suit.

Opener has a choice of three bids:

- 2♦ which says, "No, I do not have a four-card, or longer, major suit."

- 2♥ which says, “Yes, I have four hearts. I may have four spades also.”

(If you have four hearts and four spades, bid hearts); or

- 2♠ which says, “Yes, I have four spades. I do not have four hearts.”

Responder’s second bid is determined by three factors:

- Whether or not opener bid the major suit in which responder had four cards or more;
- Whether responder has a five-card major suit as well as a four-card major suit; and
- The strength of responder’s hand.

If opener’s bid confirmed at least an eight-card suit fit (i.e. showed four cards in a major suit in which responder also had four or more cards), then responder will raise the major suit to:

- The three level with 8-9 points; or,
- The four level with 10-14 points; or,
- Delay raising the major suit immediately, to make a forcing bid with 15+ points to elicit more information to see if slam is possible.

If opener’s bid did not confirm at least an eight-card suit fit (i.e. did not show four cards in a major suit in

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Stayman

Bridge students quickly discover that ‘basic’ bidding’ will only get them so far. If they really want to improve, it is necessary to master a certain number of bidding conventions, and be prepared both to play them and play against them. This ebooklet covers the Stayman convention.



PATTY TUCKER (Dunwoody, Georgia) is an ABTA Master Bridge Teacher and cofounder of Whirlwind Bridge and Atlanta Junior Bridge. Her success at the bridge table culminated in her victory in the 2000 Baldwin Flight A North American Open Pairs with long-time bridge partner Kevin Collins. Patty and Kevin were married in 2006.