

When your Stayman 2♣ gets doubled

When you open 1NT, and partner bids 2♣, then you have just three bids at your disposal (playing Standard Garbage Stayman) - 2♦, 2♥, and 2♠. The two extra bids (pass and redouble) really need to be defined. They could have been put to good use on this deal from news-sheet 217.

Dealer: ♠ A1095
 South ♥ AJ109
 Both vul ♦ J3
 ♣ AJ2

Table A

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♣ (2)
dbl (3)	2♥ (4)	all pass	

♠ Q4 N ♠ K62
 ♥ K64 W E ♥ 852
 ♦ K109 S ♦ AQ52
 ♣ K10854 ♣ Q93
 ♠ J873
 ♥ Q73
 ♦ 8764
 ♣ 76

'Expert' Table

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	pass
pass	1NT (1)	pass	2♠ (2)
dbl (3)	pass (4)	pass	2♥ (5)
pass	2♠ (6)	all pass	

- Table A: (1) I totally agree with this North's choice of 1NT – those 109 combinations in 4-card suits are easily worth a point.
 (2) Pass may work out better, but this is a fairly standard Garbage Stayman situation – bid 2♣ and pass whatever partner responds.
 (3) A double of Stayman shows ♣'s and asks for a ♣ lead.
 (4) With no agreement here I guess that North has to bid 2♥?
 'Expert' Table (4) But our experts do have an agreement of course, it is defined below and this pass shows 4-4 in the majors.
 (5) And our experts have another trick up their sleeve here - 2♥ is a transfer to get the 1NT opener as declarer.
 (6) North completes the transfer.

2♥ plays fairly well (better than 1NT) but 2♠ is easily the best spot for N-S.

When Stayman 2♣ is doubled that gives opener two extra bids (pass and redouble) and these really should be put to good use by experienced partnerships. One scheme is: -

pass = 4-4 in the majors

redbl = good ♣'s and denying a 4-card major, offering 2♣ redoubled as a final contract if responder has good clubs, and showing good ♣ stops in the more likely scenario that he does not.

2♦ = no 4-card major.

2♥/♠ = a 4 (or 5 card suit) but not 4-4 in the majors.

After 1NT pass 2♣ dbl pass pass

then responder knows that opener is 4-4 in the majors and he should bid 2♦/♥ to transfer into the best fit.

This is one treatment; another is to play pass as equal length (so normally 3-3 or 4-4) in the majors. This would work better when opener is 3-3 in the majors and responder has just one 4-card major and wishes to play in a possible Moysian fit. But if responder has game ambitions he really needs to know if partner has a 4-card major, so I think that the method given is probably superior.

Yet another treatment is to play that 2♦ promises 4+ ♦'s and denies a 4 card major. This would well if partner has bid Garbage Stayman on a weak 4441 type hand (quite likely on the bidding). Redouble should still show ♣'s and pass would deny 4 ♦'s, 4 ♥'s or 4 ♠'s and thus presumably show 4+ weak ♣'s (no redouble). I guess this works but it's unlikely for opener to have a hand with 3 or less ♦'s, ♥'s and ♠'s where he cannot redouble. This topic came up in News-Sheet 265 and opener actually has a clear redouble. I suppose that this would be the 'standard' treatment if you had not agreed either of the above?

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