***This Week in Bridge***

**(153) Range Stayman**

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**General**

A balancing 1NT bid can be a wide-ranging action, about 11-15/16 points. This 5-point range is much larger than most Notrump bids and leaves partner with a more difficult bidding situation. Range Stayman is a tool that can help Advancer better determine the values of our hand and if game is a possibility. Let’s see how this works.

**Advancer’s Bids -- Range Stayman**

After a balancing 1NT bid, Advancer normally continues the auction playing Systems On, using similar bids as though partner had overcalled a 1NT bid in the direct seat. Of course, since partner has promised fewer values for a balancing 1NT, Advancer needs to have more values to explore game.

Range Stayman is a method of rebids after Stayman where the 1NT bidder shows both the strength of their hand as well as answers the Stayman question. Bids at the 2-level are traditional answers to Stayman, but also show a minimum hand for a balancing 1NT. With a maximum hand, Opener answers Stayman at the 3-level.

*Example – Two-Way Range Stayman*

1♦ P P 1NT

P 2♣ P \_\_

**Minimum Answers**

2♦ Minimum, 11 to a bad 13 points, no 4-card Major

2♥ Minimum, 11 to a bad 13 points, 4-5 card ♥

2♠ Minimum, 11 to a bad 13 points, 4-5 card ♠

**Maximum Answers**

3♣ Maximum, Good 13 to 15 points, 4-5 ♣, no 4-card Major

3♦ Maximum, Good 13 to 15 points, 4-5 ♦, no 4-card Major

3♥ Maximum, Good 13 to 15 points, 4-5 ♥

3♠ Maximum, Good 13 to 15 points, 4-5 ♠

**3-Way Range Stayman**

Some players choose to play a 3-way Range Stayman (usually when they play an even wider ranging 1NT bid, say 11-17 points). In this case, there are three buckets.

* 2-level bids are minimum hands with Stayman answers.
* 2NT is all medium hands with 3♣ as “re-Stayman”.
* 3-level bids are natural and show maximum hands.

**Conclusion**

When partner balances with a 1NT bid, this is a wide-ranging action and can leave Advancer guessing as to the values of their hand. Range Stayman is a gadget that helps narrow the values of partner’s hand and leaves us in a better position to judge what to do after this wide-ranging 1NT bid. Add this to your hand if partner likes to make balancing 1NT bids with a wide variety of hand strengths.