

After many years playing Keri variants, we are back to playing stayman. We continue to use follow-ups to transfers developed by Charlie Garrod. Our structure after 1NT openings (or 1♣...1NT):

- 2♣ stayman, any of:
 - weak three-suiter short in clubs
 - weak with both majors
 - invite-plus including one or two four-card majors
 - invite with 5♠
 - game force short in diamonds (with or without 4-card major)
 - game forcing balanced or semi-balanced relay
- 2♦ transfer to ♥; might be only 4♥ if GF and holding a 6-card minor
- 2♥ transfers to ♠; never exactly invitational; maybe 4♠ if GF and a 6-card minor
- 2♠ balanced inv, no 4M, or any one-suited invite
- 2NT transfer to 3♣, weak or GF
- 3♣ transfer to 3♦, weak or GF
- 3♦ shows 4+♦, 0-1♣, 3-4 cards in each major, GF
- 3♥ shows 4♥, 0-1♠, 3+ cards in each minor, GF
- 3♠ shows 4♠, 0-1♥, 3+ cards in each minor, GF
- 3NT to play
- 4♣♦ transfer to hearts and to spades
- 4♥♠ signoff, no slam interest

The structure is geared towards identifying major suit length when responder has an invitational or better hands. An important departure from standard treatment is that we transfer into a four-card major on shapely game-going hands.

0.1 Bidding after 1NT-2♣

The 2♣ bid asks opener for a four-card major. We will sometimes rebid 2♠ rather than 2♥ when holding 4-4 in the majors, as this occasionally makes follow-ups easier; however otherwise this is the same as standard stayman responses. Our continuations after opener's 2♦ rebid:

1NT-2♣-2♦ Opener denies a major

- Pass weak three-suiter with 4+♦
- 2♥ weak with both majors, normally ♥ at least as long as ♠
- 2♠ exactly invitational with 5♠; not forcing
- 2NT invitational with at least one 4M
- 3♣ game forcing relay
- 3♦ game force short in ♦
- 3♥♠ *smolen* showing five cards in the other major
- 3NT balanced game force with at least one 4M
- 4♣♦ south-african transfers to ♥ and ♠ respectively (normally 6-4 hands)
- 4M is to play (normally 6-4 hand)
- 4NT is quantitative (rare, usually bid 3♣ relay first)

Over opener's 2M rebid we play the following, where "OM" refers to the *other major*.

1NT-2♣-2M Opener shows 4-5M

| | |
|------|--|
| Pass | weak hand willing to play there |
| 2♠ | exactly invitational with 5♠; not forcing |
| 2NT | invitational with 4OM |
| 3♣ | game forcing relay; normally no 4-4 fit for M |
| 3◇ | game force short in ◇; normally 3 cards in M |
| 3M | invite with 4(+)M |
| 3OM | game force (semi)-balanced with 4-5M ask cuebid |
| 3NT | balanced game force with 4OM |
| 4♣ ◇ | splinters with 4(+)M |
| 4M | is to play |
| 4NT | is quantitative (rare, usually bid 3♣ relay first) |

Most of the continuations are pretty straightforward. Over responder's 3◇ rebid, the first priority is to look for a fit, the second to determine level by using 4◇ to indicate or deny "no wastage." The main sequence which requires some more explanation is the 3♣ relay. The idea is that opener's 3◇ rebid shows one four-card minor, opener's 3NT rebid denies a five-card suit and shows an even number of four-card minors, and 3M is natural if possible or otherwise showing five cards in the related minor. This works as follows:

1NT-2♣-2◇-3♣ Relay

| | |
|----|--------------------------------------|
| 3◇ | One four-card minor, so 3343/3334 |
| | 3♥ 4+♣, slam interest opposite clubs |
| | 3♠ 4+◇, slam interest opposite diams |
| 3♥ | 5♣ |
| 3♠ | 5◇ |
| 3N | (23)44 |

1NT-2♣-2♥-3♣ Relay

| | |
|-----|------------------------------|
| 3◇ | One four-card minor |
| | 3♥ 4+♣ |
| | 3♠ 4+◇ |
| 3♥ | Shows 5♥ |
| | 3♠ Slam try in ♥ |
| | 3NT To play |
| | 4m Natural 5m slam try |
| 3♠ | Shows 4-4 majors |
| | 4m Natural 5m slam try |
| | 4♥ Slam try in <i>spades</i> |
| 3NT | 3433 |

1NT-2♣-2♠-3♣ Relay

| | |
|----|---------------------|
| 3◇ | One four-card minor |
| | 3♥ 4+♣ |
| | 3♠ 4+◇ |
| 3♥ | Shows 4-4 majors |

| | | |
|-----|-----|---------------------------|
| | 3♠ | Slam try in <i>hearts</i> |
| | 3NT | To play |
| | 4m | Natural 5m slam try |
| 3♠ | | Shows 5♠ |
| | 4m | Natural 5m slam try |
| | 4♥ | Slam try in <i>spades</i> |
| 3NT | | 4333 |

0.2 Bidding after 1NT-2♦

This is like a standard transfer except it could also be made with GF hands with only 4♥. With 4+ support and maximum, opener may super-accept similar to 3-way game try, i.e.

2♠ max, 4+♥, good side suit (next step ask, natural responses, 3♥ = ♠)

2NT, 3m max, 4+♥, weak doubleton (NT = ♠)

3♥ not necessarily a max, but optional, usually 5♥

If a transfer break occurs, then ♥ is established as trumps for game and slam purposes. The cheapest diamond bid is a re-transfer, and if followed by new suits, these are cue-bids. Over 3♦, 3♥ is a sign-off, new suits other than 4♦ are cue-bids.

1NT-2♦-2♥ can contain 4♥ if non-max

| | |
|-----|---|
| 2♠ | inv, 5♥ |
| 2NT | min, no ♥ fit (pass or 3m NF) |
| 3♣ | max, no ♥ fit (pass or 3♦ NF) |
| 3♥ | min, ♥ fit |
| 2NT | GF, 4+♥ and 4+♣, not balanced, over opener's 3♣, go into short/long-minor modules |
| 3♣ | GF, 5+♥ and 4♦, short-minor module |
| 3♦ | GF, 4+♥ and 5+♦, long-minor module |
| 3♥ | Invite 5+♠ and 5+♥ |
| 3♠ | GF, 6+♥ and asks for cuebids |
| 3NT | choice-of-game |
| 4♣♦ | splinter with 6+♥ |
| 4♥ | mild slam try with 6+♥ |

0.2.1 Long-minor module

This applies whenever responder transfers to a major (M) and then show a game-forcing hand with a 5+ card minor (m). This is always shown via a bid of 3♦. Opener continues as follows:

1NT-??-??-3♦ GF, 4+M and 5+m

| | |
|---------|---|
| 3♥ | exactly 3M, checkback for a fit |
| 3♠ | 5+M, sets M as trumps |
| 3NT | only 4M, no SI |
| 4m | SI, 5+m |
| 3♠ | sets M as trumps |
| 3NT | strength in the unbid suits, suggests a contract |
| 4m | sets m as trumps, but usually weak in an unbid suit |
| 4 unbid | sets m as trumps, cue-bids |
| 4M | 4M, bad hand for slam (not possible after 1NT-2♦) |

0.2.2 Short-minor module

This applies whenever responder transfers to a major (M) and then show a game-forcing hand with exactly 4m (m). When this is clubs, opener may not get a chance to bid anything before responder shows his shape, as follows:

1NT-??-??-3♥+ GF, 5+M and 4m, shape resolution as follows:

| | |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 3♥ | hi shortage, (15)(34) |
| 3♠ | lo shortage, (35)(14) |
| 3NT | wastage |
| 4m | sets m as trumps |
| 4om | SI, sets M as trumps |
| 4M | to play |
| 3NT | no shortage, (25)(24) |
| 4♣ | hi shortage, (16)(24) |
| 4♦ | lo shortage, (26)(14) |
| 4M | to play |
| 4OM | SI, sets M as trumps |
| 4NT | SI, sets m as trumps |
| 4M | SI, (25)(24) |

[*** Should discuss continuations over interference ***]

0.3 Bidding after 1NT-2♥

Most of the time, opener will accept the transfer. With 4+ support and maximum, opener may super-accept similar to 3-way game try, i.e.

| | |
|-----|--|
| 2NT | max, 4+ support and good side suit (next step ask, natural responses, 3♠ shows good ♣) |
| 3X | max, 4+ support, doubleton X |
| 3♠ | not necessarily a max, but optional, usually 5♠ |

Responder retransfer with 3♥ if possible; if not, 4♥ would be a retransfer. New suits are now cue-bids.

Continuations after transfers are based on more transfers. After 1NT-2♥-2♠, responder's continuations are as follows:

1NT-2♥-2♠ usually denu 4♠

| | |
|--------|---|
| Pass | spade signoff |
| 2NT | GF, 4+♠ and 4+♣, not balanced, over opener's 3♣, go into short/long-minor modules |
| 3♣ | GF, 5+♠ and 4♦, short-minor module |
| 3♦ | GF, 4+♠ and 5+♦, long-minor module |
| 3♥ | GF, 5+♠ and 5+♥ |
| 3♠ | sets ♠ as trumps, asks for cue-bids |
| 3NT | choice-of-game |
| 4♣ ♦ ♥ | splinter with 6+♠ |
| 4♠ | mild slam try with 6+♠ |

0.4 Bidding after 1NT-2♠

The 2♠ bid serves as a range ask as well as any one-suited invite. With a maximum, opener **rejects** the lowest undesirable game try.

1NT-2♠ inv, balanced, or inv any one-suited

| | |
|-----|--|
| 2NT | min |
| 3♣ | max, reject one-suited ♣ game-try |
| 3♦ | Diamond invite, weakness in clubs, can be 3352 inv |
| 3M | Major suit invite |
| 4♣ | Balanced invite with weak clubs (3343) |
| 4♦♥ | Transfer to a major |
| 3♦ | max, accept ♣ but reject ♦ |
| 3M | Major suit invite |
| 4♣ | Weak diamonds; generally 3325 or club invite |
| 4♦♥ | Transfer to a major |
| 3♥ | max, accept ♣ and ♦ but reject ♥ |
| 3♠ | Spade invite |
| 4♣ | Balanced hand weak in ♥ |
| 4♦ | Minor suit invite with ♠ tolerance, weak ♥ |
| 4♥ | Transfer to spades |
| 3♠ | max, accept any game try but ♠ |
| 4♣ | Balanced hand weak in ♠ |
| 4♦ | Transfer to ♥ |
| 4♥ | Minor invite with ♥ tolerance, weak ♠ |
| 3NT | max, accept all game tries |
| 4♦♥ | Transfer to major |

0.5 Bidding after 1NT-2NT and 1NT-3♣

The 2NT bid transfers to clubs and 3♣ transfers to diamonds. Opener always accepts this transfer absent interference. The continuations after the transfer to clubs:

1NT-2NT-3♣ forced

| | |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| Pass | club signoff |
| 3♦ | GF, 5+♦ and 5+♣ |
| 3♥ | GF, 3♥, 0-1♠, and 5+♣ |
| 3♠ | GF, 3♠, 0-1♥, and 5+♣ |
| 3NT | sets ♣ as trumps, asks for cue-bids |
| 4♣ | SI, 6+♣ and 4♦ |

Further continuations are basically natural and follow the general rules about bidding over splinters. Continuations over a transfer to diamonds are in the same style:

1NT-3♣-3♦ forced

| | |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| Pass | diamond signoff |
| 3♥ | GF, 3♥, 0-1♠, and 5+♦ |
| 3♠ | GF, 3♠, 0-1♥, and 5+♦ |
| 3NT | sets ♦ as trumps, asks for cue-bids |
| 4♣ | SI, 6+♦ and 4♣ |

0.6 Bidding after Splinters

There are many different splinter sequences in our methods. The most straightforward are the direct splinter bids, which always show three-suited hands. There are also indirect splinter sequences after minor suit transfers (typically showing major suit shortage without four cards in the other major). After such a splinter bid, we have the following general rules:

- If opener bids the short suit, it denies wastage
- If opener bypasses the short suit, it shows wasted values
- If opener bids 3NT (and has not bid the short suit) it suggests a contract
- If responder bids 3NT, opener can only pass with stoppers in short suit
- If responder bids the short suit, it agrees opener's last suit and asks about wastage
- If responder bids the short suit *after* opener has shown or denied wastage, it shows void
- If opener bids the short suit *at the 4-level* he knows the best fit
- New suit bids at the 3-level do not deny stoppers in the splinter suit
- If opener bypasses 3NT without a known fit, it denies strength in short suit
- New suit bids below game are forcing, looking for a fit
- In general opener describes suits and wastage; responder picks the level

0.7 Doubling our 1NT for penalty

Most doubles of our weak notrump opening are penalty oriented. We play suction-style runouts, with the goal of finding the best contract and putting the strong hand on lead. Responder's calls after 1NT-X are:

1NT (X) If double is for penalty

| | |
|------|---|
| Pass | balanced or semi-balanced weak hand, or ♣ signoff |
| XX | values; desire to play 1NTXX; subsequent first double is for takeout, pass is forcing |
| 2♣ | signoff in ♠, or weak hand with both majors |
| 2♦ | signoff in ♣, or 5-5 in the black suits |
| 2♥ | signoff in ♠, or 5-5 in the minors |
| 2♠ | preempt in ♣, or weak 5-5 in the red suits |
| 2NT | preempt with 5-5 in two suits of the same shape |
| 3♣ | preempt in diamonds or with 5-5 majors |

In general opener accepts the transfer to the next higher suit, after which responder can correct to show the two-suited options.

After the redouble, if the opponents run to a suit, the first double by our side is takeout. Subsequent doubles by our side are penalty. Pass suggests penalties, as we are in a forcing auction.

After a pass, opener normally bids 2♣ if he has three or more clubs. Otherwise he redoubles. Opener may optionally bid a good five-card suit if he has one. So opener's calls are:

1NT (X) P (P) shows ♣ or weak bal/semi-bal

| | |
|----|----------------------|
| XX | only 2♣, implies 3+♦ |
| 2♣ | 3+♣ |

2X good 5X

After 2♣ by opener, responder can pass or bid 2♦ to show diamonds and a major (typically 4-4). After XX, responder can bid 2♣ to sign off in clubs, or bid any other suit to play. Redoubles in these sorts of runout auctions are always for rescue.

0.8 Interference over 1NT

If the opponents bid 2♣ or make an artificial double of the 1NT, we play systems on (ignoring the opposing bidding).

If the opponents bid 2♦ or higher, we play rubensohl transfers and a negative double. Double (assuming the opposing bid is natural) is for takeout. Two-level suit bids are natural signoff. Bids of 2NT and above are transfers to the next higher suit. These can be any strength and must be accepted. The exception is a transfer into a suit which could have been bid at the two level; such a transfer shows at least invitational values and opener should bid the full value of his hand.

A transfer into the opponents' suit is a stopper ask. Accepting the transfer shows specifically half a stopper (Qx or Jxx or Qxx). Bidding 3NT shows a full stopper. Other bids are natural and deny as much as a half stopper.

Responder can also transfer and then cue as a stopper ask, or takeout double and then cue.

A voluntary bid of 3NT by responder always guarantees a stopper.

0.9 Systems over natural 2NT

In some sequences, we will make a natural bid of 2NT showing a balanced hand in some range. Our 2NT opening is artificial, but natural 2NT bids can occur as overcalls (of opposing preempts for example) or in some sequences after a 1♣ opening. We play relatively standard methods in these sequences including:

- 3♣ modified puppet Stayman
 - 3♦ some four-card major but no five-card major
 - 3♥ 4♠, may have 4♥
 - 3♠ min, fit
 - 3NT no fit (imply 4+♥)
 - 4m max, fit and cue-bids
 - 3♠ 4+♥, deny 4♠
 - 3♥ deny four- or five-card major
 - 3♠ 5+♠, checkback
 - 3♠ 5♠
 - 3NT 5♥
 - 4♣ natural
 - 4♦ transfers to ♥, promises ♥ support
 - 4♥ shows 5+♦, no ♥ fit
- 3♦ ♥ transfers to the majors
- 3♠ asks for partner's four-card minor (3NT denies)
- 3NT to play
- 4♣ ♦ are natural slam tries (forcing to at least 4NT)
- 4♥ ♠ are to play (transfer then raise would show slam interest)