

XYZ

This is the blending of Grant Baze's write up on Modified Two Way Stayman as found at <http://members.shaw.ca/conventions/m2ws.htm> and the XYZ articles as found in the November and December 2008 "Bridge Bulletin".

XYZ refers to a bidding sequence by us of 1X - 1Y - 1Z. Like Two Way New Minor Forcing (2WNMF), the XYZ convention is initiated by Responder. While 2WNMF is applicable only when Opener's Z-bid is 1NT, XYZ extends 2WNMF advantages to include a Z-bid of 1♥ or 1♠ rebid. After a XYZ bidding sequence, Responder's 2♣ or 2♦ rebid invokes the convention.

The advantage of XYZ is that it enables better sign off sequences, invitational sequences and forcing sequences. Additionally it has a few frills and benefits not seen with 2WNMF.

The disadvantage of XYZ is that you can't play in 2♣ and the opponents may be able to make a lead directing double of the artificial 2♣ or 2♦ bids.

With competition, XYZ is "on" as long as our Z-bid is at the one level and above their suit.

There are 3 important features of Responder's XYZ bid.

1. A 2♣ rebid is a relay to 2♦. 2♣ is an unconditional force to 2♦. No exceptions!
2. A 2♦ rebid is artificial and game forcing. It is usually a major suit check-back, although it could be the beginning of a forcing sequence in either minor.
3. Jump rebids into opener's suit, their own suit or any ranking lower suit {except 3♣} are game forcing, describing a "pure" hand type in the suit or suits that responder has bid.

Feature 1: Continuations after the 2♣ forced relay to 2♦

The first possibility is there will be no continuation. Responder may have a poor hand with long diamonds. If responder does not pass 2♦ any bid they make is invitational; except for the obvious splinter to be discussed later. Opener may pass, accept the invitation by bidding game or, in some cases, reinvite.

Example: 1♣ - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ {forced response}.

If responder next bids 2♥, 2♠, 2NT, 3♣, 3♦, 3♥, or 3♠, each of these bids is invitational.

The meaning of the invitational bids in this example are:

2♥ shows 5-4 in the majors

2♠ shows 5 card suit

2NT invites 3NT but shows a hand that includes 4 cards in opener's minor suit. This allows opener to sign off in 3♣ if they wish. If opener had opened 1♦, then the delayed raise to 2NT would show 4 cards in diamonds. Without 4 cards in opener's minor, responder would raise 1NT to 2NT directly.

3♣ shows 5 card club support

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- 3♦ shows 5-5 spades and diamonds
- 3♥ shows 5-5 majors
- 3♠ shows a 6 card suit

Feature 2: Continuations after the artificial 2♦ game force

2♦ usually shows a junkish game forcing hand, although it can be very strong without the suit lengths or suit quality to make a forcing jump to the 3 level. The 2♦ bid is used to:

1. Find 3 card support for responder's major
2. Find a buried 4-4 major suit fit.
3. Create a force in opener's minor.
4. Create a forcing {and natural} bid in the unbid minor.

Feature 3: Jump rebids by responder

A jump rebid of 3♣ is the end of the auction. Responder has some bad hand with lots of clubs. This is the only jump rebid that is not game forcing!

Jumps by responder in their own suit, opener's suit, or a lower ranking suit {other than clubs} are game forcing, "pure" and probably slammish. Responder's hand is unlimited, and they could have a hand with which they envision a grand slam.

If opener's suit is diamonds, responder must have at least 5 card support for a jump into opener's diamonds; otherwise they would create a game force by bidding 2♦ then supporting diamonds.

If opener's suit is clubs, responder must go through the 2♦ game force before they can support clubs, because an immediate jump into clubs is always a bad hand and the end of the auction.

Important Inferences:

Opener opens a minor; responder bids 1♠, opener rebids 1NT, responder bids 2♥. Normally when Opener has 14 HCP and four hearts; they wonder if he should bid 3♥ or 4♥. Using these methods, they must pass. If responder wanted to invite, they would have used the 2♣ relay. The same reasoning applies if responder rebids his major suit. Opener must pass.

Clarifications:

If the auction is 1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT, 2♦ is still a game force. In this auction, if responder continues with 3♣ or 3♦, they have interest in a minor suit contract, possibly a slam. If responder wanted out in diamonds, they would have used the 2♣ relay.

Reverse by Responder:

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XYZ does not change the meaning of a reverse by responder. If the auction is 1♣ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♠, responder has 5 or more hearts, presumably 4 spades, and a game force with likely slam interest.

Passed hand auctions:

When responder is a passed hand, 2♣ is still a relay to 2♦, and the entire structure applies. Even though responder is a passed hand, they can still have invitational values. If the opening bid was 1♣, you can no longer play 2♣, but the opponents probably were not going to let you play it there anyway.

After opener's rebid, responder's 2♦ can no longer be game forcing, because a passed hand cannot have a game force. In this case 2♦ is natural and not invitational; it does, however, guarantee 5 cards in responder's first bid suit. If responder has bypassed a longer diamond suit to bid a 4 card major, or if they have 4 card support for opener's diamond suit and only a 4 card major, they would bid 2♣ to force opener to bid 2♦ and then pass.

Splinter sequences:

Because of the availability of the relay auction, responder can splinter in support of Opener's suit or their suit. An immediate splinter is in support of opener's suit {think of your partner first}. A relay followed by an unusual jump is a splinter in support of responder's own suit.

1♣ - 1♥ - 1NT - 3♠ is a splinter raise of clubs. Responder has 1 spade, 4 hearts, 5 or more clubs and a game forcing hand. Responder is not necessarily interested in slam. They may be just describing their hand and warning partner that there may be a spade problem if the final contract is NT.

1♣ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♠ is a splinter for Responder's hearts. Responder has 1 spade, 6 or more hearts, and a slam interest. If responder had no interest in slam they would bid 4♥ directly over 1NT.

1♣ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 4♣ is a splinter for spades. Responder has at least 4 hearts and exactly 4 spades and at most 1 club.

1♣ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♣ - 2♦ - 4♣ is a splinter for Responder's hearts showing slam interest. Note: this is different than the Bridge Bulletin write up. The change was made so that the deferred splinter after 1NT and 1 of a major are both for Responder's suit.

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Examples:

1m - 1Y- 1Z - 2NT is natural and invitational and denies 4 card support for Opener's minor.

1m - 1Y - 1Z - 2♣ -2NT - is natural and invitational and shows 4 card support for Opener's minor.



1m - 1Y - 1Z - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3m is invitational and shows 5 card support for Opener's minor.

1X - 1M - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♦ is invitational and shows 5 card major and 5 diamonds

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1m - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♥ is weak and shows 5 spades and 4 or 5 hearts. Pass or correct.

1m - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ is invitational and shows 5 spades and 4 hearts.

1m - 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3♥ is invitational and shows 5 spades and 5 hearts.

1X - 1M - 1NT - 3NT is natural and denies a 5 card major.

1X - 1M - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 3NT is natural and shows a 5 card major. Pass or correct.

1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ - 2♥ is a game force reverse and shows at least 5 diamonds and 4 hearts.

1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT - 2♥ is a game force reverse and shows at least 5 diamonds and 4 hearts.

1♣ - 1♦ - 1♠ - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ is invitational and shows 6 diamonds and 4 hearts.

1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦ - 2♥ is invitational and shows 6 diamonds and 4 hearts.