

Scramble

After a Double of 2C Stayman
Presented by Mike Savage

Here's an idea that I heard about recently—many experts are playing some version of it. The basic idea is that after a double of partner's 2C Stayman bid, opener passes *without* a club stopper and responds normally to Stayman with a notrump club stopper. This enables the partnership to scramble out of notrump without a club stopper when there is no major suit fit.

Basic Scramble (for those who want a simple version that's still effective—my favorite)

After a lead-directing double of partner's Stayman (1NT-P-2C-Dbl)

Redouble = Shows a good 4-card/fair 5-card club suit so partner can pass if he wants to

Any immediate Response to Stayman = Shows what it normally shows *and a club stopper*

Pass = Denies a club stopper, regardless of opener's major holdings

After a **pass** by the next hand, if responder makes a:

Redouble = Asks the NT opener for a four-card major (restatement of Stayman)

Standard **2D** = Denies a four-card major, usually will have four or more diamonds

Stayman **2H** = Shows four hearts or four hearts & four spades

Responses **2S** = Shows four spades

Continuation over any of the above responses to Redouble:

3C = Asks for a partial club stopper

2D = Shows four diamonds and one unknown four-card major and can be passed

2H = Garbage or Drop-Dead Stayman, and asks opener to pass or prefer spades

After 1NT-P-2C-Dbl-P-3C: **Dbl** by responder just shows good values and opener can pass or bid

Full Scramble — responses and continuations for players who think responder should declare the majors—to right-side the play whenever he has positional club honors (Kx, AQ, Qxx)

1NT-P-2C-Dbl (with no further interference by the opponents)

Pass = No club stopper

Redouble = Asks the NT opener for a 4-card major by bidding the one he doesn't have

2D = Denies a 4-card major and (almost always) has 4 or more diamonds

2H = Shows four hearts and invitational values; may have 4 spades

2S = Shows three spades and is passable

2NT = Shows a partial club stop and denies 5+ diamonds

3D = Shows five (or more) diamonds

2S = Shows four spades and invitational values

2H = Shows four **spades**

2S = Shows four **hearts**

2D = Shows four or more diamonds and a four-card major and is invitational

Pass = Shows a minimum with a diamond fit

2H = Shows four **spades** and is a minimum

2S = Shows four **hearts** and is a minimum

2H = Garbage Stayman

2S = Shows five spades and four hearts and is invitational

Redouble = Four very good clubs or five fairly good clubs, suggesting playing 2C redoubled if responder has club tolerance and a good hand

2D = No four-card major, but has a club stopper

2H = Shows four hearts (or four hearts & four spades) and has a club stopper

2S = Shows four spades and has a club stopper