

## Improver Course: Module 4 (Stayman)

### Boards 1-8 Guide Notes

(Student version- for ease of viewing orientation has been rotated as necessary so that declarer is always South and in the bottom position.)

**Board 1**  
North Deals  
None Vul

		♠ K 8 4 2	
		♥ A K 7 6	
		♦ 10 2	
		♣ Q 7 5	
♠ Q 10 5			♠ J 9
♥ J 8 3			♥ Q 10 9 2
♦ Q 9			♦ K J 8 7 3
♣ K 10 6 4 2			♣ 9 8
		♠ A 7 6 3	
		♥ 5 4	
		♦ A 6 5 4	
		♣ A J 3	

West	North	East	South
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♥ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3 NT <sup>2</sup>
Pass	4 ♠ <sup>3</sup>	All pass	

1. Four hearts, maybe four spades
2. No four hearts, game values
3. Partner has bid Stayman and not supported hearts so must have spades

Lead ♣ 9

**Top Tricks:** 2 ♠, 2 ♥, 1 ♦, 1 ♣, 6 in total

**Extra tricks:** One spade length trick (assuming spades split 3-2). Two heart ruffs. One club trick by force.

**Plan:** On the ♣ 9 lead declarer plays low from dummy and West wins with the ♣ K and returns the ♣ 2. Does declarer win with the ♣ Q or with the ♣ A? (KEY QUESTION!) To make two heart ruffs declarer needs two entries to her hand, the ♠ K and the ♣ Q. **To preserve the club entry, declarer must win the second trick with the ♣ A**, draw two rounds of trumps (Rule of 1), winning the ♠ K on the second round of trumps, cashing ♥ AK and ruffing a heart. Declarer returns to hand with the precious ♣ Q and ruffs a second heart. Declarer does not mind if West over-ruffs with her ♠ Q. Declarer will win the ♦ A and two long trumps to make her contract. (5 spades, 2 hearts, 2 clubs and 1 diamond.)

BBO Movie – declarer is always South for the convenience of the viewer

<https://tinyurl.com/28gxn7eq>

**Board 2**

East Deals

E-W Vul

	♠ Q 9	
	♥ J 9 8 4	
	♦ K 8 4 3	
	♣ 10 5 2	
♠ J 8 7 3		♠ A 6 4 2
♥ A Q 7		♥ K 6 3
♦ 10 9 6		♦ Q J 5 2
♣ A K 4		♣ Q 9
	♠ K 10 5	
	♥ 10 5 2	
	♦ A 7	
	♣ J 8 7 6 3	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	Pass
3 NT <sup>1</sup>	All pass		

1. Though West has a 4 card major, the 4333 shape strongly suggests that a 3 NT contract will prove easier than 4 ♠ (should partner have four spades). There is no ruffing opportunity in responder's hand. Game values and no 4 card major

Lead ♥ 9

**Top Tricks:** 1 ♠, 3 ♥, 3 ♣. 7 top tricks.**Extra tricks:** 2 diamond tricks by force.**Plan:** At trick 2, lead a diamond to force out the ♦ A or ♦ K. When next on lead play on diamond again, establishing two diamond winners and then cashing the remaining top tricks.

Note: 4 ♠ makes only 9 tricks.

BBO Movie – declarer is always South for the convenience of the viewer

<https://tinyurl.com/ycn9rlzx>

**Board 3**

South Deals

E-W Vul

♠ 9 7	♠ A Q 5 3	♠ K 10 8 4
♥ K J 9 6 2	♥ 5 4	♥ Q 10 7
♦ Q 6 4	♦ K 10 9 5	♦ 7
♣ J 8 3	♣ K 5 4	♣ Q 10 9 6 2
	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">N</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">W</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">E</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; background-color: green; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> </div> </div>	
	♠ J 6 2	
	♥ A 8 3	
	♦ A J 8 3 2	
	♣ A 7	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 NT
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2 NT <sup>2</sup>	Pass	3 NT <sup>3</sup>
All pass			

1. No four card major
2. Minimum opening values, inviting 3 NT
3. Maximum so accepts the invitation.

Lead: ♥ 6

**Top Tricks:** 1 ♠, 1 ♥, 2 ♦, 2 ♣, (6 in total)**Extra tricks:** 1 spade by force, 1 spade by finesse, 2 or 3 diamond length tricks, 1 diamond finesse.

**Plan:** Declarer should duck the first two rounds of hearts (Rule of 7) . On winning the third round of hearts, declarer concentrates on the diamond suit. If diamonds split 2-2 then declarer can win five diamond tricks, enough to make 3 NT. But if they split 3-1 declarer will have to take a diamond finesse. Declarer has two finesse options, finesse North's ♦ 10 or South's ♦ J. Declarer needs to keep West off lead (West's hearts!!) so opts to finesse the ♦ J. If it succeeds declarer will make all her diamonds, and if it fails then declarer has established two extra diamond tricks. East will not be able to put West on lead with her hearts and will have to give away the lead.

BBO Movie – declarer is always South for the convenience of the viewer

<https://tinyurl.com/y8bm5yt2>

**Board 4**

West Deals

Both Vul

		♠ K Q 9 2	
		♥ 9 4	
		♦ Q 10 3 2	
		♣ 10 8 6	
♠ 7 6 3			♠ A 10 4
♥ A 6 5 2			♥ K J 8 7
♦ K 6			♦ A 9 7 5
♣ A K 5 4			♣ 3 2
		♠ J 8 5	
		♥ Q 10 3	
		♦ J 8 4	
		♣ Q J 9 7	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3 ♥ <sup>2</sup>	Pass
4 ♥ <sup>3</sup>	All pass		

1. Four hearts, maybe four spades
2. Four hearts, invitational values (11-12)
3. Maximum so accepts the invitation

Lead ♠ K

**Top Tricks:** 1 ♠, 2 ♥, 2 ♦, 2 ♣. (7 in total)

**Extra tricks:** 1 heart length trick, 1 heart finesse (the ♥ J). 2 diamond ruffs, or 2 club ruffs (Either East or West can be the ruffing hand, but not both).

**Plan:** Although it might seem correct to try the heart finesse, hoping to play the trump suit without loss, it could be fatal here. If South wins with her ♥ Q and leads a trump, declarer will be able to ruff just one club and will be one short of the ten trick target.

Declarer does not need to take the heart finesse. Two club ruffs and one heart length trick will secure the contract. Declarer should draw two rounds of trumps, winning the second round with her ♥ A, and then lead her ♣ A and ♣ K and ruff a club, returning to hand with her ♦ K, plays her ♦ A, ruffs a diamond and ruffs a fourth club. Declarer then plays a diamond, discarding if South plays her ♥ Q, or ruffing if South discards. 11 tricks and game made.

The key to success is preventing the opponents from drawing a third round of trumps.

BBO Movie – declarer is always South for the convenience of the viewer

<https://tinyurl.com/y89xkdq2>

North Deals  
N-S Vul

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	2 ♥ <sup>2</sup>	All pass <sup>3</sup>	

- Lead ♣ K

**Extra tricks:** 1 club ruff, 2 diamonds by force, heart length tricks (depending on the split).

BBO Movie – declarer is always South for the convenience of the viewer

<https://tinyurl.com/yaoa7wrx>

**Board 6**

East Deals

E-W Vul

	♠ 10	
	♥ Q 10 8 4	
	♦ Q 9 7 3 2	
	♣ 10 8 5	
♠ Q 7 5 3		♠ A 6 4 2
♥ A 5		♥ K 7 3 2
♦ 8 6 4		♦ A K 5
♣ A Q 6 3		♣ 7 2
	♠ K J 9 8	
	♥ J 9 6	
	♦ J 10	
	♣ K J 9 4	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
2 NT <sup>2</sup>	Pass	4 ♠ <sup>3</sup>	All pass

1. Four hearts, may have four spades
2. No four hearts (so must have four spades), and game invitational values (11-12)
3. Four spades and maximum

**Lead:** ♦ J**Top Tricks:** 1 ♠, 2 ♥, 2 ♦, 1 ♣. (6 in total)**Extra tricks:** 1 spade finesse (50%) and 1 length trick if spades split 3-2 (68%); 2 club ruffs**Discard opportunities:** None

**Plan:** You hope that spades will split 3-2. Win the lead and finesse the ♠ Q. Lead a low spade to your ♠ A. North shows out, spades breaking 4-1. South is the danger hand because if South gets in he will lead a spade, removing one of your ruffing trumps. Finesse the ♣ Q (if it loses North will be unable to lead a spade). The finesse wins, you cash your ♣ A and ruff your first club. Lead a low heart to dummy's ♥ A and lead a low heart to your ♥ K, Ruff a heart and then ruff your second club. (At some point South will cash the master trump but you end up making 11 tricks despite the bad trump split

BBO Movie – declarer is always South for the convenience of the viewer

<https://tinyurl.com/229s4ntv>

**Board 7**  
 South Deals  
 Both Vul

		♠ A Q 6 4	
		♥ 5	
		♦ A Q 7 4	
		♣ 6 5 4 2	
♠ 9 3 2			♠ J 7
♥ Q J 10 7			♥ 9 8 6 4 3 2
♦ 9 5 2			♦ 10 6
♣ K 10 8			♣ 9 7 3
		♠ K 10 8 5	
		♥ A K	
		♦ K J 8 3	
		♣ A Q J	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2 NT
Pass	3 ♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	3 ♠ <sup>2</sup>
Pass	6 ♠ <sup>3</sup>	All pass	

1. Stayman
2. Four spades
3. At least 30 combined points and 3 shortage points for the singleton so the spade slam has good prospects.

Lead ♥ Q

**Top Tricks:** 3 ♠, 2 ♥, 4 ♦, 1 ♣. (10 in total)

**Extra tricks:** 1 spade length trick (if spades break 3-2) . 1 club by force, 1 club possible by finesse.

**Plan:** Win the heart lead, draw trumps in three rounds (good news!), ending in dummy, and lead a low club to the ♣ Q, which loses. Win any return and take all the remaining tricks.

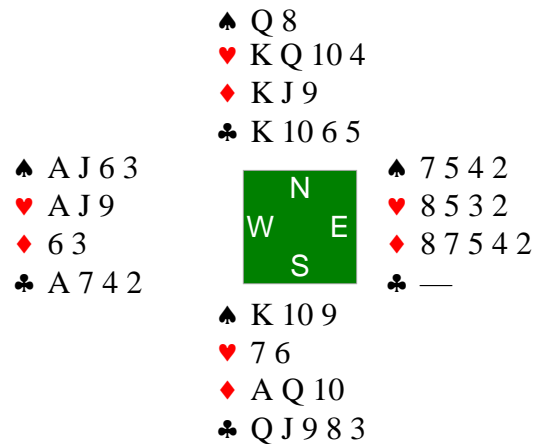
BBO Movie – declarer is always South for the convenience of the viewer  
<https://tinyurl.com/yhaz9xc>



**Board 8**

West Deals

None Vul



West	North	East	South
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣ <sup>1</sup>	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	Pass <sup>2</sup>	Pass <sup>3</sup>

1. Garbage Stayman. Prepared to pass any response. Much safer than passing and being doubled for penalties.
2. Weak takeout completed
3. Oops! Missed a 3 NT game.

Lead: ♥ K

**Top Tricks:** 1 ♠, 1 ♥, 0 ♦, 1 ♣. (3 in total)**Extra tricks:** 3 club ruffs. 1 spade length, possible diamond winners by length if diamonds split 3-3 (2) or 4-2 (1).

**Plan:** Win with the ♥ A and lead a diamond. Each time you regain the lead (sometimes with a ruff in dummy), play diamonds. If the opponents' diamonds split 3-3 you will establish two diamond winners, which you can get to by ruffing a club. You may make your contract, but even if you don't you will score a lot better than if playing in Notrumps, where dummy's spades won't win a single trick.

BBO Movie – declarer is always North for the convenience of the viewer

<https://tinyurl.com/y9zb2muz>