Systems for Hearts with Spades

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

	North	
	♠ A K 5 ♡ A 9 8 6 5 ◊ 2 ♣ K Q 9 3	
West ♠ Q 2 ♡ J 4 3 2 ◊ J 9 6 5 ♣ 8 5 4	N W E S	**East** ♠ 9 4 3 ♡ K 10 7 ◊ A K 10 7 ♣ 10 7 6
	♠ J 10 8 7 6 ♡ Q ◊ Q 8 4 3 ♣ A J 2	

West	North	East	South
	Andrew		*Pete*
	1♡	Pass	1♠
Pass	1 NT[1]	Pass	2♠[2]
Pass	4♠	All pass	

1. Exactly three spades, intended as forcing.
2. Four decent spades or any 5.

4♠ by South
Made 6 — NS +480

The Tucker system addresses the Flannery problem (5+♠ & 4+♡), the major nightmare (6+♡ & 3+♠) and North's shape on this hand. It applies after a 1♡ opening bid:

1. The 1♠ response shows any four or more spades, but is seldom made with values to drive to game. Opener's 1 NT shows exactly 3-card spade support. Responder only passes with exactly 4=1=4=4 shape, minimum values, and bad spades. Responder has no artificial forcing bids; a minor shows a suit of 5+ cards, a singleton or void in hearts, bad spades and a weak hand.

2. The 2♠ response shows 5+ spades in a game-forcing hand; there are special continuations. Whether playing Tucker or not, *I strongly recommend:* with only four spades and game values, responder bids two of a minor; over that, opener bids any 4-card spade suit immediately, which does not show extra values.

North chose a heavy 1♡ opening bid (playing Precision, 1♣ is opened when holding an unbalanced hand with 16+ HCP). Over the Tucker 1 NT rebid by North, South, holding mostly soft values, rebid only 2♠; an invitational 3♠ would have been acceptable. No problem, North had heard enough to bid the cold game.

The Precision 1♣ opening gets to game without further gadgets: 1♣ - 1♠ [5+♠, 8+HCP]; 2♠ ... 4♠.

In standard bidding: 1♡ - 1♠; 2♣ - ? Not so easy. 2 NT makes some sense, but are these really invitational values? 2♠ could land in a 5-1 fit, and 2♡ probably will. If 2◊ is an artificial game force, passing 2♣ looks quite reasonable. Much of the field failed to get to game on this hand. Maybe 1♡ - 1♠; 2♠ - ?

Here is a simple method that helps on such deals: require that a 1♠ response provide ♠ Q 10 x x or better (or any five cards). With this in place, the auction becomes easy: 1♡ - 1♠; 3♠ [can play 4-3] - 4♠. My analysis shows this method provides about half the advantages of the Flannery 2◊ opening, without having to cope with it. Tucker provides about twice the advantages of Flannery, about half for each of 1♠ and 2♠ responses.