

Autofix -- Problem

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul



♠ Q 9 7 6
 ♥ Q
 ♦ A K Q
 ♣ A Q 10 9 6

| West | North | East | South |
|------|---------------|------|-------------|
| | <i>Andrew</i> | | <i>Pete</i> |
| Pass | 1 NT | Pass | 1 ♣ ? |

What next?

Here is a summary of our minor suit system, which is a form of expert standard:

- Partner's 1 NT response to 1 ♣ shows a balanced hand with at least a good 7 HCP and denies as many as four cards in a major suit.
- A 2 NT response would have been invitational, with 11-12 HCP, so partner's maximum is 10 HCP for 1 NT.
- Inverted minor raises. Partner probably has fewer than five clubs, but could have four.
- A 1 ♦ response denies holding a 4-card major, except when holding game-forcing values. As a result, opener would only rebid a major suit over 1 ♦ with an unbalanced hand or concentrated values.

Partner may have 3=3=3=4 shape, but otherwise will have four or five diamonds. As a result, responder usually has a hand suitable for declaring a notrump contract. With an unsuitable hand, a 1 ♦ response (even with three cards) would often allow opener to declare 1 NT, which is likely to be opener's next bid.

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

NS 3N; NS 4♣; NS 2♠; EW 1♥; Par +500; EW 4♥×-3

| West | North | East | South |
|------|---------------|------|-------------|
| | <i>Andrew</i> | | <i>Pete</i> |
| | | | 1 ♣ |
| Pass | 1 NT | Pass | ? |

This is more a story than a problem.

With at least 26 combined HCP, a 3 NT contract looms large. An immediate 3 NT dares them to set us. The normal alternative is a reverse to 2♠. The spades do not seem strong enough to support that. If partner lacks both the ace and king of hearts, the spade suit is likely to be a problem in either 5♣ or a 4-3 4♠.

In my youth, I did lots of operating, but not so much any more. This time, however, I decided to tell the opponents not to lead a heart, and chose 2♥. Partner next tried 2♠ (3♣ also seems sensible), and I was pleased to settle into 3 NT with a diamond lead. Success!

Not so fast. Partner was unable to coax another trick from the opponents and finished up with his original nine tricks. Other Souths probably raised 1 NT to 3 NT. On the obvious lead of the ♥5, the ♥Q wins the first trick, making ten tricks. So, we got a bottom -- I fixed myself, not them.