

## 365. Another major dilemma

*By Ron Klinger*

This was yesterday's puzzle:

You are the dealer at favourable vulnerability. What would you do with:

♠ K10653  
♥ KQJ863  
♦ 9  
♣ 6

You do not have a weak 2♦ or 2♥, both majors, available.

In yesterday's column, we saw a player opening 1♠ in first seat with neither side vulnerable on this hand:

♠ K108764  
♥ A9643  
♦ --  
♣ 76

At the other tables, South passed. What about today's hand? The points in favour of bidding are: (1) The vulnerability is favourable, (b) You have 9 HCP points, not a paltry 7 and (c) Your 6-card suit is much stronger than yesterday's 6-card suit.

The downside of opening 1♥ on today's hand is that you are not strong enough to reverse with a 2♠ rebid and show the 6-5 pattern later, whether partner responds 1NT or bids 2-minor. That means you might miss a 5-3 spade fit. Sometimes one can open with the higher-ranking suit (1♠ here) and rebid in hearts. With the great difference in suit quality, that sequence does not appeal. Still, given the powerful nature of the heart suit, you could open 1♥ and might find partner with 2+ hearts. That will probably be as good as a 5-3 fit in spades.

Personally, I would pass. You are very likely to have a chance to show the majors later.

The deal arose in a club pairs' duplicate and West did very well by choosing to open.

Dealer West : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ AJ987	
	♥ A7	
	♦ KQ1063	
	♣ 9	
West		East
♠ K10653		♠ 4
♥ KQJ863		♥ 9542
♦ 9		♦ J842
♣ 6		♣ 10842
	South	
	♠ Q2	
	♥ 10	
	♦ A75	
	♣ AKQJ753	

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	4♥!	5♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

As you can see, North-South can make 13 tricks in clubs and, via the spade finesse, 7NT. It is hard to see how North-South could have done that after West's 1♥.

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	♥ A7	
	♦ KQ1063	
	♣ 9	
West		East
♠ K10653		♠ 4
♥ KQJ863		♥ 9542
♦ 9		♦ J842
♣ 6		♣ 10842
	South	
	♠ Q2	
	♥ 10	
	♦ A75	
	♣ AKQJ753	

No pair bid a grand slam and only one pair found 6♣ for a top board. Some played in 3NT for good results. Others played in 5♣. Note that even if West had been doubled for penalties in 4♥, West could score five trump tricks and two ruffs in dummy (after North leads, say, ♥A and a second heart). That would be -500 for East-West, but still an excellent score, given North-South can make game plus.

Two North-South pairs failed in 4♠. One went two off, -200, second bottom, and the other was three off, -300, and a bottom.

### Problem for Tomorrow:

Dealer East : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1NT - 15-17
Pass	2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	?

(1) Transfer to hearts

What would you do as South with:

♠ AKQ3  
♥ K43  
♦ K93  
♣ Q72

- (a) If you are playing teams?
- (b) If you are playing pairs?

**Why not phone or email your bridge partners and compare your answers and your reasoning?**

*Roses are red.  
Poems are hard.  
Beer is great.  
(by Beer)*