

8/02/11 Stratified

Board 5

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

NS 6♥; NS 6♣; NS 1N; EW 1♠; EW 1♦

West	North	East	South
		1♦	1♥
		2♠	4♥
Dbl	2♥	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		
Pass	Pass		

Board 5 from this week featured a battle between hearts and spades, and was further evidence for calling hearts "the third minor." East has a clear 1♦ opening and South a healthy 1♥ overcall. West has just enough to double (showing exactly 4♠), and at our table North made an overly conservative single raise to 2♥. East now had an easy 2♠ call, and South bid a good aggressive vulnerable game. With West's pass, South probably felt like she had won the auction, but East correctly decided 4♥ would make and took an obvious 4♠ sacrifice having already limited his values with 2♠ on the previous round. N/S forgot to double, but +500 vs. +150 was only half a matchpoint difference where N/S could make +680 in ♥.

East's sacrifice wasn't foolproof; after all, if partner has a singleton ♦ and the A♠, they might take a quick 4 tricks against 4♥ versus an almost certain minus in 4♠. However, East's call was probably odds on and if the game is making, East only needs to make 7 tricks in spades to show a profit.

If N/S had stayed out of the auction (and West had bid 1♠), a 4♦ rebid in standard shows a picture bid with 4 spades and six solid diamonds (♠Qxxx ♥A ♦AKQxxx ♣Kx). Perhaps 4♦ in a competitive auction should show similar shape with less high card strength to help W make a decision over a likely 4♥ bid by N/S. On this hand, E holding ♦Qxxx could judge that the partnership was a huge underdog to have enough defense to beat 4♥ opposite long diamonds and take the push to 4♠ despite holding an anemic 4-3-4-2 hand.

North has a similar problem as East on this hand. North is worth a limit raise in hearts but would also like to show his clubs in preparation for a high level partnership decision. A 2♣ bid followed by a heart bid would be nice, but that pesky spade suit the opponents hold combined with the adverse vulnerability might make the level to show hearts uncomfortably high on the next round. A 2♦ limit raise right away shows heart support but leaves the club situation a mystery. Pete last week offered a nice option to play *fit showing jump shifts* where 3♣ by N over x would show length in clubs, limit raise values and at least 3 card heart support. This hand fits that description to a T. That seems like the best shot for our South to find the winning 5♥ call today even if ♣Qxx doesn't make that a crystal clear decision. The degree of a secondary fit in a minor often is the key information toward making a winning high level decision.