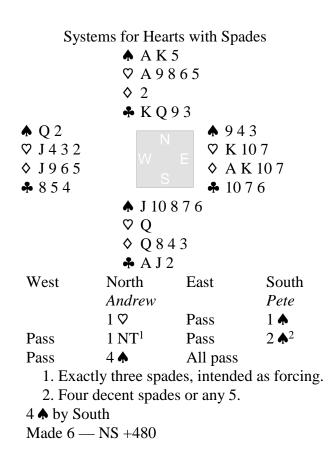
Board 1North Deals
None Vul



The Tucker system addresses the Flannery problem $(5+ \spadesuit \& 4+ \heartsuit)$, the major nightmare $(6+ \heartsuit \& 3+ \spadesuit)$ and North's shape on this hand. It applies after a $1 \heartsuit$ 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 $2 \spadesuit$ 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 $1 \heartsuit$ opening bid (playing Precision, $1 \clubsuit$ 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 $2 \spadesuit$; an invitational $3 \spadesuit$ 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: $1 \heartsuit - 1 \spadesuit$; $2 \clubsuit - ?$ Not so easy. 2 NT makes some sense, but are these really invitational values? $2 \spadesuit$ could land in a 5-1 fit, and $2 \heartsuit$ probably will. If $2 \diamondsuit$ is an artificial game force, passing $2 \clubsuit$ looks quite reasonable. Much of the field failed to get to game on this hand. Maybe $1 \heartsuit - 1 \spadesuit$; $2 \spadesuit - ?$

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