

lead a club.)”

Another group thought the question was not *whether* to bid, but *what* to bid:

KIT WOOLSEY: “Five hearts. This is a great hand opposite a four-spade call. If North bids a slam, I’d bet that it will make. Five spades doesn’t do the hand justice. There are too many spades for doubling to be right, despite the fine heart holding.”

MIKE PASSELL: “Five hearts. Not bidding is out of the question, as a double game-swing or more may be at stake. We must involve partner, as a six-level decision may be coming.”

LARRY COHEN: “Five hearts. Sure, push me around. Anyway, as long as the opponents are pushing me, I might as well try for six spades, opposite, say:

♠ K Q 10 x x x x ♥ x ♦ A J x x ♣ —.”

ROBERT FRIEND: “Five hearts. If there is no extreme duplication in hearts, we should make five spades. Bid hearts to help partner with a possible decision over six clubs. Opening lead heart ace if it comes to that.”

If that’s what you’re going to lead, you should probably keep on bidding.

These panelists rejected five hearts:

ALLAN GRAVES: “Five spades. Doesn’t seem right to withhold support, and five hearts feels too pushy.”

PRATAP RAJADHYAKSHA: “Five spades. Not sure who can make what. Since I will be on lead, I do not need to bid five hearts and thus to clue the opponents about where my side strength lies.”

How likely is partner to judge accurately at the six level, whether or not South bids five hearts? If LHO takes the push, he will probably have four clubs and a heart void, or five clubs. East-West could well be making. I suppose that partner could have diamonds sewn up, but he might not double for

fear that South’s hearts are the likes of ace-king-five-four-three-deuce.

The last word goes to a few savvy veterans who think they’ve got it all figured out:

ROBERT WOLFF: “Five spades. My first inclination was to double, but partner rates to have 11.5 of his 13 cards pointed, not leaving room for a probable misfit for East-West.”

BILLY EISENBERG: “Five spades. Will double six clubs and lead a trump.”

SAMI KEHELA: “Five spades. But really hoping to double six clubs.”

**Problem C**

Matchpoints; none vul. You, South, hold:  
 ♠ 6 4 ♥ 8 5 ♦ A K 7 3 ♣ A K J 9 5  
 SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
 ?

**What call do you make?**

Action	Score	Votes
1 ♣	100	12
1 ♦	90	10
1 NT	60	5

With the minors flipped, everyone (I trust) would open one diamond and plan to rebid two clubs. With the actual holding, we must misdescribe in some way. We could stick to the diamonds-plus-clubs plan and misrepresent the suit lengths; or we could plan to bid one club and two clubs, showing more clubs and perhaps less high-card strength than we own; or we could open one notrump with several obvious defects. Or we could follow this plan:

KIT WOOLSEY: “One club. There is no need to distort with one diamond or one notrump. This hand is strong enough to reverse. It is important for South to show what he really has.”

I like to reverse as light as anyone, but the combination of minor-suit ori-

entation, minimum high card, no singleton makes the South shade light even for me. He Kit says, the reverse describes what you’ve got. A reverser should strain right and rightside the hand. If partner doesn’t get us over the top, Well, that’s a big “if.”

The rest of the minor-suiters will rebid two clubs regardless of which minor they opened. The diamond bidders want to get both minors and hope that the length is not costly:

BARBARA HABERMAN: “One diamond. An exception to my usual promise of a diamond followed by two clubs and at least five diamonds. Someone major, and I’ll be better placed than diamonds.”

LARRY COHEN (along with ROBERT FRIEND): “One diamond. This is a little about length and strength of reversing strength, so I am with a little about length and strength of both minors.”

ROBERT WOLFF: “One diamond to solve the rebid problem instead of the possibility of playing in the wrong suit. It’s very close, but I opt to get into the game. I love to open one club but this hand stretches that position much.”

STEVE BEATTY: “One diamond. Four-five in the minors, I avoid one diamond; but here I have a good reason. The two-club rebid has a wide-enough range that partner will strain to move. I will be much more comfortable with this auction than with a one-club opening with bidding clubs twice, or with one notrump.”

SIDNEY LAZARD: “One diamond. A scene except at matchpoints.”

Some diamond bidders thought the alternative was one notrump.

entation, minimum high cards, and no singleton makes the South hand a shade light even for me. However, as Kit says, the reverse describes what you've got. A reverser should reach the right strain and rightside the notrump. If partner doesn't get us overboard . . . Well, that's a big "if."

The rest of the minor-suit openers will rebid two clubs regardless of which minor they opened. These diamond bidders want to get both suits in play and hope that the length disparity is not costly:

BARBARA HABERMAN: "One diamond. An exception to my usual promise that one diamond followed by two clubs shows at least five diamonds. Someone will bid a major, and I'll be better placed having bid diamonds."

LARRY COHEN (along with ROBERT FRIEND): "One diamond. This is just short of reversing strength, so I am willing to lie a little about length and strength while bidding both minors."

ROBERT WOLFF: "One diamond. Trying to solve the rebid problem instead of the possibility of playing in the wrong strain. It's very close, but I opt to get diamonds into the game. I love to open one notrump, but this hand stretches that possibility too much."

STEVE BEATTY: "One diamond. With four-five in the minors, I avoid opening one diamond; but here I have a good suit, and the two-club rebid has a wide-enough range that partner will strain to move towards game. I will be much more comfortable with this auction than with a reverse, or with bidding clubs twice, or with opening one notrump."

SIDNEY LAZARD: "One diamond. Ob-scene except at matchpoints."

Some diamond bidders thought that the alternative was one notrump:

DAVID BERKOWITZ: "One diamond. Many successful matchpoint players would open one notrump, but I am too old."

ERIC KOKISH: "One diamond. Just a matter of style and personal experience. The hopeless doubletons work both ways, as one notrump might operate as a preemptive strike, though this is not the best vulnerability for that gambit."

And this is a slightly different take:

RUSS EKEBLAD: "One diamond. Only because I have a 'tweener' in strength, not strong enough to reverse but too strong (and a little distorted) to open one club and rebid two clubs. With 2=2=4=5 and a minimum, I would open one club. Some might consider the offshape one notrump as a solution, but I would prefer to have at least the jack in one of the majors. (Yeah, smile!)"

However, the diamond bidders were outvoted by those choosing to open in the stronger suit:

PRATAP RAJADHYAKSHA: "One club. Second choice one diamond. No one notrump with two worthless doubletons. I'm comfortable rebidding two clubs with this suit."

DANNY KLEINMAN: "One club. One club on Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; one diamond on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. This holding is on the cusp of a reverse. I like aces and kings together, and (of course) jass-menel. Swap the jack-nine of clubs and the seven-three of diamonds, and I'd open one diamond every day of the week."

DAVID ROWNTREE: "One club. The suit is strong enough to rebid if necessary, so I will avoid a canapé sequence. One notrump with a low doubleton in *both* majors is not for me, both because one of the doubletons will be trumps opposite five fairly frequently, and because of the missing stoppers."

MARK FELDMAN: "One club. While it may be fashionable to open one notrump, I reject that with such concentration and this

distribution. I also dislike opening one diamond and rebidding two clubs with longer clubs. Opening one club and rebidding two clubs, while not ideal, isn't a gross distortion, nor does it wrongside notrump."

ALLAN GRAVES: "One club. Kit Woolsey's advice to avoid bids with two flaws has always appealed to me. This hand has three flaws for notrump: two low doubletons and five-four shape. [Isn't that duplication of flaws?—*B.B.*] One diamond is okay but clearly not perfect, and we in the one-club camp are content to cross various bridges when they arrive."

Yes, auctions seem to turn out "luckier" when one opens in the longest suit. They do for me, anyway.

That brings us to the matter of one notrump. A few panelists had nothing but contempt: "How do I loathe thee? Let me count the ways."

LARRY COHEN (*continued*): "One diamond. Please tell me that this is *not* a three-way choice. Will panelists really opt for one notrump with two low doubletons? Is there anything about the spade six or heart eight that argues for playing from our side? I don't mind occasionally opening one notrump with two doubletons, but there must be a better reason than this!"

BILLY EISENBERG: "One club. I'd accept one diamond; one notrump looks ugly."

IRA RUBIN: "One club. One notrump would be moronic, but actions like that have become quite popular. The clubs should be rebid after a major-suit response."

ROSS GRABEL: "One diamond. Matter of style. This is not strong enough for a reverse, and I'd prefer not to open one club and to rebid two clubs. No doubt, there will be some perverted one-notrump openers—after all, there are 15 HCP—but that is a true distortion in every other sense."

Ugly, moronic, perverted! Strong stuff, but not enough to deter:

MIKE PASSELL: "One notrump. Whenever I can open one notrump, I do so. Here, the preemptive value will often overcome the obvious shortcomings."

AUGIE BOEHM: "One notrump. Given busy bidding tendencies, I'll often get a second chance over interference. I might even be able to suggest both minors with two notrump if the opponents show the majors. I could be talked out of one notrump if I knew which minor to open."

CARL HUDECEK: "One notrump. At least I have 15 HCP and no singleton. If partner expects more, he is overly optimistic."

JEFF RUBENS: "One notrump. With top tricks, this hand is not terrible in terms of support for partner's long major. We may suffer antipositionally in notrump, but that seems a less-important possibility than stopping an overcall on a balanced, near-balanced or marginal hand."

The Editor, who is not a big fan of offshape notrumps, surprises me again. He must have eaten his Wheaties before answering this set. I like one notrump. Sometimes showing one's point-count is the most important thing; if South opens in a minor, he'll have a hard time getting the strength across. And the preemptive value of the strong notrump is often overlooked.

You can't always tell the players without a scorecard:

JOE GRUE: "One club. Everyone knows that I would open one notrump, but opening one club planning on rebidding two clubs is my BWS answer. I really dislike opening any suit that's not my longest, so I hate one diamond."

Okay, Joe, you score 100. Happy? But his closet one-notrump opening is more than offset by the strength of conviction shown by our final pair:

SAMI KEHELA: "One club. Not c  
ZIA: "One club. One club. O  
(Just in case you didn't hear the fir

**Problem D**

IMPs; neither side vul. You, South,

♠ A Q 3 ♥ A ♦ A Q 10 6 5 4

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	Pass	Pass	1 ♣
Double	Pass	2 ♥	Pa
?			

What call do you make?

Action	Score	Votes
3 ♦	100	17
3 NT	70	7
2 NT	50	3
2 ♠	20	0

With 20 real, there should be  
jection to the initial double, righ

DANNY KLEINMAN: "Three dia  
(Or two diamonds, the call I'd hav  
initially. Maybe West will condone  
I know, the moths have gotten to  
but I can be thankful that they didn'  
six of diamonds."

KIT WOOLSEY: "Three notrump.  
I should have made immediately, to  
partner from insisting on hearts wi  
diocre six-card suit. Three notrump  
to be the right contract, and if so  
else is better I'm unlikely to be  
find it."

Don't pair up those two gu  
eryone else is content with the  
The real problem is what to do n  
partner has made the expected a  
of two hearts. One plan is to p  
that our hand is strong and bala

ROSS GRABEL: "Two notrump  
diamonds is the only alternative, an  
just burying one's head in the sand  
is almost certain to pass. With on  
diamond and one more heart, two  
would be unanimous."

DAVID ROWNTREE: "Two notru  
hand may be too strong for this, b