

XYZ -- Problem

Board 4
 West Deals
 Both Vul



♠ 7 2
 ♥ K Q J 7
 ♦ 5 4 3
 ♣ 9 6 5 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	?
Lead: ♥ 8			

Join my opponent for this deal, in an online matchpoint pairs game. Do you play XYZ, an extension to this situation of two-way new minor forcing? What difference does that make on this deal, anyhow?

Playing your preferred style, what is your call over partner's 1 ♠ rebid?

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XYZ -- Solution

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	3 NT	All pass	

3 NT by North
 Lead: ♥ 8
 Made 5 — NS +660

Playing XYZ, your only reasonable action over partner's 1 ♠ rebid is to bid 1 NT. You must not pass partner in a 4-2 spade fit, and 2 ♣ would be inviting game (or escaping into diamonds). Over 1 NT, North can visualize the possibility of taking as few as the five top tricks in a notrump contract. A gentle 2 NT seems plenty. With only six points, and not knowing about partner's clubs, you pass.

However, our opponent was playing standard methods. Lacking a diamond stopper, 2 ♣ appealed more than 1 NT. North visualized clubs running, for eight tricks -- surely South will provide another. Suddenly optimistic, North leaps to game. To add insult to injury, even though I took the second heart trick, declarer had entries in clubs to enjoy two more of them -- making five for an 85% board. This was a system win for traditional methods.

Would you have led a spade? I might well have done so at IMPs, but not at matchpoints. No other lead makes a difference.