

THINKING BRIDGE - - By Eddie Kantar -
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Competitive bidding expertise definitely separates the men from the boys. See which category you fall into on this hand from a matchpoint game with neither side vulnerable.

You are South, holding

♠5 ♥Q J 5 4 ♦Q 7 6 ♣K Q 10 8 4

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1 Heart	1 Spade
2 Club (1)	4 Spade	Pass	Pass
?			

(1) Natural, intending to bid hearts later. Some would bid 3♥ or 4♥ directly.

In any case, what would you do now? Make up your mind before looking at the full deal below.

Dealer: South Vul : - -None	♠ 10 ♥ K 10 9 8 7 ♦ A K J 9 5 ♣ 7 6	
♠ K J 6 3 2 ♥ 3 ♦ 4 3 2 A 9 5 3		♠ A Q 9 8 7 4 ♥ A 6 2 ♦ 10 8 ♣ J 2
	♠ 5 ♥ Q J 5 4 ♦ Q 7 6 ♣ K Q 10 8 4	

Keeping in mind that one hand doesn't prove anything, withholding strong trump support is usually wrong, as in this case. As the cards lie, 4♠ is cold and 5♥ is down one.

How would the bidding have gone had you leaped to 4♥ directly?

West would surely bid 4♠, and now it would be up to your partner to decide whether to bid 5♥. Had partner known you had club strength, he probably would have opted to defend. Not knowing that, it's not clear what he would have done.

And, yes, your 2♣ response by a passed hand is not forcing, but you know there is going to be more bidding and you wanted to describe your hand a little better before supporting hearts. It normally helps partner to know where your outside strength is when you have trump support.

It's a tough game.