


42. Responding with five-four in the majors

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	♠ Q73 ♥ K43 ♦ A6 ♣ A8643																	
♠ A54 ♥ 1082 ♦ QJ98 ♣ J105		♠ K6 ♥ Q97 ♦ 75432 ♣ K97																
	♠ J10982 ♥ AJ65 ♦ K10 ♣ Q2																	
	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">W</td> <td style="width: 25%;">N</td> <td style="width: 25%;">E</td> <td style="width: 25%;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♣</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">INT</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">4♠</td> <td style="text-align: center;">All Pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	W	N	E	S		1♣	P	1♠		INT	P	2♥		4♠	All Pass		
W	N	E	S															
	1♣	P	1♠															
	INT	P	2♥															
	4♠	All Pass																
	--North-South Vulnerable--																	

The bidding:

North, with 13 high card points, opens one club, his better minor. South will bid his suits up the line except when he has a five-card suit. South bids spades, his five-card suit. North, without four-card support, bids one notrump.

Now South can bid two hearts showing ten plus points and a four-card suit. Spades must be longer since he bid them first. That is all North needs for game so he places the contract in four spades.

The contract: Four spades by South

The opening lead: The queen of diamonds

The play:

Declarer wins the opening lead in his hand with the king and then cashes the ace of diamonds. The queen from QJ9x is a safer lead than QJxx because declarer is less likely to finesse the defense out of both honours.

Declarer plays trump from dummy. West gets in and exits a trump. East wins the king and plays a heart. Because declarer played two rounds of diamonds, the defense does not have a safe diamond exit card.

Declarer wins the jack of hearts and draws the last trump ending in dummy. He then plays a little club to the queen. East wins the king and exits a club to the queen.

The result: Four spades making for +620

Note:

-It is important to think of the hand in terms of exit cards. When the defense is forced to lead a suit, it often helps the declarer. The defense needs to keep a small defensive footprint by not helping the declarer.