6. Not opening 1♥ with 4♠-4♥

Whereas you should open $1 \triangleq$ with $5 \triangleq -5 \checkmark$ — so you can bid $2 \checkmark$ next time — you should definitely open $1 \checkmark$ with $4 \triangleq -4 \checkmark$. This is to facilitate finding an eight-card fit in either major.

The difference in strategies stems from the fact that when you are 4 - 4, you'll not bid spades yourself (rather rebid notrumps). So you must give partner the chance to introduce spades at the One-level. If you open 1 + 1, partner may lack the strength to respond 2 (or length 1 - 2 shows five cards).

What Happened

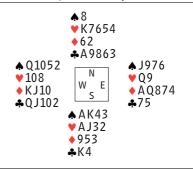
With South erroneously opening IA, the heart fit was missed and North languished in INT. East led a diamond and the defence promptly cashed five rounds of the suit. Although declarer won the remaining eight tricks when VQ fell under VAK, that was an underwhelming INT plus one.

What Should Have Happened

South opens 1, knowing partner can easily respond 1, with four cards in that suit, and North's seven-point hand suddenly looks like 17 (well, perhaps not quite, but certainly enough to jump to game).

West naturally leads *Q, declarer winning *K and promptly cashing *AK, dumping a diamond from dummy. Reverting to the clubs (general principle: work on your side suit before drawing trumps as this caters better to poor splits in either suit), declarer crosses to *A and

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither



Milat Habbellen							
S	W	N	Е				
1♠(1) Pass(3)		1NT(2)	Pass				

What Hannoned

- (1) Mistake.
- (2) Not strong enough to respond a new suit at the Two-level.
- (3) Bidding 2♥ would show 5♠-4♥. South has nowhere to go.

Contract: 1NT (by N), Opening Lead: ◆7

What Should Have Happened						
S	W	N	Е			
1 🕶 (1)	Pass	$4 \vee (2)$	end			

- (1) Yes ensuring no major-suit fit can be missed.
- (2) Loves his hand in support of hearts.

Contract: 4♥ (by S), Opening Lead: ♣Q

ruffs ♣6 (East discarding). He now cashes ♥A, crosses to ♥K (noting the 2-2 split) and ruffs ♣8. He ruffs ♠3, cashes ♣9 and merely concedes a diamond at the end. That's 12 tricks and 4♥ plus two.

What a difference South's choice of opening bid makes.

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