Board 15
South Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q 9 7 6
♡ Q
♢ A K Q
♣ A Q 10 9 6

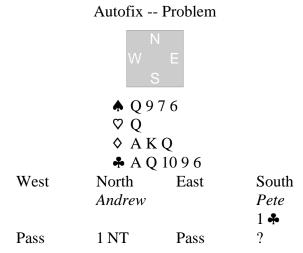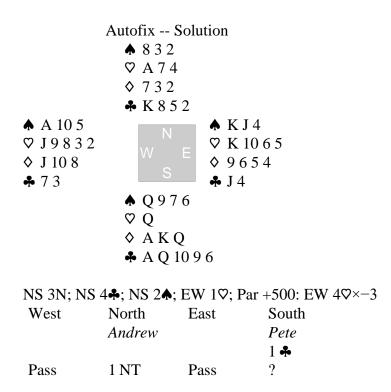| West	North	East	South
	Andrew		*Pete*
			1 ♣
Pass	1 NT	Pass	?

What next?

Here is a summary of our minor suit system, which is a form of expert standard:

-- Partner's 1 NT response to 1 ♣ shows a balanced hand with at least a good 7 HCP and denies as many as four cards in a major suit.

-- A 2 NT response would have been invitational, with 11-12 HCP, so partner's maximum is 10 HCP for 1 NT.

-- Inverted minor raises. Partner probably has fewer than five clubs, but could have four.

-- A 1 ♢ response denies holding a 4-card major, except when holding game-forcing values. As a result, opener would only rebid a major suit over 1 ♢ with an unbalanced hand or concentrated values.

Partner may have 3=3=3=4 shape, but otherwise will have four or five diamonds. As a result, responder usually has a hand suitable for declaring a notrump contract. With an unsuitable hand, a 1 ♢ response (even with three cards) would often allow opener to declare 1 NT, which is likely to be opener's next bid.

Autofix -- Solution

Board 15
South Deals
N-S Vul

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                          ♠ 8 3 2
                          ♡ A 7 4
                          ◇ 7 3 2
                          ♣ K 8 5 2
        ♠ A 10 5                          ♠ K J 4
        ♡ J 9 8 3 2          N            ♡ K 10 6 5
        ◇ J 10 8        W         E        ◇ 9 6 5 4
        ♣ 7 3               S            ♣ J 4
                          ♠ Q 9 7 6
                          ♡ Q
                          ◇ A K Q
                          ♣ A Q 10 9 6
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NS 3N; NS 4♣; NS 2♠; EW 1♡; Par +500: EW 4♡×−3

West	North	East	South
	Andrew		*Pete*
			1 ♣
Pass	1 NT	Pass	?

This is more a story than a problem.

With at least 26 combined HCP, a 3 NT contract looms large. An immediate 3 NT dares them to set us. The normal alternative is a reverse to 2 ♠. The spades do not seem strong enough to support that. If partner lacks both the ace and king of hearts, the spade suit is likely to be a problem in either 5 ♣ or a 4-3 spade game.

In my youth, I did lots of operating, but not so much any more. This time, however, I decided to tell the opponents not to lead a heart, and chose 2 ♡. Partner next tried 2 ♠ (3 ♣ also seems sensible), and I was pleased to settle into 3 NT with a diamond lead. Success!

Not so fast. Partner was unable to coax another trick from the opponents and finished up with his original nine tricks. Other Souths probably raised 1 NT to 3 NT. On the obvious lead of the ♡ 5, the ♡ Q wins the first trick, making ten tricks. So, we got a bottom -- I fixed myself, not them.