Here is your hand and the bidding so far:

♠️ K 9 3
♥️ A Q J 8 6
♦️ Q 4
♣️ 9 5 4

The bidding so far:

PARTNER  YOU
1♦️  1♥️
1♣️  ???

What do you bid now? This situation is tricky – especially if your partner is in the habit of making light distributional opening bids. Your opening bid opposite your partner’s opening bid should produce game – but where? When you are not sure it’s a good idea to run through the possibilities to see if any bid stands out, so let’s do that.

1) PASS. This is not an option. – ONE/ ONE/ ONE is FORCING.
2) 1NOTRUMP. Less than ten points with a club stopper – neither is correct.
3) 2♦️. You have nothing in clubs.
4) 2♥️. Your support is insufficient and your hand is too strong.
5) 2♣️. A gross underbid suggesting weak hand with six hearts.
6) 2♠️. Not a good idea to support your partner’s second bid suit with only three cards. He will expect at least four and a weaker hand.
7) 2NOTRUMP. Better strengthwise but no club stopper.
8) 3♥️. Better strengthwise but NOT forcing, and suggests longer hearts.
9) 3♠️. Better strengthwise, but may not have a fit.
10) ANY HIGHER BID – It’s just plain guessing, so HELP!

ENTER 4th SUIT FORCING.

Bid 2♠️. A bid of the 4th suit in this situation, is a game-forcing CONVENTION, Which says nothing about the club suit you have just bid, It says GAME IS ON SO TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR HAND. Isn’t that a marvellous idea? You have kept the bidding low so that you can now talk to each other and arrive at the best game call.

More later.

Please remember that the bid should be alerted – and explained if requested.

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