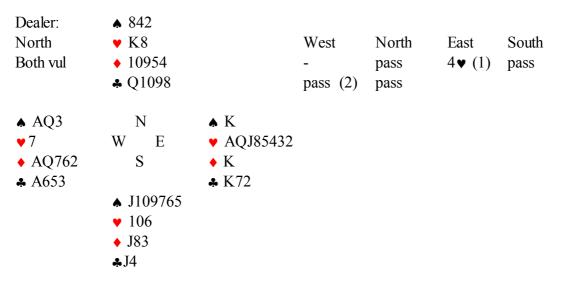
Is a 4♥/▲ opening weak or strongish?

Here's a hand from news-sheet 139: -



- (1) What would you open with this East hand ? An opening 4♥/♠ is normally played a pre-emptive; the same as a 3♥/♠ opening but with one more trump.
- (2) And I too would pass with this West hand as slam looks remote.

And what happened? 13 tricks were easy with the \mathbf{v} K doubleton on-side.

Hand A	So an easy 6♥ missed, what went wrong? Now I agree that 4♥ is a better opening
	than $1 \checkmark$ provided that partner knows that it may be this good.
♠ 7	But then what do you open with this Hand A?
♥ AQJ85432	Clearly you cannot make the same opening bid.
♦ 7	The answer is to play Namyats.
* 872	In my (and many others) opinion $4 \clubsuit$ and $4 \blacklozenge$ art not really good as natural
	pre-emptive bids (as they go past 3NT if partner has a good hand) – so with a weak
	minor hand open $3 /$ or $5 /$ or a gambling 3NT.
So that leaves	$4 \neq 4$ (spare' and the best use of these is to distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' $4 \neq 4$

▲ openings. So a 4♣ opening is a good 4♥ and a 4♦ opening is a good 4♠.

So playing Namyats we open the East hand with 4, and with Hand A with 4.

And here's another extract from an old new-sheet (No 106): -

Board 12 from Friday 12th, N-S vul

West (H)	East (M)	<u>Table A</u> West	North	East	South
▲ QJ987642	▲ 3	3♠ (1)	pass	4 ▲ (2)	all pass
♥ 53	♥ AQJ8				
♦ 3	♦ AJ8	Table B			
♣ Q9	♣ AJ1063	West	North	East	South
		4 ▲ (1)	pass	pass (3)	pass
		Table C			
		West	North	East	South
		4 ▲ (1)	pass	6 ♠ (4)	all pass

So what did you open with Hand H in this week's quiz? $3 \bigstar$ or $4 \bigstar$? At this vulnerability I would like to open $4 \bigstar$, but not if partner is going to leap off to slam. I'll explain how to avoid this problem later.

Table A:	(1) 3 A was the most popular choice of opening bid, quite sensible if you can't differentia		
	between a decent 4 opening and a heap.		
	(2) And what did you bid at (2) with Hand M in this week's quiz? Everybody got this right.		
	I like to think that some of them may have been influenced by my writings – I bet a number		
	would have bid the poor 3NT a year or so ago?		
Table B:	(1) At this vulnerability I agree with a $4 \bigstar$ opening.		
	(3) An inspired pass?		
Table C:	(4) This East bid slam – quite reasonable opposite most 4 ♠ openers.		

And what happened? The K was onside and so 4 made and 6 was down. But is there a more scientific approach if West wants to pre-empt at the 4 level?

Hand R	Hand S	Consider these two hands. 4 imes is a very sensible
		opening with either of these hands, but how do you let
▲ QJ1087642	▲ AKJ109876	partner know that Hand R is purely pre-emptive
♥ K3	¥ -	whereas Hand S would not be adverse to an advance
♦ 3	♦ K93	towards slam?
* 92	♣ Q9	The answer is Namyats.

Now you may recall from previous news-sheets that I do not like to open $4 \clubsuit$ or $4 \blacklozenge$ with a long minor suit as it goes past 3NT. Thus the bids are spare and are used to differentiate between 'good' and 'bad' 4 of a major openings.

So with Hand R (or our West Hand H) we open $4 \bigstar - a$ real heap. But with Hand S we open $4 \bigstar - a$ sound $4 \bigstar$ opener ($4 \bigstar$ is a sound $4 \bigstar$). Partner then either bids 4 of the major to sign off or else investigates slam.

Namyats