

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH TANNAH HIRSCH & BOB JONES

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PERFECT 10

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
 ♠ A J 10
 ♥ A K 7 2
 ♦ A 10 6 3 2
 ♣ 8

WEST
 ♠ K 5 4
 ♥ 10 8 4
 ♦ K Q J 9 5
 ♣ 10 2

EAST
 ♠ Q 9 8 6
 ♥ Q 5 3
 ♦ 8 7
 ♣ A Q 5 4

SOUTH
 ♠ 7 3 2
 ♥ J 9 6
 ♦ 4
 ♣ K J 9 7 6 3

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: King of ♦

North had a difficult hand to bid and the sequence he chose was reasonable. South denied a four-card major when he responded one no trump, so his three-club bid showed a weak hand with long clubs. North was a bit embarrassed not to have a second club, but he knew that bidding on was futile.

South won the lead with the ace in dummy and led a club, rising with the king when East played low. So far so good! It was crucial for South to hold his trump losers to two. All plays would work if the suit split 3-3, but what about a 4-2 split? The only club holding that South could do anything about was a doubleton 10, so he led the jack of clubs from his hand and was gratified to see the 10 from West.

East won the queen and returned his remaining diamond. South ruffed and led the nine of clubs to force out the ace. East returned his last trump to avoid breaking a major suit, but declarer was in control. South won the trump and played a spade, inserting dummy's 10 when West played low. East won his queen, but was now endplayed. A heart shift would give declarer all the rest, so he did the best he could and returned a spade. South still had to give the defenders a heart, but his contract was safe.

(Tannah Hirsch and Bob Jones welcome readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Content Agency, LLC., 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, TX 75001. E-mail responses may be sent to tcaeditors@tribune.com.)

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TOMMY BRANCHES OUT

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
 ♠ A 10 6
 ♥ Q J
 ♦ A Q 5 3
 ♣ K 8 5 4

WEST
 ♠ J 3 2
 ♥ 7 6
 ♦ K 7 6 4
 ♣ Q 10 7 2

EAST
 ♠ Q 5
 ♥ 5 4 2
 ♦ J 10 9 8 2
 ♣ J 9 3

SOUTH
 ♠ K 9 8 7 4
 ♥ A K 10 9 8 3
 ♦ Void
 ♣ A 6

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♠*	Pass	7♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

*Two aces plus the trump queen

Opening lead: Seven of ♥

Trump Coup Tommy was South in today's hand. Tommy is a whiz when trumps break badly but his game is quite ordinary the rest of the time. Today's auction reflects Tommy's approach to bridge — "Let's get the auction over with so we can play the cards!"

Tommy was disappointed with dummy's trump jack. Trumps were solid and there was no chance for a trump coup. He began the play a bit carelessly. Tommy won the lead with dummy's queen and immediately led the trump jack, overtaking it in hand with the ace and finished drawing trumps by cashing the king. Tommy now took the time to count his tricks

and was aghast to see that, barring a miracle in spades, he only had 11.

Next Tommy cashed the ace of clubs and led a club to dummy's king. The ace of diamonds was cashed, Tommy discarding a low spade, and a club was ruffed. Tommy then cashed every one of his hearts leaving this position before the last trump:

NORTH
 ♠ A 10 6
 ♥ Void
 ♦ Q
 ♣ 8

WEST
 ♠ J 3 2
 ♥ Void
 ♦ K
 ♣ Q

EAST
 ♠ Q 5
 ♥ Void
 ♦ J 10 9
 ♣ Void

SOUTH
 ♠ K 9 8 7
 ♥ 3
 ♦ Void
 ♣ Void

Tommy played his last heart, letting a spade go from dummy, and West was miserable. A spade discard would make all of Tommy's spades good, so he let go of his club queen. He was hoping Tommy wouldn't know that dummy's eight of clubs was now high, but Tommy was on full alert. Next came a spade to dummy's ace and the eight of clubs was cashed. West was cooked. A discard in either spades or diamonds would give Tommy the grand slam. He threw in his cards conceding the rest, and Tommy had finally produced a masterpiece that did not require a trump coup!

(tcaeditors@tribune.com)

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GOOD TIP?

Neither vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH			
♠ A 9 7 2			
♥ 8 5			
♦ 10 7 6 5			
♣ A 3 2			
WEST		EAST	
♠ Q 5 3		♠ K 10 8	
♥ K Q 9 3		♥ A J 4 2	
♦ 9 2		♦ A J 8 3	
♣ K 8 7 5		♣ 10 9	
SOUTH			
♠ J 6 4			
♥ 10 7 6			
♦ K Q 4			
♣ Q J 6 4			

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	3♣	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: King of ♥

East-West stopped accurately in two hearts and North backed in with a balancing double. North had played duplicate bridge the day before and had learned something new: "Never let the opponents play at the two-level." Applied with judgment, that is a good tip for duplicate players due to

the scoring used at that form of the game, but rubber bridge players must be willing to go quietly far more often.

West doubled the final contract and the defense was relentless. East overtook the opening lead with the ace to play the club 10 to the queen, king and ace. Declarer led the last heart from the table, but East stepped up smartly with the jack to play the nine of clubs. South won with the jack and ruffed his last heart in dummy. Next came a diamond from the table, South winning the king when East played low. A spade was ducked to East, who continued with the ace of diamonds and a diamond. West ruffed and cashed his high trump.

Declarer was still entitled to the ace of spades and a trump, but that was it. Down three and a 500-point penalty to East-West. A gentleman to the end, South never said a word, but he was seen giving North a very stern look at the end of the hand.

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COUNT IS THE KEY

Neither vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH			
♠ A 10 7 6 3			
♥ K 8 5			
♦ 6 3			
♣ Q 4 2			
WEST		EAST	
♠ 8 2		♠ 9	
♥ J 9 2		♥ Q 10 7 4	
♦ 10 9 4 2		♦ A Q J 7 5	
♣ 8 7 5 3		♣ K J 10	
SOUTH			
♠ K Q J 5 4			
♥ A 6 3			
♦ K 8			
♣ A 9 6			

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
1♦	1♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Opening lead: Ten of ♦

The opening diamond lead went to East's ace and the suit was continued. South won his king and drew trumps in two rounds, then stopped to consider his prospects. It was entirely possible to lose four tricks on this hand — two clubs and a heart to go with the diamond already lost. Care was required.

South next played the ace of hearts

and then a heart to dummy's king, followed by a third round of the suit. Should East win this trick, he would have to yield a ruff-sluff or lead a club toward dummy's queen. Happy days — but no such luck. West was able to win the third heart with the jack and shift to the three of clubs. Low from dummy, the 10 from East, and declarer took a few seconds to count the hand. East had opened the bidding and so far had showed up with, at most, 10 points. East was sure to hold the club king, so winning the ace and playing toward dummy's queen would only work when East started with a doubleton club. East would win the king, but would not have another club to play and would have to give a ruff-sluff.

South found an elegant solution by playing a low club from hand and allowing East to hold the trick. There was no answer for the defense. East would have to lead a club from the king or give a ruff-sluff. Four spades bid and made!

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Saturday, December 14, 2013

GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ Q 8 4 ♥ K Q J 4 ♦ A J ♣ 9 8 6 4

The bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	1♣	?

What call would you make?

Q 2 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ J 9 7 4 ♥ K J 5 4 ♦ Q 9 8 7 ♣ A

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♣	1♦	?	

What call would you make?

Q 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ 5 ♥ A K 8 7 ♦ 8 6 4 ♣ J 9 6 4 3

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass

What call would you make?

Q 4 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ J 5 ♥ A J 3 2 ♦ A K 10 6 3 ♣ Q 6

As dealer, what is your opening bid?

Q 5 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ 10 7 5 3 2 ♥ 5 3 2 ♦ K J 7 2 ♣ J

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♥	2♣	?	

What call would you make?

Q 6 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ Q J 9 2 ♥ J 6 5 2 ♦ A K 7 ♣ J 9

As dealer, what call would you make?

Look for answers on Monday.

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Sunday, December 15, 2013

GOREN BRIDGE

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ALWAYS LEAD YOUR SINGLETON?

North-South vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH

♠ 10 4
♥ K Q J 9 3
♦ Q 7 5
♣ Q J 2

WEST

♠ Void
♥ A 7 6 5
♦ 8
♣ A 10 9 7 6 5 4 3

EAST

♠ 9 8 7 3 2
♥ 10
♦ A 9 6 4 3
♣ K 8

SOUTH

♠ A K Q J 6 5
♥ 8 4 2
♦ K J 10 2
♣ Void

The bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
5♣	Pass	Pass	5♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening lead: Eight of ♦

There is a large group of bridge players who believe that, should you be on lead against a suit contract and you hold a singleton, that's the lead. Experts would rather spend their leisure time in a dentist's chair than play bridge with a partner who ascribed to that belief, but it is widely held.

West was a true believer, and he led his singleton diamond. Despite

two aces that he might have led instead and no trump in his hand with which to ruff a second round of diamonds, he led his singleton anyway. Luckily for West, he had a good partner. East won the lead and reasoned that South would not have come in at the five-level without a six-card suit, therefore, East would be unable to ruff the second diamond. He shifted to his singleton, the 10 of hearts. West won the ace and gave his partner a heart ruff to defeat the contract. Had East returned a diamond at trick two, the contract would have romped home.

A befuddled South said to West, "I would have made five spades if you led the ace of clubs. Why in the world did you lead your singleton when you were void in trumps?" "I always lead my singleton," said West. East then pointed out that the horrible break in trumps would have defeated the contract anyway had West led the ace of clubs. South felt much better. He was defeated by East's good play, not West's poor lead.

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

Q 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **Q 8 4** ♥ **K Q J 4** ♦ **A J** ♣ **9 8 6 4**

The bidding:

WEST **NORTH** **EAST** **SOUTH**
Pass Pass 1♣ ?

What call would you make?

A - In days of yore, you might have been drawn and quartered if you overcalled on a four-card suit. Experts today will overcall with a four-card suit, as long as the suit is excellent and the hand is reasonably good. Bid one heart.

Q 2 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **J 9 7 4** ♥ **K J 5 4** ♦ **Q 9 8 7** ♣ **A**

The bidding:

NORTH **EAST** **SOUTH** **WEST**
1♣ 1♦ ?

What call would you make?

A - Double. This is a negative double promising values worth competing at this level, but with no clear bid. It suggests length in the unbid suits. Should this find a major-suit fit, great! You are strong enough to continue with a no trump bid if that fails.

Q 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **5** ♥ **A K 8 7** ♦ **8 6 4** ♣ **J 9 6 4 3**

The bidding:

SOUTH **WEST** **NORTH** **EAST**
Pass 2♣ Pass Pass ?

What call would you make?

A - Partner may have quite a good hand with length in spades. Double! You are protected by your status as a passed hand. Partner can't play you for too much.

Q 4 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **J 5** ♥ **A J 3 2** ♦ **A K 10 6 3** ♣ **Q 6**

As dealer, what is your opening bid?

A - Should you open one diamond and partner respond one spade, you will have no good re-bid — not enough for two hearts and too much for one no trump. Avoid this and open one no trump now. You are a bit off-shape, but it is the lesser evil.

Q 5 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **10 7 5 3 2** ♥ **5 3 2** ♦ **K J 7 2** ♣ **J**

The bidding:

NORTH **EAST** **SOUTH** **WEST**
1♥ 2♣ ?

What call would you make?

A - Your hand re-evaluates to about seven points in support of hearts. Bid two hearts. With a better hand, you might start with a negative double and support hearts later, but this hand is only worth one bid. Raise now!

Q 6 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **Q J 9 2** ♥ **J 6 5 2** ♦ **A K 7** ♣ **J 9**

As dealer, what call would you make?

A - A hand with this distribution is usually opened one diamond. This is an awkward opening and sometimes leads to problems later in the auction. Is this hand really worth it? Pass.

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