

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH TANNAH HIRSCH & BOB JONES

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EXTRA CHANCES

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♠	Pass	4♦*	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

*Spade fit; singleton diamond

Opening lead: Queen of ♦

These boys certainly had their bidding shoes on. As we've said before — if you're going to bid like this, you better be able to take your tricks.

South won the first trick and took a minute to assess his chances. It didn't look good, but it wasn't hopeless.

There would be a heart loser even if the king were onside, so the trump finesse was essential. South led the jack of spades and ran it when West followed low. So far so good! The ace of spades was cashed, drawing the remaining trump, and South paused once again to consider his next play.

He saw an extra chance! Next came three rounds of clubs followed by the ace of hearts. A diamond ruff got him to dummy to lead a heart, and eliminated the minor suits from both his hand and dummy's. Cashing the ace of hearts first cost nothing. The queen would still provide a trick should the king be with East. Cashing the ace first gave South an extra chance, which paid off on this hand. Declarer played a heart to his queen, losing to the king, but West was trapped! He had no heart to return and was forced to give declarer a ruff-sluff. South ruffed in dummy while discarding the last heart from his hand. Well done!

(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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ESTHER'S BIRTHDAY

North-South vulnerable. West deals.

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

The bidding:

WEST	FRED	EAST	ESTHER
2♠	Dbl	3♠	4♥
Pass	6♥*	Pass	Pass
Pass			

*Fred forgot that he doubled on the previous round!

Opening lead: Ace of ♠

It was Esther's birthday and she asked her husband, Fred, to play with her at the local duplicate. Fred had become a bit forgetful as he got on in years, but he still enjoyed the occasional game.

West won the first trick and shifted to the eight of clubs. Esther went into deep thought. "Oh dear, if I take this club finesse I might go down at trick two, and Fred will never play with me again. I better play the ace and hope something lucky happens later. That's usually the way I play slam hands anyway."

Esther rose with the ace of clubs and led a trump to her hand. She ruffed a spade, played another trump

to her hand and ruffed her last spade high. Dummy's last trump was played back to her hand and she ran all of her trumps saying a silent prayer with every card. She came down to this position:

NORTH	EAST
♠ Void	♠ Void
♥ Void	♥ Void
♦ A 10 9	♦ Q J 3
♣ Void	♣ K
SOUTH	
♠ Void	
♥ Void	
♦ K 2	
♣ Q	

East still had to make a discard. In desperation, he pitched the king of clubs. With a squeal of birthday delight, Esther cashed the queen of clubs and claimed the last two tricks with the ace and king of diamonds. Note that it would not have helped East to discard a diamond. The slam would still have been made, perhaps without the squeal.

After the opponents left the table, Esther said to Fred: "I can't imagine why that nice man discarded his king of clubs. Do you think he knew it was my birthday?"

East was standing nearby and overheard the question. He leaned over and whispered in Esther's ear. "It's not just your birthday, Esther, Merry Christmas!"

Merry Christmas, everyone!

(tcaeditors@tribune.com.)

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HAND OF A LIFETIME

Both vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	1♠	2♥	Pass
4♥	4♣	Pass	Pass
5♥	?		

Opening lead: Ace of ♣

What was West to do? He had the hand of a lifetime and he was being abused by his opponents. West already considered himself to be the unluckiest bridge player of all time and this hand was the proof! Should he pass, double or bid five spades?

Bidding those spades for a third time didn't appeal, and neither did double on a wild hand. West meekly passed and led his top club when the next two passed as well.

South didn't catch a very good dummy, but the little that was there was golden. Three magical queens that were worth a trick each! South had no trouble scoring 11 tricks and making his contract. He just drew trumps, forced out the ace of spades and claimed. South was quick to point out that West could have done a bit better by bidding his spades once again. Five spades would have been down two, doubled, showing a small profit against the actual result.

West was disconsolate. He announced that next week, he would go bowling instead of playing bridge. The other three players at the table chuckled silently. They knew West would be back at the same table next week enjoying a game of bridge.

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POOR LEAD

Both vulnerable. North deals.

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

The bidding:

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

Opening lead: Ten of ♥

West should have led a high club to get a look at dummy, but the lure of leading his singleton heart was too much to resist. South could have made the 10 tricks he needed by bashing out the ace, king and another trump, but that would have led to defeat against most 4-2 trump splits. South was unaware of the possible heart ruff and gave himself a slight extra chance in the trump suit.

At trick two, he led a low trump toward dummy's jack. This would have gained a trick had either defender started with Q-8-x-x of trumps and the other with 10-x, but might have been fatal on this hand. East won his queen and wasn't sure how to proceed. Should declarer have the singleton heart, it would be foolish to play a heart into dummy's ace-jack. He reasoned that declarer held a high club, since partner did not lead one, so partner might well hold the ace of diamonds. East shifted to his singleton jack of diamonds.

South won the ace, drew trumps and cashed the 10 of diamonds. Next came a heart to dummy's ace and South discarded two losing clubs on dummy's king and queen of diamonds. Making five!

East said, "Partner, if you had led a high club, I would have known declarer had the ace of diamonds and then tried to give you a heart ruff as our only chance." All we heard from West was "mumble, mumble, mumble."

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GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q 1 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K Q 8 6 ♥ K 4 ♦ A K J 7 ♣ K 9 7

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	?	

What call would you make?

Q 2 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A 4 ♥ K J 10 9 8 6 4 ♦ J ♣ A Q 5

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
?			

What call would you make?

Q 3 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A 10 9 8 7 5 2 ♥ J ♦ 7 5 4 3 ♣ 7

As dealer, what call would you make?

Q 4 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A K 8 3 ♥ J 10 9 5 3 2 ♦ 8 ♣ 7 4

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
Pass	?		

What call would you make?

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

♠ Q J 8 7 ♥ A K J 9 6 4 2 ♦ A ♣ 2

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	?	

What call would you make?

Q 6 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K 9 7 ♥ K J 9 4 ♦ K J 10 8 ♣ K 7

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass
?			

What call would you make?

Look for answers on Monday.

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FEEL THE PINCH

Neither vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH

♠ 6 2
♥ K Q J 8 3
♦ 10 9 8
♣ K J 6

WEST

♠ 10 7 3
♥ 9 7 5 2
♦ Q 3
♣ 10 9 8 5

EAST

♠ A Q J 5 4
♥ A 6
♦ 7 6 5 4 2
♣ 2

SOUTH

♠ K 9 8
♥ 10 4
♦ A K J
♣ A Q 7 4 3

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
1♠	1NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening lead: Three of ♠

When you are searching for tricks, try running your long suit. You will be surprised at what can happen. This deal is from a European Mixed Teams Championship.

Although four hearts is an easier contract, most pairs reached three no trump on an auction such as the above. Even if North has the methods to show a five-card heart suit, it is likely that South will still opt for no trump as the final contract.

Declarer could see that the opening lead was the lowest outstanding card

in East's suit. West was marked with exactly three spades, hence East was known to have exactly five spades. South could count eight tricks and the simpler souls banked everything on the diamond finesse — with unhappy results.

The winning declarers decided there was no hurry to commit to the finesse. After winning the first trick with the king of spades, East making the routine play of the jack, declarer ran five rounds of clubs. On the first four, East had no problem. The defender could follow to the first round and then part with two diamonds and a heart. The fifth club ruined the East hand.

Obviously, East had to hold onto the ace of hearts. If East discarded a spade, declarer could afford to force out the ace of hearts and the defenders would only be able to take three more spade tricks. So East had to let go of a third diamond. Declarer knew East still had four spades and the ace of hearts, so he could not hold more than two diamonds. The finesse was pointless, so the ace and king were cashed, felling the queen and the jack became the fulfilling trick.

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

Q 1 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

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

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	?	?

What call would you make?

A - Bid six no trump. You would rather have the lead come up to your hand in all three side suits. Also, there are some hands partner might have, with weak hearts, that will give you good play for 12 tricks without his long hearts.

Q 2 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **A 4** ♥ **K J 10 9 8 6 4** ♦ **J** ♣ **A Q 5**

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
?	?	?	?

What call would you make?

A - Bid four hearts. This re-bid shows a hand with great playing strength rather than massive high-card points, but too good to have started with a pre-empt. Perfect!

Q 3 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **A 10 9 8 7 5 2** ♥ **J** ♦ **7 5 4 3** ♣ **7**

As dealer, what call would you make?

A - The choice is between three spades and four spades. Hands with 7-4 shape are usually opened at the four-level, but this side suit is too weak. Bid three spades.

Q 4 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **A K 8 3** ♥ **J 10 9 5 3 2** ♦ **8** ♣ **7 4**

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
Pass	?	Pass	?

What call would you make?

A - We are proponents of aggressive weak two-bids, even with length in a side major, but this hand is too extreme — poor hearts and excellent spades. Pass.

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

♠ **Q J 8 7** ♥ **A K J 9 6 4 2** ♦ **A** ♣ **2**

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	?	?

What call would you make?

A - We had high hopes when partner opened the bidding. Slam was in the air! His repeated minor-suit bids have made us lose interest. Bid four hearts.

Q 6 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **K 9 7** ♥ **K J 9 4** ♦ **K J 10 8** ♣ **K 7**

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass
?	?	?	?

What call would you make?

A - This hand re-evaluates to about 15 points. Despite holding no aces, we think the hand is worth an invitation. Bid three spades.

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