

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH TANNAH HIRSCH & BOB JONES

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WORLD-CLASS PLAY

Both vulnerable. North deals.

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

(Hands rotated.) The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
Pass	1♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	4♥	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening lead: Ten of ♠

This hand is from the World Championship Bermuda Bowl, played recently in Bali, Indonesia. South was Carlos Pellegrini of Argentina, playing against an all-star team from Poland.

South won the opening spade lead and immediately led a diamond to the ace in order to ruff a diamond in

hand. A spade ruff in dummy was next, followed by another diamond ruff in hand. When South then led another spade, West found himself in a horrible position. Should he ruff high, he would have no good return. West was out of spades and diamonds, and a lead in either clubs or trumps would be costly, so he decided to ruff low. A club discard would have led to a different ending, but the same result.

South over-ruffed in dummy and then played a trump to his ace and another trump. West could cash his three trump tricks, but then had to lead a club. Pellegrini didn't even have to guess the location of the club queen to land his doubled contract. Well played!

In the replay, North-South never got into the auction and East ended up declaring the unhappy contract of two spades. This did not fare well, but it wasn't doubled, so Pellegrini's fine play earned his team a sizeable pick-up.

(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.)

GOREN BRIDGE

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THE COUNTER

Neither vulnerable. East deals.

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

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
INT	2♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Opening lead: Six of ♦

You do not often win the contract after an opponent opens one no trump. When you do, there is a lot of information available to you that can help you in the play.

East won the opening diamond lead with the ace and returned the suit. West won the jack and continued with the king, South ruffing. Declarer led the king of spades from hand,

East winning and returning the suit. South won and drew the last trump.

South wasn't sure which defender should be played for the heart queen. East, who showed 15-17 points in the auction, was the favorite to hold that card, but it wasn't a sure thing. Declarer postponed his decision in that suit and led a club to dummy's jack. East won with the king and played another diamond, South ruffing with his last trump.

South was out of trumps, but the opponents were out of diamonds, so it was safe to play a club to the 10 in dummy. When East won the ace and returned the suit, South's count was complete. East showed up with six points in diamonds, four in spades and seven in clubs, for a total of 17. West must hold the queen of hearts! South finessed West for that card and brought home his contract. Had West won the ace of clubs, South would have played East for the heart queen, certain of success.

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Thursday, January 9, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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A GREAT VOID

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A 10 7 6 4
♥ Q J 8 6 5
♦ A 9 7
♣ Void

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

SOUTH
♠ 9
♥ A K 10 4 3
♦ K 8 2
♣ K Q 5 2

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	Pass	4♣*	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♣	Pass
7♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

*Game-forcing raise with at most one club

Opening lead: Seven of ♥

The proper response to Blackwood when holding a void has been debated for decades. When holding two or more aces, playing regular Blackwood as opposed to Key Card, an elegant solution is to lie by two aces, this forces partner to sign off at the five-level, whereupon you cuebid your void. That is exactly what North

did here, and South probably overreacted when he jumped to seven. The grand slam was not a good one, but there were chances.

Declarer won the opening lead and then cashed the ace of spades before ruffing a spade in hand. South needed an extra trick even if the spades behaved, so he led the king of clubs. East covered, dummy ruffed and he was in business!

Next came the ace of diamonds, followed by a diamond to the king. South cashed the queen of clubs, discarding the board's remaining diamond, and made the rest on a careful cross-ruff. Money in the bank! Note that had South drawn the last trump before ruffing a spade, the contract would have failed. There would not be enough trumps to ruff all the spades.

The best course of action when you respond to Blackwood with a void is usually to ignore the void. Partner has said, "Tell me how many aces you have and I can place the final contract." Tell him how many aces you have. Your void may not be useful.

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Friday, January 10, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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AN AGGRESSIVE BID IN BALI

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 9 8 7 3 2
♥ 3
♦ Q 10 8 5
♣ A 6 2

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

SOUTH
♠ Void
♥ A K Q J 10 6 4
♦ K J 6
♣ K J 3

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
2♣*	4♣	Pass	Pass
5♥	Pass	5NT**	Pass
6♥	Dbl	Pass	Pass

Pass

*Game forcing

**Pick a slam

Opening lead: Ace of ♠

This is another hand from the World Championship Bermuda Bowl, contested recently in Bali, Indonesia.

North was Gavin Wolpert, of Florida, representing the USA.

Wolpert reasoned that if partner could contract for 11 tricks, despite possibly no help from him, then the little that he did have might be enough for 12 tricks. It was possible that partner held a two-suited hand and never got a chance to name his other suit, so Wolpert bid 5NT to give him that chance. South knew where he wanted to play. Was Wolpert's bid aggressive or an overbid? Aggressive is what we call it when it works — when it doesn't work, it's an overbid.

There was nothing to the play. South ruffed the opening spade lead and drew trumps. He then knocked out the ace of diamonds and claimed the rest. West's somewhat greedy double didn't cost much.

In the replay, the auction was exactly the same up until North's key decision. The German North passed, and the slam was missed. This pass can only be faulted by the result. Wolpert's bold bid helped the USA to an important win over Germany in their qualifying match.

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Saturday, January 11, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

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

♠ K 9 5 2 ♥ A K 9 2 ♦ A 7 ♣ 10 9 3

Right-hand opponent opens one club. What call would you make?

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

♠ K J 10 9 ♥ A K Q J 9 8 ♦ Void ♣ 8 7 2

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠
?			

What call would you make?

Q 3 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A 8 6 4 2 ♥ A K Q 4 3 ♦ Void ♣ A 7 4

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
2♦	Pass	?	

Partner opens with a weak two-bid. What call would you make?

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

♠ A K 7 5 ♥ A 9 7 4 ♦ J ♣ A J 9 2

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
?			

What call would you make?

Q 5 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ J 6 4 ♥ A 8 7 ♦ 9 7 5 2 ♣ A 9 2

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♣	1♠	?	

What call would you make?

Q 6 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ Q ♥ K Q J 10 ♦ A K Q J 8 ♣ A 10 5

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♦	Dbl	Pass	2♠
?			

What call would you make?

Look for answers on Monday.

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Sunday, January 12, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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BAD LUCK OR BAD PLAY?

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
 ♠ A 9 5 3
 ♥ K J 7 5 3
 ♦ A 10 5
 ♣ 5

WEST	EAST
♠ J 7 2	♠ 10 6
♥ 9 2	♥ Q 10 8
♦ K 9 6 2	♦ Q 8 7 3
♣ Q J 10 6	♣ K 8 7 3

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

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Queen of ♣

North-South held nothing back in the auction, but excellent controls and the double fit gave the slam a chance.

South won the club lead and ruffed a club in dummy. Then came the ace and king of trumps, followed by

another club ruff. Declarer crossed back to his hand with the ace of hearts, drew the last trump with the queen and played a heart to dummy's jack. No luck. East won and cashed his club for down one.

South was unlucky to find East with both the queen of hearts and a fourth club. Study the hand for a moment and decide — was South just unlucky or did he misplay?

There were 12 tricks available on this hand provided both majors split 3-2. South probably cannot handle a 4-1 split in either major. Declarer should think positively, assume the majors are splitting 3-2, and that he has a chance. After ruffing a club at trick two, South should play a low heart from both his hand and the dummy! The defense cannot then prevent him from ruffing one more club in dummy, drawing the trumps, and running the hearts. Six trump tricks, four heart tricks and the two minor-suit aces gives him 12 in all.

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GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

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

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

Right-hand opponent opens one club. What call would you make?

A - Many experts today believe that a hand like this, with four cards in each major, full values to enter the auction, but flawed by holding only two cards in the unbid minor, is worth a take-out double. Should partner bid diamonds, pass and hope he has a lot of them. Double!

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

♠ **K J 10 9** ♥ **A K Q J 9 8** ♦ **Void** ♣ **8 7 2**

The bidding:

SOUTH 1♥ **1♠** **2♦** **2♣**
NORTH 2♥ **2♠** **?**

What call would you make?

A - Without the spade overcall on our left, we would bid four hearts and expect to have good play for it. The overcall is a red flag and we should take heed of it. Bid three hearts.

Q 3 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **A 8 6 4 2** ♥ **A K Q 4 3** ♦ **Void** ♣ **A 7 4**

The bidding:

NORTH 1♠ **EAST** 2♠ **SOUTH** 2♥ **WEST** 2♦ **Pass** **?**

Partner opens with a weak two-bid. What call would you make?

A - A void in partner's suit is a good reason to be cautious, but this hand is just too good. Should he hold three cards in either major, we should have a fair to excellent chance for 10 tricks. Bid two spades, forcing, and bid three hearts next if he doesn't raise spades.

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

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

The bidding:
SOUTH 1♣ **WEST** 1♥ **NORTH** 1♠ **EAST** Pass
1♣ **Pass** **1♥** **Pass**
?

What call would you make?

A - Should you and your partner employ splinter bids as part of your system, this hand is perfect. Bid four diamonds, showing game-forcing values and at most one diamond. Bid four hearts if that gadget is not available.

Q 5 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ **J 6 4** ♥ **A 8 7** ♦ **9 7 5 2** ♣ **A 9 2**

The bidding:

NORTH 1♠ **EAST** 1♠ **SOUTH** 2♠ **WEST** 1♠ **?**

What call would you make?

A - Negative double, one no trump and two clubs all have serious flaws. This hand is too strong to pass, so you must do something. We like the negative double as the least flawed. Should you not play negative doubles, perhaps one no trump is best.

Q 6 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

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

The bidding:

SOUTH 1♦ **WEST** 2♣ **NORTH** 2♠ **EAST** 2♣ **Pass** **2♠**
?

What call would you make?

A - The opponent's bidding is most annoying, but this hand has tremendous potential and we have to be aggressive. Bid three hearts. Double is a good second choice, but should partner hold three-card diamond support, he won't bid hearts with only four of them. Your most likely game would be missed.

(Tannah Hirsch and Bob Jones welcome readers' responses sent to tcaditors@tribune.com.)