

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH TANNAH HIRSCH & BOB JONES

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CARE AT TRICK ONE

Neither vulnerable. West deals.

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

The bidding:

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♥ | Pass | 2♥ | 3♦ |
| 3♥ | 4♦ | Pass | 5♦ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Opening lead: King of ♠

South won the opening spade lead in dummy and paused to consider his chances. The ace of hearts was almost sure to be off-side, so it seemed that his best chance was to find the opponents' clubs splitting 3-3. That would allow him to discard a heart on the long club.

Declarer drew the outstanding

trumps and played ace, king and another club. The clubs did, indeed, split 3-3, but East was able to win the third round and quickly played a heart through declarer's king to defeat the contract.

South had a good idea about the play of the hand, but the execution was poor. Had he considered his chances before winning the ace of spades at trick one, he would have had time to find the winning play — duck the opening lead! He could then discard a club on the spade ace, draw trumps, and ruff the third round of clubs. East would never gain the lead. Declarer could discard a heart on the long club and surrender just one heart to the defense to go with the first spade. Five diamonds bid and made!

Many makeable contracts fail due to hasty play at trick one. It is a good idea for declarer to pause 10 seconds or so before playing from dummy to the first trick, even when that play seems obvious. Sometimes the right play isn't so obvious.

(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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CLEVER PLAY

East-West vulnerable. North deals.

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

The bidding:

| NORTH | EAST | SOUTH | WEST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♦ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| 3♠ | Pass | 5♦ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Opening lead: Jack of ♥

North had dead minimum values, but he did an excellent job of describing his distribution. He would not have raised diamonds at his second turn if he held a four-card major, so South could read partner's exact shape. South judged that five diamonds would have better play than three no trump — not true on this hand due to the lucky lie of the

top hearts.

East won the opening heart lead and shifted to a trump, won in hand by South with the six. Counting two heart ruffs, declarer only had 10 tricks — he needed an extra trick from the club suit. He set about trying to ruff out king-third of clubs, a line that was due to succeed. West found the clever falsecard of the nine of clubs on the second round of the suit! This gave declarer the losing option of leading the club queen on the third round of the suit, pinning the now singleton jack had West started with a holding of jack-nine-two.

Declarer did try this play and thus went down in a makeable contract. Perhaps South was trying for the exotic play rather than the mundane — West might have had king-nine-two of clubs instead — but give West full credit for his imaginative falsecard. Had he followed with the club three on the second round, declarer would have had no choice but to ruff a low club on the third round and fell the king.

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Thursday, February 20, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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TIMING

Both vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | 3♣ |
| 3♠ | Pass | 6♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Opening lead: Queen of ♣

South showed substantial extras when he bid three spades, perhaps more than he had, and North was counting on those extras when he leaped to slam.

South won the opening club lead in dummy, then cashed the king of trumps before leading a trump to his ace, discovering the bad break. He finished drawing trumps, taking the marked finesse, and led a diamond. When that suit broke 4-0, declarer was out of options and the contract

drifted three off.

An opposing pre-empt should send an alarm that suits might be breaking badly and care must be taken. Catering to all bad breaks, declarer should have started trumps by cashing the ace in hand and then playing to dummy's king. When East shows out, South should switch to a diamond. Should East follow, South rises with the ace. If West also follows, South draws trumps and claims all 13 tricks. Should West ruff, South ruffs the club return, draws the remaining trump, then takes the marked diamond finesse for 12 tricks.

Should East show out on the first diamond, as here, South plays low and allows West to win the trick. West's best return is another diamond. Declarer runs the diamonds, discarding low cards from dummy. Should West ruff at any point, dummy overruffs and draws the remaining trump. South ruffs his way back to hand in order to finish the diamonds. Twelve tricks on any diamond split after the trump position is known!

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Friday, February 21, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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GOOD DECISION

Both vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♠ | 3♦ |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Opening lead: Six of ♦

The opening diamond lead went to the queen, king and ace. South led a trump to the king, East winning the ace and shifting to the queen of clubs. South took the ace and finished drawing trumps, West shedding a heart on the third round. Declarer exited with his remaining diamond

and ruffed the diamond continuation, West shedding another heart.

Declarer paused to consider his next play. East was known to have started with three spades and six diamonds. East had shifted to the queen of clubs but never played another club. South was certain that East had started with a singleton club. Was there anything he could do to salvage his contract if that were true? South found an elegant solution.

South cashed the ace of hearts, led a heart to dummy's king, and ruffed the third heart. He was gratified to see both defenders follow to all three rounds. He was out of trumps, but that was OK. He had a perfect count on the hand. His next play was to lead a low club toward dummy's eight while showing West his king-nine in the suit. West could win his 10, but then had to concede the last two tricks to declarer. Well done!

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GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

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

♠ 10 4 ♥ A J 9 8 5 2 ♦ J 8 3 ♣ A J

Three passes to you. What call would you make?

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

♠ J 10 7 4 ♥ A 10 9 ♦ 8 5 2 ♣ J 9 3

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
| 1♣ | 1♠ | Pass | 2♠ |
| 3♣ | Pass | Pass | ? |

What call would you make?

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

♠ J 10 7 ♥ K 10 6 ♦ A 5 ♣ A Q J 9 6

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

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

♠ Q 6 2 ♥ A K 7 5 ♦ A 10 8 5 3 ♣ 9

As dealer, what is your opening bid?

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

♠ K 8 ♥ 5 4 ♦ K 10 5 4 ♣ K Q 9 5 2

| | | | |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| NORTH | EAST | SOUTH | WEST |
| 1NT | Pass | ? | |

What call would you make?

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

♠ J 10 8 4 ♥ K 4 2 ♦ 9 7 ♣ A K J 10

| | | | |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 3♥* | Pass |
| ? | | | |

*Invitational

What call would you make?

Look for answers on Monday.

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A GOOD PLAN

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
| 1♥ | 2♣ | Dbl* | 3♣ |
| 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

*Negative, values with no clear bid

Opening lead: Three of ♠

North's final raise to game was very brave, but he knew his partner had extras for his free bid of three hearts. Could South make it?

South ducked the opening spade lead, losing to East's king. East returned his lowest spade, the four, as

a suit preference for clubs, the lowest ranking suit. West ruffed and duly underled his ace of clubs to get another ruff and defeat the contract.

North was the perfect gentleman. "Bad luck, partner," he said, but he couldn't contain himself when South criticized his final bid. "Partner," he said, "my double suggested spades and there is no chance that West would have led a spade from the king on this auction, especially after his suit was raised. That lead smelled just like what it was — a singleton. You should have won the ace of spades and played a trump to your ace and then another trump. West could win his king, but he would never have gotten a ruff. You could lead towards the queen of spades later for 10 tricks and the contract."

South made a silent promise to himself that he would never again criticize his partner. A good plan for all of us!

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GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

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

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

Three passes to you. What call would you make?

A - You can pass the hand out and re-deal, so it makes no sense to open unless you feel you can make a plus score. This hand has prospects. Fourth-seat pre-empt don't exist — bad hands just pass. This hand would be about minimum for a fourth-seat two-bid, but we like it. Open two hearts.

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

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

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
| 1♣ | 1♣ | Pass | 2♣ |
| 3♣ | Pass | Pass | ? |

What call would you make?

A - The popular "Law of Total Tricks" tells us that we are safe competing to the three-level if we have nine trumps between us. Bidding again on this junk will stretch that "Law" to its limits, but at least we'll have something to blame if it doesn't work. Bid three spades.

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

♠ **J 10 7** ♥ **K 10 6** ♦ **A 5** ♣ **A Q J 9 6**

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

A - It is usually right to pass when right-hand opponent bids our best suit, but this hand is an exception. A one no trump overcall shows the same strength as a one no trump opening, but it also guarantees a stopper in the opponent's bid suit. This hand qualifies. Bid one no trump.

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

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

As dealer, what is your opening bid?

A - There has been much discussion among experts as to the correct opening with four goodish hearts and five diamonds. Some always open one heart, some one diamond, and others decide based on their re-bid choices if partner responds one spade. This hand can happily raise a one spade response. Open one diamond.

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

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

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| NORTH | EAST | SOUTH | WEST |
| INT | Pass | ? | ? |

What call would you make?

A - Nine tricks is so much easier than eleven. Don't even think about a minor-suit contract. Bid three no trump.

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

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

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 3♥* | Pass |
| ? | ? | ? | ? |

*Invitational

What call would you make?

A - You couldn't be faulted much for passing. Partner's bid is only invitational and you have a minimum — but this is an excellent minimum — good trump support on the auction and a ruffing value that should be useful. Bid four hearts!

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