

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH TANNAH HIRSCH & BOB JONES

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DON'T BE LAZY

North-South vulnerable. West deals.

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

The bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
2♥	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening lead: King of ♥

Most players find defense to be the toughest part of the game. After the opening lead, you have seen more than half the high cards and good players will use what they see to make a plan for the defense. This will be a flexible plan that might change as more cards become known. Some players find this to be too much trouble. They will just make the "obvious" play and see how it all works out. This is lazy play and even good players can get lazy.

East overtook the king lead with

the ace and returned the heart jack. This was routine play by East. West, a good player, now committed a very lazy error. He overtook the heart jack and played the safe 10 of hearts, the obvious and easy play. South could now ruff this, cross to the queen of spades, cash the ace of clubs and ruff a club back to hand to play ace and king of spades. There was still a trump loser, but that was it. Plus 420!

West should have seen the need for a diamond shift from partner. This not only sets up a trick or two in his hand, it knocks out the entry to the clubs. The contract might be cold anyway if declarer's spades are solid, but it can't hurt anything and might be absolutely necessary. West knows there are no more heart tricks coming for the defense.

West should let East hold the trick with the jack of hearts and East will make the obvious shift to a diamond. An expert would take this a step further and play the 10 of hearts under the jack as a suit preference signal, asking for a shift to the higher ranking of the two remaining suits, excluding the suit being led and trumps. Declarer has no winning line after this defense.

(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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TOO TOUGH

North-South vulnerable. West deals.

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

The bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	1♠	2♥
2♠	Dbf	3♠	4♥
Dbf	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♠

The single most difficult skill in bridge is the opening lead. A player who always finds the best opening lead would be unbeatable. Sometimes, though, it is just too tough.

North's double was responsive, showing values worth competing, but

no clear bid. West led a spade and it was all over for the defense. East won and shifted to a diamond. South rose with the ace, cashed the ace and queen of clubs and next led the queen of hearts. It didn't matter whether West covered or not. Most would not cover, ensuring that they would take two trump tricks later. The queen held the trick and South continued with a trump to the ace. Now the king of clubs discards a diamond, then another club, discarding declarer's last diamond, while East ruffs with the jack of hearts. Four hearts doubled, bid and made!

Can West make a more effective lead? Yes! The incredible lead of the king of hearts beats this contract! Declarer is now denied an entry to the good clubs and will eventually lose one spade, one trump and two diamonds. Down one!

Would you find this brilliant lead? Neither would we.

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AN ELEGANT DEFENSE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♦	2♣	Dbl	Pass
2♠	3♣	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Queen of ♦

North's double was negative, showing enough values to participate in the auction, but nothing clear to bid. Four cards in the unbid major was strongly implied.

Dummy won the opening lead and ran the jack of spades trying to draw

trump. How would you continue as West after winning the queen of trump?

West produced an elegant defense. He led the club two! Declarer guessed right, of course, and won the club king in dummy. South tried a second round of trumps, losing to the ace. West now continued with the club four to partner's jack. When East recovered from his shock at winning the trick, he reasoned that partner must have had something in mind when he went to all this trouble to get him on lead. He must want a diamond ruff. The diamond ruff provided the setting trick. A beauty!

Four spades were bid and made at almost every table in a recent tournament. Most of the players missed the beauty of this great bridge hand. If not for West finding this excellent defense and reporting it, this gem of a hand would have been lost forever.

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DON'T START THE PARTY

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♣	1♦	Pass	2♣*
3♠	4♦	Pass	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
* Diamond raise with 10-plus points			

Opening lead: Ace of ♦

Overuse of the strong two-club opening is common in bridge. Many players use this bid as a way to start the party without considering the drawbacks. You start at a high level with an artificial bid. Partner usually makes an artificial response and you are often quite high before you can start describing your hand. Worst of all, you attract competition. You have announced that you have a game, so the opponents know they can withstand a penalty and will take chances in an effort to disrupt your

bidding. A two-club opening should usually be one of two hand types: 1) A very strong balanced hand, or 2) a big one-suited hand. Experts will not open two clubs with a two-suited hand unless the high-card strength is overwhelming, and will never open two clubs with a three-suited hand.

Should you open two clubs with the South hand, you will likely come to grief. Active competition from East-West will cause South to be shut out of spades completely. He will have to show his clubs first and will never get the chance to show the fifth spade.

On this hand, South opened one club and had a much easier time. East-West bid a lot, but not as aggressively as they would have over two clubs. South got to bid and re-bid spades. By the time South bid four spades, he was in a great position. If partner passed four spades he was in the top spot. If partner gave a preference back to five clubs, South could presume that partner had at most two spades and consider bidding six clubs. He owned the table!

Don't be in a rush to start the party. Two-suited hands should almost always be opened with one of a suit.

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

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

♠ J 9 3 ♥ A K Q J 4 ♦ K Q 10 2 ♣ J

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
?			

What call would you make?

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

♠ 7 3 ♥ K Q 5 3 2 ♦ A J 7 3 ♣ J 3

The bidding has proceeded:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	1NT	?

What action would you take?

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

♠ J 8 ♥ K 5 3 ♦ K Q J 7 6 ♣ J 6 2

You are the dealer. What is your call?

Q 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A K 5 3 ♥ Q J 9 8 3 2 ♦ 3 ♣ 10 5

Right-hand opponent passes. What action would you take?

Q 5 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A 6 4 ♥ 9 8 5 4 3 ♦ 9 4 ♣ 7 4 2

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♠	Dbl	?	

What call would you make?

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

♠ A K 10 5 ♥ K Q 10 3 2 ♦ K ♣ 7 4 3

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1NT	Pass	?	

How would you proceed?

Look for answers on Monday.

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FAMOUS HAND

North-South vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH

♠ A 9
♥ 8 5 4
♦ A 2
♣ A K Q J 10 3

WEST

♠ J 8 5 2
♥ A 10 9 6
♦ 9 4
♣ 9 7 2

EAST

♠ Void
♥ K Q J 7 3 2
♦ Q J 10
♣ 8 6 5 4

SOUTH

♠ K Q 10 7 6 4 3
♥ Void
♦ K 8 7 6 5 3
♣ Void

The bidding:

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
1♥	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	6♦	Pass	6♠
Pass	7♠	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Ace of ♥

This hand is from a World Championship long ago.

Some of these bids are very aggressive, but that is how bridge was played back in those days. South was Pietro Forquet of Italy, one of the greatest players of all time. He reasoned that West would not double a grand slam just because he held an ace. At this level of play, he would have great respect for his opponents. West must have a potential trump trick for his double. Forquet ruffed the opening heart lead and immediately led a trump to dummy's nine! Next he cashed the ace of

trumps and led a low diamond to his king. He drew the remaining trumps and played a diamond back to the dummy's ace. He then discarded the rest of his diamonds on dummy's clubs. Seven spades doubled bid and made!

Alas, the great play above never happened. Forquet would surely have played the hand this way, but he never had the chance. His partner panicked when seven spades was doubled and ran to seven no trump. This was also doubled and East-West took the first six heart tricks. This cost the Italian team a combined 2,870 points — one of the great disasters in World Championship history.

How did Forquet react? Legend has it that he never said a word or changed expression. He calmly began play on the next hand. North, having escaped the lash for what was surely the greatest bridge error of his life, was able to recover and went on to play excellent bridge the rest of the way. The Italians rallied to overcome this disaster and win the World Championship.

All this happened in 1957, but the lesson from this hand rings true today: The most important skill you can develop as a player is the ability to be a good partner!

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

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

♠ J 9 3 ♥ A K Q J 4 ♦ K Q 10 2 ♣ J

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♥ Pass 3NT Pass

? What call would you make?

A - Pass. You have a bit extra in both points and distribution, but not enough extra to look for slam and no room left to show your distribution.

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

♠ 7 3 ♥ K Q 5 3 2 ♦ A J 7 3 ♣ J 3

The bidding has proceeded:

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
Pass Pass INT ?

What action would you take?

A - Pass. The primary requirement for bidding over an opponent's one no trump is a good suit. This hand doesn't have one. Even if we had some gadget available that would allow us to show both of our suits at the two-level, we would still pass.

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

♠ J 8 ♥ K 5 3 ♦ K Q J 7 6 ♣ J 6 2

You are the dealer. What is your call?

A - Pass. There are some 11-point hands that are worth an opening bid. This isn't one of them. Secondary honors, queens and jacks (also 10s), are worth more when they are connected with other honors. The black jacks in this hand are isolated and may be worthless.

Q 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A K 5 3 ♥ Q J 9 8 3 2 ♦ 3 ♣ 10 5

Right-hand opponent passes. What action would you take?

A - Open one heart. Some 10-point hands are worth opening. This is one of them. Five-five and six-four distributions with the honors concentrated in the long suits should be promoted aggressively.

Q 5 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A 6 4 ♥ 9 8 5 4 3 ♦ 9 4 ♣ 7 4 2

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ Dbl ?

What call would you make?

A - Bid two spades. Many tournament players use a two-club bid over the double to show a sound raise to the two-level, leaving the simple raise to show a weakish hand like this. That's great, but we would still bid two spades even without that gadget.

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

♠ A K 10 5 ♥ K Q 10 3 2 ♦ K ♣ 7 4 3

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
INT Pass ?

How would you proceed?

A - Playing transfers over one no trump, start with two diamonds and continue with two spades over the forced two-heart response. Should this locate a fit, you can consider slam prospects. Settle for three no trump otherwise. Without transfers, start with a Stayman two clubs and continue with a jump to three hearts should partner deny a major.

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