

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH TANNAH HIRSCH & BOB JONES

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A PERFECT 10

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

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

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	5NT*	Pass
7♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

*Grand Slam Force

Opening lead: Nine of ♠

The Grand Slam Force asks partner to bid a grand slam if he holds two of the top three honors in the agreed trump suit. This can be a useful tool when you have a void and Blackwood won't help. Should no suit be explicitly agreed, as here, there must be an obvious suit. Hearts was the obvious suit on this auction. South did as he was asked and thus arrived in a shaky grand slam. Could

he make it?

South reasoned that a lead from a king against a grand slam was very unlikely, so he rose with dummy's ace at trick one to consider his next move. He could easily make his contract if the clubs split 3-3 and trumps no worse than 3-1. Should the clubs split 4-2, the percentage split, he would need trumps to be 2-2. If East were the opponent with four clubs, he would need some additional luck.

Declarer started by cashing the ace and king of clubs, discarding spades, and led a third round. East followed cleverly with the club queen, but South had seen this ploy before. He took care to ruff this trick carefully with the 10 of trumps and held his breath — one bullet dodged! All South needed now was a 2-2 trump split. He cashed the king of trumps and led a trump to the board's ace. Success! Trumps were drawn and it was now a simple matter to ruff another club, ruff a diamond back to dummy, and discard the rest of his losers on the good clubs. 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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KEEP TRYING

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

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

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	6NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Two of ♥

South needed a forcing bid at his second turn and tried two spades. North duly raised and South took what he thought was a reasonable gamble and bid the slam.

The dummy was a disappointment. There were only eight top tricks and serious help was needed. South took

the heart finesse in desperation, and success there got him up to 10 tricks. Should clubs split 3-3 with the king in the West hand, there might be two more tricks available, but that was way against the odds. So was everything else, for that matter, but South thought he had a better plan.

Declarer next cashed the ace and king of spades. Had the queen fallen, a diamond could be ducked for 12 tricks. No luck there, so South repeated the heart finesse and cashed the remaining hearts, discarding a club and a spade from hand. Three top diamonds came next, followed by a fourth round to endplay East. Declarer was quite hopeful at this point. West had shown up with five spades, four hearts and three diamonds. East was a big favorite to hold the club king, and so he did. The forced club play away from the king allowed South to win the queen of clubs in dummy. The long diamond plus the club ace got his trick total up to 12!

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ESTHER'S TRUMP SQUEEZE

North-South vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH
 ♠ K 7 4 2
 ♥ 8 3
 ♦ A 10 7 5
 ♣ A K 5

WEST
 ♠ Q J 6
 ♥ A Q J 9 6 4 2
 ♦ 9 3
 ♣ 9

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

SOUTH
 ♠ A
 ♥ 7 5
 ♦ K Q J 8 4 2
 ♣ 8 7 6 3

The bidding:

EAST	ESTHER	WEST	FRED
Pass	2♦	2♥	3♥
Dbl	3♠	4♥	5♦
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♥

Fred hadn't played bridge since Esther's birthday two months ago, but he got the urge to play and invited Esther to the local duplicate. Esther was thrilled.

She opened a weak-two bid as South and things escalated quickly. All this cue-bidding and doubling made her nervous, but she had a pretty good hand for a weak two-bid and showed that with her second bid. Fred, who knew Esther would not open two diamonds with a four-card major, put her in game and East, who had played against Esther before, doubled smugly.

The defense started with the ace

and another heart. East won and shifted to a spade, won in hand by Esther. She counted 10 tricks and saw no chance for an 11th, so she started cashing her trumps. They came to this position after five rounds:

NORTH
 ♠ K 7 4
 ♣ A K

WEST
 ♠ Q J
 ♥ Q J 9

EAST
 ♠ 10 9 8
 ♣ Q J 10

SOUTH
 ♦ 2
 ♣ 8 7 6 3

East still had to discard, but his position was hopeless. A spade would allow Esther to cross to a club, ruff a spade, then get back to the board with another club to cash the good spades. East shed a club instead. Esther had no idea about any of this, but she didn't want to cash her last trump. It was safer to keep it. She cashed the board's two high clubs and king of spades before ruffing a spade back to her hand. She showed her last card, the club eight, resigned to her fate. Lo-and-behold, it was the only club left and she scored up her contract! "Nicely played," said Fred. Esther was elated. A compliment from Fred!

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TAKE PRECAUTIONS

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
 ♠ 8 3
 ♥ 7 5 4
 ♦ A Q 10 9 3
 ♣ K Q 10

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

EAST
 ♠ J 10 9 7
 ♥ Q 9
 ♦ K 8 2
 ♣ 8 6 5 2

SOUTH
 ♠ A K 6 4 2
 ♥ K J 2
 ♦ J 6 4
 ♣ A J

The bidding:

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

Opening lead: Six of ♥

South realized that he needed tricks from the diamond suit, so he captured East's queen of hearts with the king at trick one and immediately took the diamond finesse. This lost to East's king, and the heart return quickly defeated the contract.

South was certainly unlucky. Not only was the diamond king offside, but the hearts split 5-2. Had East's second heart been the 10, the suit would have been hopelessly blocked when South withheld his jack on the

second round. The contract would have been safe had the hearts split either 4-3 or 6-1, but a safe contract doesn't require a good declarer.

South should have taken precautions against this lie of the cards. He should have made the simple but elegant play of allowing the queen of hearts to hold the first trick! This would scissor the communications between the defenders. West can establish his long hearts, but he has no entry to cash them. This play might cost declarer an extra overtrick, but 10 tricks, and the contract, would be secure.

There is a remote possibility that West has led from two low hearts and East has played the queen from ace-queen-10-x-x. Should this be the case, South must win the first heart. This defense is not only diabolical, it is so remote that it cannot be considered when planning the play. Besides, players capable of a defense like this would be off somewhere practicing for the World Championships, not tormenting you!

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Saturday, March 1, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

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

♠ K Q J 10 6 3 2 ♥ 3 ♦ A Q 6 ♣ K J

WEST **NORTH** **EAST** **SOUTH**
Pass Pass 2♥ ?
What call would you make?

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

♠ K Q 8 4 ♥ J 7 6 4 ♦ A K Q 10 ♣ 7

NORTH **EAST** **SOUTH** **WEST**
2♠* Pass ?
*Weak — six spades, 6-11 points
What call would you make?

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

♠ Q 7 5 ♥ Q 5 ♦ K Q 9 7 ♣ A Q 10 9

SOUTH **WEST** **NORTH** **EAST**
1NT Pass 2♦* Pass
?
*Transfer to hearts
What call would you make?

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

♠ K Q J 7 3 2 ♥ 10 ♦ K 6 ♣ A J 3 2

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

What call would you make?

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

♠ A ♥ A Q 7 5 4 2 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ J 9 2

As dealer, what call would you make?

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

♠ K Q J 9 ♥ K Q 4 ♦ K 10 9 5 ♣ K 2

SOUTH **WEST** **NORTH** **EAST**
1NT Pass 2♥* Pass
?

*Transfer to spades
What call would you make?

Look for answers on Monday.

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Sunday, March 2, 2014

GOREN BRIDGE

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LOVELY HAND

East-West vulnerable. West deals.

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

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

SOUTH
♠ 10 9 6 5
♥ 2
♦ K 10 9 7 5
♣ K 5 3

The bidding:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♣	Db1	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Opening lead: Three of ♠

North's sequence — double followed by a free bid — shows a bit more than he held. South, expecting a better hand from North, was well within himself when he looked for game by bidding his other suit. North, who already owed the bank for his earlier bidding, leaped to

game! South might have carried on anyway. Could South find a way to make it?

Declarer couldn't allow East to gain the lead, so he played dummy's queen of trumps at trick one. Good start! Next came the ace of hearts and a heart ruff, followed by a low club toward the queen. West had to duck, so the queen won and another heart was ruffed.

South was now in firm control. He led a trump to dummy's ace and cashed the board's two good hearts. West discarded on the last heart rather than ruff, but he was just postponing the inevitable. Declarer put West on play by exiting with a trump. West could cash his two minor suit aces, but he had to surrender a trick to one of South's kings. Beautifully played!

Running the opening lead around to his 10 would be declarer's percentage play on another day. Today, it would have led to defeat after a diamond shift from East.

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GOREN BRIDGE

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

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

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

WEST **NORTH** **EAST** **SOUTH**
 Pass Pass 2♥ ?
 What call would you make?

A - Simple rule: When their jump is weak, your jump is strong. If their jump is strong, your jump is weak. A three spade bid would show this hand with a six-card spade suit. The seventh spade makes this hand better than that. Bid four spades.

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

♠ **K Q 8 4** ♥ **J 7 6 4** ♦ **A K Q 10** ♣ **7**

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

*Weak — six spades, 6-11 points
 What call would you make?

A - You certainly want to be in game, and slam is possible. Two no trump asks partner if he has a minimum or maximum. He re-bids his suit with a minimum and anything else with a max. Bid two no trump. You will settle for game if he shows a minimum. Maybe party time if he shows a max.

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

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

SOUTH **WEST** **NORTH** **EAST**
 INT Pass 2♦* Pass
 ?

*Transfer to hearts

What call would you make?

A - When partner makes a transfer bid, don't even think of not accepting it. The worse your hand is for partner's suit, the more important it is to accept it. Bid two hearts!

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

♠ **K Q J 7 3 2** ♥ **10** ♦ **K 6** ♣ **A J 3 2**

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

What call would you make?

A - Slam was in the air when partner opened the bidding, but nothing good has happened since. Give him one more chance to support spades. Bid three clubs.

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

♠ **A** ♥ **A Q 7 5 4 2** ♦ **9 6 3** ♣ **J 9 2**

As dealer, what call would you make?

A - This hand is a sound one heart opening bid in any position. Bid one heart.

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

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

SOUTH **WEST** **NORTH** **EAST**
 INT Pass 2♥* Pass
 ?

*Transfer to spades

What call would you make?

A - When partner transfers, any call you make besides a simple acceptance shows a hand that loves his suit. Bid three spades. That shows a hand with four-card support that revalues to perhaps more than promised by the one no trump opening.

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