

## Daily Bridge Club

# Simple Saturday

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“Simple Saturday” columns focus on basic technique and logical thinking.

“Bad spellers of the world, untie!” — graffiti.

There may be enough ardent finessers around to form a union, but finesses are fickle. Try to avoid them.

In today’s deal, South won the first spade with the ace, capturing East’s king. He led a diamond to dummy and returned a heart, finessing with his ten. West took the queen and exited with a diamond, and South won in dummy and let the jack of hearts ride. West won again and got out with his last heart.

### 13TH HEART

South took his ace, led a club to dummy’s ace and returned a club to his queen. West won and led another club, and East took the ten and jack and then the 13th heart. Down two.

South over-relied on finesses. After he wins the first spade, he can cash three diamonds, then let the jack of hearts ride. When West wins, any return — a spade to South’s Q-10, a heart to South’s A-10 or a club away from West’s king — gives South a ninth trick.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ J 9 6 2 ♥ K Q 4  
♦ 8 4 3 ♣ K 6 3. Your partner opens

one club, you respond one spade and he next bids two hearts. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Partner has “reversed” the usual order of showing two long suits — higher-ranking first — and so promises substantial extra strength. In some styles, his sequence is forcing to game. Bid three clubs. Partner won’t pass. If he has A K, A J 6 2, 2, A Q 9 7 5 2, you may reach a club slam.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 7 4 3  
♥ J 9 6  
♦ K Q 7 5  
♣ A 8 4

#### WEST

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

#### EAST

♠ K 8 5  
♥ 7 5 3 2  
♦ 10 6  
♣ J 10 9 7

#### SOUTH

♠ A Q 10  
♥ A 10 8  
♦ A J 9 2  
♣ Q 5 2

South  
1 NT

West  
Pass

North  
3 NT

East  
All Pass

Opening lead — ♠ 2

## Daily Bridge Club

# Magical powers

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Average players tend to credit experts with mystical powers, like computer technicians and auto mechanics. (When I take my computer to a shop, I half-expect to find the repairman wearing one of those pointy magician's hats with stars and moons and such.) In fact, most of the extraordinary plays an expert declarer makes are based on simple logic.

Today's North-South got to four spades after South opened one spade in fourth seat. West led the king, ace and a third heart, and South ruffed East's nine and cashed the A-K of trumps.

When East discarded, South took the K-A of clubs, ruffed a club in dummy and ruffed the last heart. West overruffed with his queen and led the queen of clubs. Declarer ruffed in dummy but couldn't avoid a diamond loser. Down one.

South slightly mistimed. He can cash only the ace of trumps, then take the top clubs and ruff a club. He comes to his hand with the king of trumps and ruffs his last club in dummy. South then ruffs dummy's last heart. If West refuses to overruff, South throws him in with the queen of trumps at Trick 11.

West must then lead a diamond, all he has left, and South must guess: Should he play the queen from dummy or play low?

A declarer who has operated to

best advantage so far will guess right, based on the bidding. West, who passed as dealer, has shown the queen of spades, A-K of hearts and queen of clubs. He can't have the king of diamonds, so South should play low from dummy.

Many "expert" plays are within the reach of any player.

West dealer

N-S vulnerable

### NORTH

♠ 10 9 5 4

♥ 10 8 4 3

♦ Q 7 5

♣ K 6

### WEST

♠ Q 7 3

♥ A K 5

♦ J 6 4

♣ Q 10 5 4

### EAST

♠ 8

♥ Q 9 7 2

♦ K 9 8 3 2

♣ 8 7 2

### SOUTH

♠ A K J 6 2

♥ J 6

♦ A 10

♣ A J 9 3

West

Pass

Pass

All Pass

North

Pass

2 ♠

East

Pass

Pass

South

1 ♠

4 ♠

Opening lead — ♥ K

## Daily Bridge Club

# When to draw trumps

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

"I used to be addicted to soap, but I'm clean now." — graffiti.

Many newer players have a problem (I won't call it an addiction) with drawing trumps: They hasten to draw them and worry about it later.

In today's deal, North's raise to four spades was not a weakish "shutout" bid; North showed about 20 points and four good spades. When West led a low heart, dummy played low, and East won with the jack and switched to the queen of diamonds.

### RE-ENTRY

South won and ... drew trumps. He next led a club. West rose with his ace and led the queen of hearts and another heart. South ruffed and took the queen of clubs but had no re-entry to the J-10 in his hand. He lost two diamonds to East: down two.

South drew trumps too soon: He can lead the king of clubs at Trick Three, and West wins to continue hearts. After declarer ruffs the third heart, he takes the queen of clubs and can draw trumps ending in his hand. He wins the rest with high clubs and diamonds plus dummy's last trump.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ 8 4 3 ♥ Q 10 7 4 2 ♦ 9 7 ♣ A 6 3. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one heart

and he next bids one spade. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Partner has at most 18 points and may have only 12. Game is most unlikely, and one spade might be your last makeable contract. Pass. You could try 1NT, but it's probably best not to give partner another chance to bid — and maybe get too high.

North dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ A J 7 5

♥ K 8 3

♦ A K 5 3

♣ K Q

#### WEST

♠ 8 4 3

♥ Q 10 7 4 2

♦ 9 7

♣ A 6 3

#### EAST

♠ 6 2

♥ A J 5

♦ Q J 10 8

♣ 8 7 5 2

#### SOUTH

♠ K Q 10 9

♥ 9 6

♦ 6 4 2

♣ J 10 9 4

North

1 ♦

4 ♠

East

Pass

All Pass

South

1 ♠

West

Pass

**Opening lead** — ♥ 4

## Daily Bridge Club

# Unexpected developments

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

One news item you won't see: "The Clairvoyants Club meeting has been cancelled due to unforeseen developments."

As declarer, be aware that things can go wrong. For one, trumps may break badly. A careful declarer takes what precautions he can. Against today's four spades, West led the jack of diamonds: queen, king, ace. South then took the A-K of trumps, unclairvoyantly expecting a normal 3-2 break. East showed out.

South next cashed his three high clubs to discard dummy's last diamond. He ruffed a diamond in dummy and led a heart to his king. West won and drew trumps with his Q-J, and South went down two.

### HIGH CLUBS

South played incautiously. He can cash one trump, then take the high clubs for a diamond discard and lead the king of hearts.

If West wins and leads the queen of trumps (no play is better), South wins, ruffs his last club in dummy, leads a heart to his queen, ruffs a diamond and discards his last diamond on the jack of hearts. He loses two trumps and a heart.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ 8 6 5 4 ♥ J 7 6 5 4  
♦ Q 8 ♣ K 4. Your partner opens  
one diamond, you respond one heart

and he next bids one spade. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** To pass would be reasonable. Partner has at most 18 high-card points, and your chances for game are slim. Still, many players would raise to two spades as a chance-giving action. In fact, although opener's non-jump change of suit is not forcing in theory, some pairs treat opener's one spade here as forcing.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 8 6 5 4  
♥ J 7 6 5 4  
♦ Q 8  
♣ K 4

#### WEST

♠ Q J 9 3  
♥ A 9  
♦ J 10 9  
♣ J 9 6 2

#### EAST

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

#### SOUTH

♠ A K 7 2  
♥ K Q  
♦ A 6 2  
♣ A Q 7 3

South

2 NT

3 ♠

West

Pass

Pass

North

3 ♣

4 ♠

East

Pass

All Pass

Opening lead — ♦ J

## Daily Bridge Club

# Opportunity knocks

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“I had it all figured out,” Cy the Cynic grumbled to me, “but I didn’t include the Millard factor in my calculations.”

Millard Pringle is a quiet little man who tends to get lost in the maze of defensive “rules.” In my club’s penny game, Cy was declarer at four hearts, and West led the queen of clubs.

“I played low from dummy,” Cy told me. “I planned to ruff the next club and lead a diamond. If West won and led a third club, I would ruff and take the A-K of trumps. If East-West followed low, I would run the diamonds, pitching four spades from dummy. I could ruff my queen of spades in dummy and lose only three tricks.”

### SOUND APPROACH

“Seems like a sound approach,” I nodded.

“Millard was East,” the Cynic said, “and he was as confused as ever. He played the ace on the first club — ‘third hand high’ — and led a spade. Dummy’s king of clubs was high for a spade discard, but I couldn’t get there. I lost a trick in each suit.”

Millard found the only play to beat the contract.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A Q ♥ A K 7 6 2  
♦ K Q J 10 9 ♣ 5. You open one heart, and your partner raises to two

hearts. South in today’s deal bid four hearts with this hand. Do you agree with that call?

**ANSWER:** South’s call looks hasty and ill-judged to me. North might easily have held 7 6 5, 10 8 5 3, A 6 5, A 9 4, and then South could make seven hearts if the missing trumps broke 2-2. South could have jumped to four diamonds, suggesting a big two-suited hand with slam interest.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ J 10 9 6 3

♥ J 5 4

♦ 6

♣ K 7 4 3

#### WEST

♠ K 7 4

♥ Q 10 9

♦ A 7 3

♣ Q J 10 8

#### EAST

♠ 8 5 2

♥ 8 3

♦ 8 5 4 2

♣ A 9 6 2

#### SOUTH

♠ A Q

♥ A K 7 6 2

♦ K Q J 10 9

♣ 5

South

1 ♥

4 ♥

West

Pass

All Pass

North

2 ♥

East

Pass

Opening lead — ♣ Q

## Daily Bridge Club

# Childhood games

By **FRANK STEWART**

*Tribune Content Agency*

Children can learn bridge (though it requires patience, a late-developing trait); I remember playing a sort of three-handed bridge with my parents. I also recall a children's game called "Duck, Duck, Goose." What all that has to do with today's deal will be seen.

Against 3NT, West led a high heart, and South won and led a club: seven, king, ace. He won East's heart return, led a second club to dummy's queen and conceded a club to East's jack. The defense took the A-K of spades, holding South to his contract.

Question: Were there any geese in the game? Could there have been ducks?

### FIRST CLUB

South and East were geese. East prevails by ducking the first club. Then South lacks the dummy entries to set up and cash the long clubs and wins only seven tricks.

South must duck the first club (playing low from dummy), forcing East to win. South can win the heart return, lead a second club to the king and ace, win the third heart, and go to the ace of diamonds to run the clubs.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ Q 9 7 6 3 ♥ A K Q ♦ K Q J ♣ 8 2. Your partner opens one diamond, you bid one spade and

he rebids two diamonds. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Slam is possible; your partner might hold a suitable minimum hand such as 4, 8 7 6, A 10 7 6 4 3, A K 5. To blast into six diamonds or bid 4NT, giving the opening leader little or no help, might work. If you prefer to investigate, bid two hearts, forcing, and support the diamonds strongly at your next turn.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ J 5

♥ J 10

♦ A 10 9

♣ K Q 9 6 5 3

#### WEST

♠ K 10 4

♥ 9 8 6 4 2

♦ 8 5 3

♣ 10 7

#### EAST

♠ A 8 2

♥ 7 5 3

♦ 7 6 4 2

♣ A J 4

#### SOUTH

♠ Q 9 7 6 3

♥ A K Q

♦ K Q J

♣ 8 2

South

1 ♠

3 NT

West

Pass

All Pass

North

2 ♣

East

Pass

**Opening lead — ♥ 9**

## Daily Bridge Club

# State of denial

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“No matter what anybody says, there is no ‘i’ in ‘denial.’” — graffiti.

South’s bid of four hearts in today’s deal was clear — he needed little help in dummy to make it — but there is no denying that he went down. When West led the queen of spades (not best), South won with the king and cashed a high trump. He next took the ace of spades and ruffed a spade in dummy.

East overruffed and led a club. South won and ruffed his last spade in dummy, but East overruffed again, and the defense also got a diamond and a club. Down one.

### CLUB DISCARD

South was in denial (and that’s not a crocodile-infested river in Egypt) when he tried for spade ruffs in dummy after West had opened one spade. After South takes the king of spades, he can continue with the ace and a third spade, throwing a club from dummy.

If West shifts to the king of clubs, South takes the ace and leads his last spade, throwing dummy’s last club. He can ruff his ten of clubs in dummy, losing only three tricks in all.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ Q J 10 9 7 ♥ 8  
♦ K Q 6 ♣ K Q 8 5. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one spade and he bids four spades.

What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Partner has about 20 points, balanced. Bid 4NT, Blackwood, and try six spades unless two aces are missing. It’s possible that you will need a winning finesse in trumps if partner holds A 8 5 2, A K Q, A J 10 4, J 2. A popular variation known as “Keycard Blackwood” would locate the king of trumps.

West dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 8 5  
♥ 4 3 2  
♦ 7 5 4 3 2  
♣ 6 3 2

#### WEST

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

#### EAST

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

#### SOUTH

♠ A K 6 3  
♥ A K Q 10 6 5  
♦ 9  
♣ A 10

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Dbl
2 ♣	Pass	Pass	4 ♥
All Pass			

**Opening lead — ♠ Q**

## Daily Bridge Club

# Simple Saturday

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“Simple Saturday” columns focus on basic technique and logical thinking.

Beginning players may hear about “eight ever, nine never,” a bit of pseudo-wisdom about how declarer should attack a nine-card holding missing the queen (like the hearts in today’s deal): He should take the A-K, expecting the queen to fall, instead of finessing in one direction or the other.

In fact, to play for the drop is only slightly better; if declarer has any clue at all about where the queen lies, he should be willing to back his judgment.

### CONTROL

South plays at four hearts after West inserts a weak jump-overcall. North’s bid of three spades shows a good hand with heart support, not necessarily a “control” in spades. West leads the queen of spades. How should declarer play the trumps?

It’s right to ignore “nine never.” West probably had six spades, East two. There is more room in the East hand for hearts, so the odds in hearts have shifted. South should take the ace and let the nine ride.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ K 8 5 ♥ K J 10 6 4  
♦ 5 3 ♣ A Q 4. You open one heart,

and your partner bids one spade. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** I believe in raising a major-suit response with three-card support in a suitable hand. Bid two spades. A rebid of two hearts would suggest a longer suit, and a bid of 1NT with no diamond strength is unattractive. “When in doubt, raise,” is a sound dictum. Auctions are easier when a trump suit is suggested early.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

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

#### WEST

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

#### EAST

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

#### SOUTH

♠ K 8 5  
♥ K J 10 6 4  
♦ 5 3  
♣ A Q 4

South

1 ♥  
4 ♥

West

2 ♠  
All Pass

North

3 ♠

East

Pass

Opening lead — ♠ Q



## Daily Bridge Club

# Question of theory

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

"Let me ask you a theoretical question," Wendy, my club's resident feminist, said to me in the lounge.

"Does it concern bidding theory?" I asked.

"It concerns man-woman theory," Wendy growled. "If a man is spouting off in a remote area of a forest and no woman is around to hear him, is he still wrong?"

"So you and Cy are still at it," I sighed. Cy the Cynic, a shameless chauvinist, and Wendy are always arguing.

"We were partners in a penny game," Wendy said, showing me today's deal. "I opened one club as North and raised Cy's one-heart response to two. He jumped to 3NT, which was fine by me. West led a low spade, and the Cynic won with the queen.

"Cy next led a club to dummy," Wendy went on, "and let the nine of hearts ride. West took the queen and led the king of spades, and Cy played low and won the third spade. He had only eight tricks, and when he led another heart, West won and cashed two more spades for down one.

"That performance was bad enough, but then the Cynic insisted that the contract was unmakeable and chastised me for opening the bidding on my 12-point hand. The man is a fruitcake."

I avoid getting involved in the Cy

vs. Wendy saga, but I sympathized with Wendy here. After Cy wins the first spade, he loses nothing by cashing some club tricks. The third club fixes West. To discard the queen of hearts is clearly fatal. If West discards a spade, he can get only two spade tricks plus his A-Q of hearts. If West discards a diamond, Cy can set up a third diamond trick in dummy.

North dealer

E-W vulnerable

### NORTH

♠ 8 3  
♥ J 9 8  
♦ A K 7 5  
♣ K J 8 6

### WEST

♠ K J 6 5 2  
♥ A Q  
♦ Q 10 6 2  
♣ 7 3

### EAST

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

### SOUTH

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

North

1 ♣  
2 ♥

East

Pass  
Pass

South

1 ♥  
3 NT

West

Pass  
All Pass

Opening lead — ♠ 5

## Daily Bridge Club

# Overberried

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Today's South was Joe Overberry, who plays every contract for the maximum — and many for the minimum. Joe thinks it's nobler to go down trying for overtricks than to make his bid.

At four hearts, Joe won the first spade and took the A-K of hearts; if the queen fell, he would make two overtricks. But when instead East showed out, Joe was in trouble. He led another trump, and West won with the ten, cashed a spade and led a third spade.

Joe ruffed again and started the diamonds, but when West ruffed the third diamond and led another spade, Joe went down two. (He could have saved one trick.)

### DIFFICULT

The winning play would be difficult for anyone. Joe must make sure of running the diamonds and so must maintain trump control in case of a 4-1 break. Nor can he let East get in for a club shift. Joe should duck the first spade, win the second spade and lead the jack of trumps.

West wins and forces with a spade, and Joe then leads a low trump. He is sure of 10 tricks.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ K Q J 10 3  
♥ Q 10 8 7 ♦ 9 ♣ K J 8. The dealer, at your right, opens one diamond. You

overcall one spade, and your partner bids two hearts. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Many pairs would treat partner's bid as neither forcing nor encouraging. Still, he must have a decent heart suit, and you have excellent support. Bid four hearts. You won't make it if partner's hand is aceless, but that is unlikely.

West dealer

Neither side vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 7 6 2  
♥ 6 5 3  
♦ Q 10 7 4 2  
♣ 9 7

#### WEST

♠ K Q J 10 3  
♥ Q 10 8 7  
♦ 9  
♣ K J 8

#### EAST

♠ 9 5 4  
♥ 9  
♦ 8 6 5 3  
♣ 10 6 4 3 2

#### SOUTH

♠ A 8  
♥ A K J 4 2  
♦ A K J  
♣ A Q 5

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All Pass	

Opening lead — ♠ K

# Daily Bridge Club

## Cy's one chance

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Cy the Cynic say that if at first you don't succeed ... you and he have a lot in common. As declarer, Cy relies on the first line of play he sees. That approach, he says, saves wear and tear on his brain, but it costs him in the wallet.

Cy was today's South in a penny game. North's "advance cue bid" of four hearts showed good spade support and the ace of hearts. The Cynic tried Blackwood and bid seven spades when North had two aces.

Cy took the ace of diamonds, drew trumps, shrugged and let dummy's jack of clubs ride. Alas, West produced the queen.

### ONE CHANCE

Cy gave himself one chance that failed — costing 2310 points. My readers would do better. After declarer draws trumps, he should cash the A-K of clubs.

When East-West play low, South leads a heart to dummy's ace and returns the queen for a ruffing finesse, pitching a club if East doesn't cover. If East covers the jack next, South ruffs, leads a trump to dummy and discards his last low club on the nine of hearts.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ K J 5 2 ♥ A Q J 9  
♦ A 6 ♣ J 10 8. Your partner opens one diamond, you bid one heart and

he rebids two diamonds. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** If partner has an ideal minimum such as A Q 3, 8 3, K Q 10 8 5 3 2, 7, you can make six diamonds. Still, you must focus on reaching the best game. Bid two spades. If he next bids 2NT, raise to 3NT. If he rebids three diamonds, bid four diamonds (forcing). If he bids three hearts, try four hearts.

North dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ K J 5 2

♥ A Q J 9

♦ A 6

♣ J 10 8

#### WEST

♠ 7 6

♥ 6 4 3 2

♦ 10 9 8 7

♣ Q 5 2

#### EAST

♠ 4

♥ K 8 7 5

♦ J 5 4 3 2

♣ 7 4 3

#### SOUTH

♠ A Q 10 9 8 3

♥ 10

♦ K Q

♣ A K 9 6

North

1 NT

4 ♥

5 ♥

East

Pass

Pass

Pass

South

3 ♠

4 NT

7 ♠

West

Pass

Pass

All Pass

**Opening lead — ♦ 10**

## Daily Bridge Club

# If he only had a brain

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Wendy, my club's feminist, had a job interview and entered the club wearing a dress and makeup. That got the attention of Cy the Cynic.

"I thought wearing makeup was taboo for you," Cy said.

"It can be necessary," Wendy told him icily, "since a man's eyes are usually more developed than his brain."

Cy and Wendy were East-West in a penny game, and against four hearts, Wendy led the ace and king of clubs (showing a doubleton). The Cynic signaled with the six and deuce. Wendy then pondered and led ... a diamond.

### DISCARDS

South won, drew trumps and took two more high diamonds to pitch dummy's last two clubs. He claimed 10 tricks, losing a spade to the ace.

"If you even had a brain," Wendy growled at Cy. "As usual, you won't send a woman to get the job done."

Cy must help Wendy at Trick Two. Cy can follow with the queen of clubs, a strikingly high club to show an entry in the high-ranking suit. When Wendy leads a spade, Cy takes his ace and gives her a club ruff.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ 9 ♥ A K J 9 2  
♦ A K Q 3 ♣ 10 7 5. The dealer, at

your right, opens one spade. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** This case is close. You could double for takeout, then bid hearts to suggest substantial extra strength. But the opponents may be about to bid more spades, and you might have to introduce your long suit at an uncomfortable level. Overcall two hearts. If the next player raises to two spades and two passes follow, you will double.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ K Q 7 3

♥ Q 10 7 4

♦ 8

♣ J 8 4 3

#### WEST

♠ 10 8 5 4 2

♥ 6 5

♦ J 10 7 2

♣ A K

#### EAST

♠ A J 6

♥ 8 3

♦ 9 6 5 4

♣ Q 9 6 2

#### SOUTH

♠ 9

♥ A K J 9 2

♦ A K Q 3

♣ 10 7 5

South

1 ♥  
4 ♥

West

Pass  
All Pass

North

2 ♥

East

Pass

Opening lead — ♣ A

## Daily Bridge Club

# Asset or liability?

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

In northeast Alabama where I grew up, communities have names of Native American origin such as Ballplay and Turkeystown, and the local idioms are no less distinctive. If you rid yourself of something unwanted, you are said to “git shed” of it.

Today’s West doubled South’s one spade for takeout, and when North leaped rather gaily to four spades, West doubled for penalty. He led the K-A of clubs and then the queen.

South ruffed, took the A-K of hearts, ruffed his last heart in dummy and led a trump. When West won, he was end-played: A diamond lead would give South a free finesse, a club or heart would let him ruff in dummy and discard the queen of diamonds. Making four.

### LIABILITY

The ace of trumps is often an asset to be cherished, but in this deal it was a potential liability. After West takes the king of clubs, he must git shed of his ace of trumps.

West then continues clubs. South can ruff the third club but must lose the setting trick to West’s king of diamonds.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ Q 8 6 5 3 2 ♥ K 8 5  
♦ A Q ♣ 10 5. Your partner opens one heart, you respond one spade

and he next bids two diamonds. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** You have 11 high-card points, enough to invite game. But even though you hold three “working” red-suit honors, you don’t quite have enough strength to force. Jump to three hearts, invitational. If your queen of spades were the ace, you would bid four hearts instead.

North dealer

E-W vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ K J 10 7 4

♥ A 2

♦ 8 6 4

♣ 9 8 6

#### WEST

♠ A

♥ Q 7 6 4

♦ K J 3 2

♣ A K Q 2

#### EAST

♠ 9

♥ J 10 9 3

♦ 10 9 7 5

♣ J 7 4 3

#### SOUTH

♠ Q 8 6 5 3 2

♥ K 8 5

♦ A Q

♣ 10 5

North

Pass

4 ♠

All Pass

East

Pass

Pass

South

1 ♠

Pass

West

Dbl

Dbl

Opening lead — ♣ K

## Daily Bridge Club

# Chain letter

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“My partner used to be a chain-smoker,” a reader’s letter states. “She broke that habit, but now she’s a chain-talker. She lights every sentence with a spark from the last.”

My reader writes that she was today’s West and led the king of hearts against four spades.

“My partner played the deuce, South played the six. I continued with the ace and then the jack. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps and ran the diamonds, making five.”

### OVERTRICK

“My partner had a lot to say. First she said I could have cashed my ace of clubs at the third trick to stop the overtrick. Then she proceeded to ask why I hadn’t led a low heart at Trick Two! She would win and shift to a club, and I would get the queen and ace for down one. She was still going at it during the next deal.”

When East plays the deuce on the first heart, she can’t have Q-10-2 (she would encourage with the ten) or the doubleton 10-2. She must hold the singleton deuce or Q-2, so West can’t lose by leading a low heart at Trick Two.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A Q J 8 5 2 ♥ 10 6 ♦ 10 5 ♣ K 10 6. You deal and open two spades. Your partner bids three

spades. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Partner’s raise of your weak two-bid is meant to prevent your opponents from entering the auction cheaply. Pass (without looking at your hand). If partner wanted to look for game, he might have bid 2NT (as a conventional inquiry to learn more about your hand) or bid a new suit as a forcing action.

North dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ K 10 9

♥ 8 5 3

♦ A K Q J 9

♣ J 7

#### WEST

♠ 6 3

♥ A K J 9 7 4

♦ 6 3

♣ A Q 4

#### EAST

♠ 7 4

♥ Q 2

♦ 8 7 4 2

♣ 9 8 5 3 2

#### SOUTH

♠ A Q J 8 5 2

♥ 10 6

♦ 10 5

♣ K 10 6

North

1 ♦

2 ♠

East

Pass

Pass

South

1 ♠

4 ♠

West

2 ♥

All Pass

**Opening lead — ♥ K**

## Daily Bridge Club

# Simple Saturday

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

As declarer at a notrump contract, start by counting your fast winners. If you need additional winners, decide how to develop them. Your choice must be realistic, since the defenders will be racing to establish tricks for themselves.

West leads the jack of spades, threatening to set up at least three defensive tricks in that suit. How do you proceed as declarer?

You have two spades and four hearts. You can set up the diamonds for three more tricks, but if you force out a high diamond, win the spade return and force out the other high diamond, the defense will cash spades.

### SECOND CLUB

Attacking the diamonds won't work; you must try the clubs. Lead a heart to dummy's ace at Trick Two and return a club to your jack. When it wins, go back to dummy and lead a second club. When East's ace appears, you have three club tricks and your contract.

Note the technique of leading twice toward the hand with two club honors. If you start by leading a club to dummy's queen, you fail.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ Q 8 7 4 3 ♥ 7 3 2  
♦ A 7 2 ♣ A 4. The dealer, at

your left, opens three diamonds. Your partner doubles. The next player passes. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Partner's double is for takeout, though you might rarely pass for penalty with strong diamonds. He suggests support for every unbid suit and, since he is prepared to play at the three level, a hand worth 17 points or more. Jump to four spades. To bid only three would be neglectful.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 6 2  
♥ A Q J  
♦ 10 9 8 4 3  
♣ Q 7 3

#### WEST

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

#### EAST

♠ Q 8 7 4 3  
♥ 7 3 2  
♦ A 7 2  
♣ A 4

#### SOUTH

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

South  
1 NT  
3 NT

West  
Pass  
All Pass

North  
2 NT

East  
Pass

Opening lead — ♠ J

## Daily Bridge Club

# Maintaining focus

By **FRANK STEWART**

*Tribune Content Agency*

A friend of mine told me about the time he'd had a Saturday-night date with his best girl. After a lovely evening, he drove her to her parents' home as usual, kissed her goodnight — and was perplexed when she made no move to get out of the car. Then it dawned on him: They had been married for two weeks.

That's force of habit — something potent and potentially dangerous. Too many players are in the habit of playing impulsively to the first trick. Perhaps they fear that taking a little time to plan will betray weakness or uncertainty.

In today's deal, West led the ten of hearts against 3NT, and declarer promptly played dummy's jack. When East's queen covered, South took his king; he couldn't afford to refuse the trick since a spade shift might be damaging.

South next led a diamond, and West rose with his ace to continue hearts. South took dummy's ace, cashed his diamond winners and led a club. West produced the ace and took three hearts for down one.

South lost his contract because of Trick-One impulse: He has no rush to try winning a heart trick with dummy's jack. South should play low from dummy on the first heart and take his king. He forces out the ace of diamonds next. West leads a second

heart, and then dummy plays the jack.

East wins, but he has no more hearts. (If East did have a third heart, South would still be safe; he could lose only two hearts plus the two minor-suit aces.) South can win East's spade shift and force out the ace of clubs, winning two hearts, two spades, three diamonds and two clubs.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

### NORTH

♠ 7 3

♥ A J 4

♦ K 10 6 2

♣ K 8 4 2

### WEST

♠ J 6 4

♥ 10 9 8 7 3

♦ A 5 3

♣ A 5

### EAST

♠ Q 10 8 5 2

♥ Q 6

♦ 8 4

♣ 10 7 6 3

### SOUTH

♠ A K 9

♥ K 5 2

♦ Q J 9 7

♣ Q J 9

South  
1 NT

West  
Pass

North  
3 NT

East  
All Pass

**Opening lead — ♥ 10**



## Daily Bridge Club

# Trials and errors

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“Your honor,” the district attorney stated, “we will prove that West committed a felony: He handed declarer a vulnerable game on a platter.”

“Proceed,” the judge instructed, and the court heard evidence.

“West led a low heart against 3NT,” the DA said: “four, ten, queen. South next led the ten of diamonds, winning when West played low. South then lost a club to the ace and had three clubs, two hearts, three spades and a diamond. But if West grabs his ace of diamonds and leads another heart, he sets up his suit, and South has only eight tricks.”

### FINESSE

“Rubbish,” West’s counsel roared. “My client naturally thought declarer was taking a finesse in diamonds. And even if West takes his ace, how does he know leading another heart is safe? South must have A-Q-J.”

Would you convict West?

“Guilty,” the judge ruled. “If South has 15 points for his 1NT bid, East can’t hold the queen of diamonds. West must win the first diamond and lead another heart as his only chance.”

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ J 9 8 ♥ K 9 5 3 2  
♦ A 4 ♣ A 5 3. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one heart

and he bids one spade. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Assuming your partner isn’t inclined to open trashy hands, you can commit to game. Your best spot may be 3NT, but you don’t know enough about partner’s hand to bid it, and if his club holding is Q-x, he should be declarer at notrump. Bid two clubs, a forcing “fourth-suit” call, and let your partner continue to describe his hand.

South dealer  
N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ A 6  
♥ 7 6 4  
♦ K J 7 3  
♣ K J 6 2

#### WEST

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

#### EAST

♠ 10 7 4 3  
♥ J 10 8  
♦ 9 8 6 5  
♣ 9 8

#### SOUTH

♠ K Q 5 2  
♥ A Q  
♦ Q 10 2  
♣ Q 10 7 4

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

**Opening lead — ♥ 3**

## Daily Bridge Club

# Hasty play

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

"I don't know what to say about my partner's game," a club player told me in confidence. "He has a spark of brilliance but ignition trouble. He makes good plays but also grievous errors, mostly at the first trick."

My friend's partner played at today's 3NT, and West, with no sign of an entry, tried to hit East's long suit by leading a club.

"My partner put up dummy's queen," I heard, "but East diagnosed the lead and played low. My partner led a second club to his jack and next led the A-J of diamonds. East took his king, and declarer took only eight tricks: two spades, two hearts, three clubs and a diamond."

### SAME FAILING

Many players have the same failing as South: hasty play to Trick One. South should play a low club from dummy and, no matter what East does, win with the ace.

South then leads the A-J of diamonds, overtaking with the queen. If East wins and leads a spade, South wins and leads his jack of clubs to dummy's queen. He is sure to reach dummy for the good diamonds.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ Q 10 4 ♥ K 7  
♦ K 8 7 6 ♣ K 7 4 3. Your partner opens 2NT. The next player passes.

What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Slam is possible. If partner's 2NT opening promises 21 or 22 points, raise to 4NT, inviting slam, or bid 6NT if feeling lucky. If your 2NT range is 20 or 21 points, raise to 4NT or settle for a sure game. It's possible that your best contract is six of a minor; practiced partnerships might have methods to locate a minor-suit fit.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 6 3  
♥ 10 2  
♦ Q 10 9 5 3  
♣ Q 10 5 2

#### WEST

♠ J 9 7 5  
♥ J 9 8 4 3  
♦ 4 2  
♣ 8 6

#### EAST

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

#### SOUTH

♠ A K 8 2  
♥ A Q 6 5  
♦ A J  
♣ A J 9

South

2 ♣

2 NT

West

Pass

Pass

North

2 ♦

3 NT

East

Pass

All Pass

Opening lead — ♣ 8(!)

## Daily Bridge Club

# Resisting temptation

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Another sign standing sentinel beside a church in my town:

“Flee temptation. And don’t leave a forwarding address.”

In a penny game at my club, West yielded to temptation, and the cost was 750 points. After East preempted in diamonds, South tried Blackwood, then stopped perversely at five spades when South denied an ace. Presumably, South would have bid seven spades if North had the ace of clubs, but six spades would have been fine if North held 7 5 3, 10 9 3 2, 8 4, J 10 9 8.

### SINGLETON

West led his singleton diamond, and South won with the king and cashed the A-K of trumps. When East discarded, South took the ace of hearts and led ... the ace of diamonds. West was tempted to ruff. And did.

West then led the jack of clubs, but South won, got to dummy with the seven of trumps and threw two clubs on the K-Q of hearts. He lost a club at the end, making five.

West couldn’t resist temptation. But if he discards on the second diamond instead of ruffing, South wins only 10 tricks.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ 7 5 3 ♥ K Q 10 9  
♦ 6 4 ♣ 7 6 5 2. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one heart

and he bids one spade. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Enough. Your partner has fewer than 19 points — he did not jump at his second turn — and he may have only 11 or 12. Pass. In “Standard” methods, opener’s non-jump change of suit is not forcing. You may concede a small loss at one spade, but if you bid again, you court disaster.

South dealer  
N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 7 5 3  
♥ K Q 10 9  
♦ 6 4  
♣ 7 6 5 2

#### WEST

♠ 10 9 8  
♥ J 8 7 6 4  
♦ 2  
♣ A J 10 9

#### EAST

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

#### SOUTH

♠ A K Q J 4 2  
♥ A  
♦ A K  
♣ K Q 4 3

South	West	North	East
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	4 ♦
4 NT	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
5 ♠	All Pass		

**Opening lead — ♦ 2**

## Daily Bridge Club

# Law is repealed

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Unlucky Louie was having a miserable week; he had lost every day in his penny game — and blamed it on his bad luck, as usual.

“In my case the law of averages has been repealed,” Louie grumbled to me.

Louie was declarer at today’s four hearts, and West led the queen of spades. Louie took his ace and cashed the K-A of trumps, sighing when East showed out. Louie next took the king of diamonds and led to dummy’s jack.

### DOWN ONE

East produced the queen, cashed the king of spades and shifted to the ten of clubs: three, king, ace. When Louie next led the ace of diamonds, West ruffed and led a club to East’s queen. Down one.

“You would think that even I could either pick up the trumps or win the diamond finesse,” Louie growled.

After Louie cashes the top trumps, he must take the A-K of diamonds, refusing a finesse, and lead a third diamond. East wins, cashes a spade and leads a club, but then Louie can pitch his club loser on a good diamond in dummy and make his game.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠64 ♥K83 ♦AJ532  
♣AJ6. Your partner opens one club,

you respond one diamond and he bids one heart. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** You have the values for game but need to hear more from partner. A jump to three clubs would be acceptable if forcing, but some pairs treat a jump-preference in opener’s minor as invitational. Many players would bid one spade, a “fourth-suit” call that doesn’t promise spades, only a desire to have partner act again.

North dealer

N-S vulnerable

### NORTH

♠ 6 4

♥ K 8 3

♦ A J 5 3 2

♣ A J 6

### WEST

♠ Q J 10 9 5

♥ Q J 9

♦ 9 7

♣ K 5 4

### EAST

♠ K 8 7 3

♥ 4

♦ Q 10 8

♣ Q 10 9 8 2

### SOUTH

♠ A 2

♥ A 10 7 6 5 2

♦ K 6 4

♣ 7 3

North

1 ♦

2 ♥

East

Pass

Pass

South

1 ♥

4 ♥

West

Pass

All Pass

Opening lead — ♠ Q

## Daily Bridge Club

# One day at a time

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Unlucky Louie had lost all week in his penny game.

"I try to take it one day at a time," he said glumly, "but lately several days have attacked me at once."

"The man won't come close to breaking even if he keeps playing too fast," Rose told me.

When Louie was declarer at four spades, West led three high hearts. Louie ruffed, but when he took the Q-J of trumps next, East discarded. If Louie drew all the trumps, he would have none left, and West would win the last two tricks with the ace of clubs and a heart.

### FOURTH HEART

So at the sixth trick, Louie led a club to his king. West took the ace and led a fourth heart. Louie ruffed in dummy, but when he quickly tried to get to his hand with a high diamond to draw trumps, West ruffed!

"The 5-0 diamond break was unlucky," Rose acknowledged, "but all Louie had to do was lead the queen of clubs at Trick Six. If West took the ace and led another heart, Louie could ruff in dummy and come to his king of clubs to draw trumps and claim."

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A K 8 6 5 ♥ J 4  
♦ A K 10 5 ♣ K 7. You open one spade, your partner responds two

hearts, you bid three diamonds and he rebids three hearts. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Your three diamonds was a "high reverse," promised extra strength and was forcing. Partner suggests long hearts but may (in "Standard" methods) have only 10 or so points. To bid 3NT would be acceptable. Since the club stopper isn't robust, I would raise to four hearts.

East dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

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

#### WEST

♠ 10 9 4 3  
♥ A K Q 8 7  
♦ None  
♣ A 8 4 2

#### EAST

♠ 7  
♥ 6 3 2  
♦ 9 7 6 4 2  
♣ J 10 9 5

#### SOUTH

♠ A K 8 6 5  
♥ J 4  
♦ A K 10 5  
♣ K 7

East  
Pass  
Pass

South  
1 ♠  
4 ♠

West  
2 ♥  
All Pass

North  
2 ♠

**Opening lead — ♥ K**

# Daily Bridge Club

## Simple Saturday

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“Simple Saturday” columns focus on basic technique and logical thinking.

When today’s South opened one club, North bid one diamond; many players would have preferred one heart. South’s 2NT showed 18 or 19 points, balanced, and was not forcing, but North reacted like a bull seeing a red flag; he raised to 3NT on his six points.

Many players know the benefit of “holding up” a winner to break the opponents’ communication. When West led the seven of spades and East played the king, South held up his ace. East returned a spade, and South ducked again.

### SWITCH

West took the jack and saw that to continue spades was futile. He shifted to the jack of diamonds. South took the ace and forced out the ace of clubs, but then East cashed the K-Q of diamonds. Down one.

South’s second hold-up was wrong. If spades are split 4-3, South can afford to win the second spade. If West has five spades and the ace of clubs, 3NT is doomed.

Don’t hold up if a shift poses a greater danger.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ K 6 ♥ 9 7 3 ♦ K Q 9 ♣ A 8 6 5 2. You open one club, and

your partner bids one diamond. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Your opening bid was skimpy, but you had ample defensive values. Partner’s new-suit response is forcing, so you must act again despite your minimum. A bid of 1NT, showing a balanced minimum hand, would not be a terrible mistake. I would raise to two diamonds. To raise with strong three-card support is desirable.

South dealer  
N-S vulnerable

**NORTH**  
♠ 10 9 4  
♥ Q 10 4 2  
♦ A 8 7 5  
♣ 10 4

**WEST**  
♠ Q J 8 7 5  
♥ 8 6 5  
♦ J 10 4  
♣ 7 3

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

**SOUTH**  
♠ A 3 2  
♥ A K J  
♦ 6 3 2  
♣ K Q J 9

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT(!)	All Pass

Opening lead — ♠ 7

## Daily Bridge Club

# Inquiring minds

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

A sign in blue letters adorns a wall at my club. It perches there like a scolding bluejay, admonishing players who delay the game with learned analyses.

“Members are reminded that only coroners and surgeons are entitled to hold inquests and postmortems.”

That of course is like telling some of our players not to breathe.

In a penny game, North-South displayed a contrast in bidding styles. When East opened one diamond, South tried one spade. North, looking at 16 high-card points and spade support, jammed it into four spades. (He should have gone slower by cue-bidding two diamonds; North-South might have belonged at 3NT.)

West led his ten of diamonds, and East took the K-A. West ruffed the third diamond and led a club. South took dummy's ace, drew trumps and passed the jack of hearts, but West produced the king for down one. Then the North-South colloquy was brief and to the point: North said that overcalling on the weak South hand was unthinkable; South said that anyone who passed had no idea how to play bridge.

They managed to agree that South would have made four spades if East had held the king of hearts. In fact, South could have succeeded anyway. After he takes the ace of clubs, he leads a trump to his queen and then

leads his high nine of diamonds.

If West could ruff, South would overruff in dummy and finesse in hearts. But as it happens, West has no more trumps, so dummy can discard a heart. South then takes the ace of hearts and crossruffs hearts and clubs, winning the last seven tricks and 10 in all.

East dealer

Both sides vulnerable

### NORTH

♠ A K J

♥ J 2

♦ Q J 4

♣ A 7 5 4 2

### WEST

♠ 6 3

♥ K 8 7 5 4 3

♦ 10

♣ J 10 8 3

### EAST

♠ 5 4 2

♥ 10 9

♦ A K 8 5 2

♣ K Q 6

### SOUTH

♠ Q 10 9 8 7

♥ A Q 6

♦ 9 7 6 3

♣ 9

East

1 ♦

All Pass

South

1 ♠

West

Pass

North

4 ♠

Opening lead — ♦ 10

## Daily Bridge Club

# Poor club selection?

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

If you've played golf, you've heard stories about impertinent caddies. (Golfer who has been in the woods all day: "Caddie, why do you keep looking at your watch?" Caddie: "It's not a watch, sir. It's a compass.") If bridge players had caddies, some of the colloquy might be entertaining.

At today's 3NT, South took the king of hearts and led the king of diamonds, won by East's ace. South won the heart return and cashed three diamonds and three spades, but then he could head for the 19th Hole. West won the last four tricks with the ace of clubs and good hearts.

If you were South's caddy, what would you say about his play?

### HAZARD

I would say South found a hazard. He should lead the king of clubs at Trick Two. As it happens, he gets lucky when East has the singleton queen. If West takes the ace, South wins four clubs, three spades and two hearts.

More likely, West will play low (and would also play low with A-x-x). Then South can shift to diamonds to set up nine tricks.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ J 10 9 6 3 ♥ 9 5 4 2 ♦ A 8 4 ♣ Q. The dealer, at your left, opens one diamond. Your partner

doubles, and the next player bids three diamonds. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Your opponent's jump-raise is weak and preemptive. Don't be intimidated. Since you have five spades and seven high-card points, and your ace of diamonds will be ideal opposite partner's likely singleton, bid three spades to compete. I would rather bid four than pass.

South dealer  
N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 7 4  
♥ 8 6  
♦ 6 5 3 2  
♣ J 9 8 6 2

#### WEST

♠ 8 5  
♥ Q J 10 7 3  
♦ 9 7  
♣ A 10 7 3

#### EAST

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

#### SOUTH

♠ A K Q 2  
♥ A K  
♦ K Q J 10  
♣ K 5 4

South  
2 ♣  
3 NT

West  
Pass  
All Pass

North  
2 ♦

East  
Pass

**Opening lead — ♥ Q**



## Daily Bridge Club

# Misery loves company

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Wendy, my club's feminist, believes that God created Adam and said, "I can do better than that." Cy the Cynic is a shameless chauvinist. The two are relentless adversaries.

"I can define a bachelor," Wendy told me: "a man who has missed his chance to make some woman miserable. Cy is trying to compensate by making me miserable."

Cy and Wendy were East-West in a penny game, and she led a high diamond against 3NT. South won with the ten and passed the nine of hearts. The Cynic took the queen and switched to a low club: ten, jack, king. He won the next heart and led another low club, but South won with the nine and had nine tricks.

### SPADE LEAD

"Lead a spade and we beat it," Cy told Wendy.

"We might beat it anyway if you would ever learn to send a woman when you want a job done," Wendy snarled.

When Cy takes the queen of hearts, he must lead the queen of clubs. If South wins, Cy creates an entry for Wendy's jack, letting her lead a spade and give the defense five tricks.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ K J 9 ♥ K J 10 6 5  
♦ A Q 6 ♣ K 2. You are the dealer.  
North in today's deal opened one

heart. Do you agree or would you open 1NT?

**ANSWER:** I agree, not because I am reluctant to suppress the five-card major suit (although some experts would refuse to do so) but because the hand is too strong, assuming a 1NT range of 15 to 17 points. The hand has a good five-card suit and prime values. If partner responds in a suit, jump in notrump next.

North dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ K J 9  
♥ K J 10 6 5  
♦ A Q 6  
♣ K 2

#### WEST

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

#### EAST

♠ A Q 6 4  
♥ A Q 4 2  
♦ 4  
♣ Q 6 5 3

#### SOUTH

♠ 10 8 5  
♥ 9 8 3  
♦ K J 10  
♣ A 10 9 8

North

1 ♥  
2 NT

East

Pass  
Pass

South

1 NT(!)  
3 NT

West

Pass  
All Pass

**Opening lead — ♦ 9**

# Daily Bridge Club

## Louie's 100-point loss

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Unlucky Louie, who has been beating his head against Wall Street for years, got this cheering note from his stockbroker:

"Due to current economic conditions, the light at the end of the tunnel has been extinguished."

Louie's outlook grew blacker when he held today's sterling North hand in a penny game.

"It could be worse," he whispered to me: "My five of spades could be the four."

South then bid a slam with no encouragement from Louie. He took the king of diamonds, cashed four trumps, the ace of diamonds and the A-K of clubs. East kept all his spades, and when South next tried the A-K and a third spade, he lost two spades.

### DELIGHTED

"I would have been delighted to lose only 100 points when I saw my hand," Louie shrugged.

South should lead a low spade at Trick Two. He wins East's return, takes the A-K of trumps and then the A-K of spades. As it happens, East has both the missing trump and four spades, and South can ruff his last low spade in dummy to make the slam.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ Q J 9 8 ♥ 10 8 5  
♦ Q 8 7 ♣ Q J 9. The dealer, at your left, opens one diamond. Your

partner doubles, you respond one spade and he next bids 1NT. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Partner has a strong hand, the equivalent of a 1NT overcall or maybe a bit more. You can be aggressive here because the play will be easier for partner; he will know where the missing high cards lie. Bid 3NT, especially if vulnerable.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 5 3 2  
♥ 4 3 2  
♦ 5 4 3 2  
♣ 4 3 2

#### WEST

♠ 10 7  
♥ 7 6  
♦ J 10 9 6  
♣ 10 8 7 6 5

#### EAST

♠ Q J 9 8  
♥ 10 8 5  
♦ Q 8 7  
♣ Q J 9

#### SOUTH

♠ A K 6 4  
♥ A K Q J 9  
♦ A K  
♣ A K

#### South

2 ♣  
2 ♥  
3 ♠  
6 ♥

#### West

Pass  
Pass  
Pass  
All Pass

#### North

2 ♦  
2 NT  
4 ♥

#### East

Pass  
Pass  
Pass

**Opening lead — ♦ J**

# Daily Bridge Club

## Marital issues

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Some couples let the little frustrations of their marriage surface at the bridge table. They should recall this Ogden Nash poem: "To keep your marriage brimming, with love in the loving cup, whenever you're wrong, admit it. Whenever you're right, shut up."

Today's North-South could have made 3NT but overbid instead to four hearts. West led the K-A of spades and then the eight. Dummy played the nine, and East ... ruffed with the five of trumps.

### OVERRUFFS

South overruffed with the six, led a club to dummy and returned the jack of trumps: queen, king. He drew trumps with the ace and ten, lost a diamond to the ace and claimed.

"Ruff the third spade with the nine," West growled. "Eventually, my eight will get to be high."

"You're right," East admitted.

I have more respect for East than for West. West should have saved his critical analysis for after the game. Pointing out partner's errors at the table is only likely to distract him or her — and induce further errors.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A K J 8 7 ♥ 8 3 2 ♦ A 6 2 ♣ 8 4. You open one spade, and your partner bids two hearts. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** A two-heart response to one spade suggests a five-card or longer suit (rarely, a four-card suit so strong that a raise with three-card support would be welcomed). Bid three hearts. You might rebid two spades with six good spades before supporting the hearts, but to raise directly is better here.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ Q 9 5 2

♥ J 4

♦ 9 3

♣ A K Q 7 3

#### WEST

♠ A K J 8 7

♥ 8 3 2

♦ A 6 2

♣ 8 4

#### EAST

♠ 10 4

♥ Q 9 5

♦ 8 7 4

♣ J 10 9 6 2

#### SOUTH

♠ 6 3

♥ A K 10 7 6

♦ K Q J 10 5

♣ 5

#### South

1 ♥

2 ♦

3 ♦

4 ♥(!)

#### West

1 ♠

Pass

Pass

All Pass

#### North

2 ♣

2 NT

3 ♥

#### East

Pass

Pass

Pass

Opening lead — ♠ K

# Daily Bridge Club

## Spectacular play

By **FRANK STEWART**

*Tribune Content Agency*

“One of these days,” Cy the Cynic told me, “I’ll pluck those glasses right off her nose and run them through a shredder.”

Minnie Bottoms, my club’s senior member, wears old bifocals that make her mix up kings and jacks, often to her opponents’ chagrin. Cy has been Minnie’s chief victim.

Minnie was declarer at today’s four hearts, and Cy, West, led three high diamonds. Minnie ruffed and ... led the jack of trumps!

“She thought her trumps were A-K-Q,” I laughed. “She was just drawing trumps.”

### HELPLESS

“I played low,” the Cynic said, “and Minnie next led the queen. I was helpless. If I ducked again, Minnie would see East discard, take the ace, cash her black-suit winners and lose just one trump. When instead I took the king and led another diamond, she ruffed in her hand and got to dummy to draw trumps with the 9-8.”

Minnie’s play shredded the defense. If she leads the ace and queen of trumps, Cy can play low and get two trump tricks no matter how Minnie continues.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ K J 5 ♥ 9 8 7 4  
♦ 8 7 2 ♣ A J 5. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one heart,

he bids two clubs and you return to two diamonds. Partner then bids 2NT. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Partner has tried for game despite your weak preference, and your values are maximum. But he has about 16 points, so his pattern must be unbalanced. If he has a singleton heart, the defense may lead hearts effectively against 3NT. Bid three diamonds.

South dealer  
N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

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

#### WEST

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

#### EAST

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

#### SOUTH

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

#### South

1 NT  
3 ♥

#### West

2 ♦  
Pass

#### North

3 ♦  
4 ♥

#### East

Pass  
All Pass

**Opening lead — ♦ K**

## Daily Bridge Club

# Simple Saturday

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

“Simple Saturday” columns focus on basic technique and logical thinking.

At today’s four spades, South took the ace of hearts, led a diamond to dummy and returned the ten of trumps for a winning finesse. He led a second trump, picked up the trumps and forced out the ace of clubs. The defense cashed a heart, and South claimed, pitching his low diamond on a high club in dummy.

South then went fishing.

“Don’t you think I did well to make an overtrick?” he asked his partner.

North took the bait.

### DUMMY ENTRY

“You might have gone down,” North said. “If your trump finesse loses, the defense can force out dummy’s second high diamond. Then if you draw trumps, you will have no entry to the long clubs; if you lead clubs before you draw them, the defense may get a club ruff.”

South should lead a low trump at Trick Two. He retains a high diamond as a dummy entry to the clubs and can also handle a 4-1 trump break.

Never fish for compliments; you might catch a boot.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ 10 9 7 ♥ 4 2  
♦ A K 6 ♣ Q 10 8 7 3. Your partner

opens one heart, you respond 1NT, he bids two clubs and you raise to three clubs. Partner next rebids three hearts. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Your raise to three clubs invited game, and partner has accepted by bidding again. He is still open to playing game at hearts; he should have a six-card suit since your bidding has denied as many as three hearts. Raise to four hearts or cue-bid four diamonds.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 10 9 7

♥ 4 2

♦ A K 6

♣ Q 10 8 7 3

#### WEST

♠ 5 4

♥ Q J 10 6 3

♦ 7 3 2

♣ A 9 4

#### EAST

♠ K 3 2

♥ K 9 8 7

♦ Q J 10 9

♣ 6 2

#### SOUTH

♠ A Q J 8 6

♥ A 5

♦ 8 5 4

♣ K J 5

South

1 ♠

3 ♠

West

Pass

Pass

North

2 ♠

4 ♠

East

Pass

All Pass

Opening lead — ♥ Q

## Daily Bridge Club

# A man of integrity

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

Cy the Cynic is, I must admit, a man who can demonstrate conviction.

I was kibitzing my club's penny game, and South played at today's six hearts. When West led the king of spades, South discarded a club on dummy's ace, drew trumps and led the king of diamonds. West withheld his ace, reasoning that if South held the singleton king, he would have discarded it on the ace of spades.

West won the next diamond and led the queen of spades. South ruffed but had to lose a club.

I repaired to the lounge — and there sat Cy, having lunch.

"Just saw an interesting slam," I said, writing down the North-South cards on a napkin. "How would you play six hearts?"

Cy surveyed the layout.

"I wouldn't have bid six hearts," he demurred. "It's a poor contract."

"Granted," I said, "but tell me anyway."

"I wouldn't have bid it."

"Come on," I urged, "I'll give you a quarter to give me your line of play."

"Really?" Cy said, evincing interest.

I deposited a quarter on the table.

"I wouldn't have been at six."

"Look, Cy," I said. "An infirm old lady asks you how to play six hearts. It's her dying wish. Understand?"

"Yes," said the Cynic. "It's quite touching."

"So what do you tell her?"

"I wouldn't have bid it."

South should play low from dummy on the first spade and ruff in his hand. He draws trumps and leads the king of diamonds and a second diamond. Then West must lead a spade or a club, and South is sure to reach dummy to run the diamonds for 12 tricks.

West dealer

N-S vulnerable

### NORTH

♠ A J 3 2

♥ 6 3

♦ Q J 10 9 6

♣ J 9

### WEST

♠ K Q 10 8 5 4

♥ 7 5 2

♦ A 3

♣ K 4

### EAST

♠ 9 7 6

♥ 8 4

♦ 8 5 4 2

♣ 8 6 5 3

### SOUTH

♠ None

♥ A K Q J 10 9

♦ K 7

♣ A Q 10 7 2

West

1 ♠

2 ♠

All Pass

North

Pass

3 ♦

East

Pass

Pass

South

Dbl

6 ♥(!)

Opening lead — ♠ K

## Daily Bridge Club

# Pulling an all-nighter

By FRANK STEWART

*Tribune Content Agency*

The trouble with phones: They don't sleep when you do. Mine jarred me awake at 7:45 one morning. A voice called off today's North-South cards as I groped for a bedside pen and pad.

"I'm declarer at four spades," I heard, "and West led the jack and ten of clubs. East overtook with the queen and led the ace. I ruffed high, and West threw a heart.

"I drew trumps and led a heart to my king. West took the ace and returned the deuce to my queen. Next I led a diamond to the ace and back toward my ten. Down one. How do I know to finesse in diamonds against West? It looked like a guess."

### COBWEBS

I struggled to dust away the cobwebs of sleep.

"You know West had four black cards, and it looks like he had four hearts from his return of the deuce. The odds heavily favor West to hold long diamonds — and so the queen."

Silence.

"When did this deal happen?" I asked groggily.

"Ten minutes ago."

My club's penny game had gone on all night. Some bridge players are like phones.

### DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A K Q J 6 ♥ K Q 8  
♦ K 10 5 ♣ 6 4. The dealer, at your

right, opens one club. You double, and your partner bids one heart. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Your hand is promising, but you mustn't get excited. Your partner had to respond to your double and may have nothing. To raise the hearts would be wrong. Bid one spade. When you double before bidding a suit, you show a strong hand. If partner has anything, he will act.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

#### NORTH

♠ 10 8 4 3

♥ 9 7

♦ A J 6 2

♣ K 5 2

#### WEST

♠ 9 5

♥ A 10 6 2

♦ Q 9 7 4 3

♣ J 10

#### EAST

♠ 7 2

♥ J 5 4 3

♦ 8

♣ A Q 9 8 7 3

#### SOUTH

♠ A K Q J 6

♥ K Q 8

♦ K 10 5

♣ 6 4

South

1 ♠

4 ♠

West

Pass

All Pass

North

2 ♠

East

Pass

Opening lead — ♣ J