

Daily Bridge Club

Test your defense

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This week's deals (and last week's) have focused on the defenders' play. By counting, thinking logically and applying some principles, anyone can defend well.

Cover the West and South cards; defend as East. Against four spades, your partner leads the deuce of hearts. You take the K-A, but declarer ruffs the third heart. He cashes the A-K of trumps – West follows – and next lets the nine of diamonds ride to your jack.

What do you return?

RISKY

You seem to be stuck between Scylla and Charybdis: Leading a club from your king is risky, and leading a diamond from your king into dummy's A-Q looks suicidal. (Another heart lead may concede a fatal ruff-sluff.)

Count declarer's tricks. He has five spades and one club, so even if he wins three diamond tricks, he will be a trick short. Lead a diamond. South can take three diamond tricks in dummy, pitching two clubs, but you still get your king of clubs.

This was a tough defensive problem. Did you get it right?

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ Q 10 9 5 ♥ 9 6 3
♦ A Q 10 8 ♣ A 6. Your partner opens one spade, you respond 2NT as

a conventional forcing raise, and he bids three hearts. What do you say?

ANSWER: As part of the structure after your 2NT, partner's bid of a new suit shows a singleton there. You can judge whether you have useful or "wasted" honors opposite his singleton. Since you have no waste in hearts, slam is possible. Cue-bid four clubs.

East dealer

Both sides vulnerable

NORTH

♠ Q 10 9 5
♥ 9 6 3
♦ A Q 10 8
♣ A 6

WEST

♠ 8 4
♥ J 8 2
♦ 7 5 4 2
♣ J 9 3 2

EAST

♠ 7 3
♥ A K 10 7 4
♦ K J 3
♣ K 10 4

SOUTH

♠ A K J 6 2
♥ Q 5
♦ 9 6
♣ Q 8 7 5

East	South	West	North
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Opening lead – ♥ 2