

Daily Bridge Club

If at first ...

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“If at first you don’t succeed, rummage through the wastebasket in a desperate attempt to find the instructions.” – Cy the Cynic

The problem some players have as declarer is that if at first they don’t succeed, that’s the end of it all. Against today’s 3NT, West led the queen of hearts, and South took the ace and wanted the next eight tricks. He took the A-Q of spades and led a third spade to his king. A 3-3 break would have seen him home, but West pitched a club.

DOWN ONE

Declarer next led a club to dummy’s ace and a club to his jack. Alas, West produced the queen, and the defense took four hearts and the ten of spades. Down two.

South didn’t succeed at first – or at second. He should have tried playing third. After the spades fail to break, South should take the A-K of diamonds. (He has eight diamonds and seven clubs, so the queen of diamonds is more likely to fall.)

When West’s queen appears, South makes an overtrick. If instead East-West played low, South would finesse in clubs.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A Q 4 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A 7 3 2 ♣ A 6 4 2. You open one diamond,

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

ANSWER: To bid two clubs next would be a clear error. You would suggest a two-suited hand when your actual hand is balanced, and your partner would correctly return to two diamonds with a weak responding hand and 5-4-2-2 pattern. Raise to two spades. Like some players, I would have preferred to open one club.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH

♠ A Q 4
♥ 4 2
♦ A 7 3 2
♣ A 6 4 2

WEST

♠ J 9
♥ Q J 10 6 5
♦ Q 8
♣ Q 10 8 5

EAST

♠ 10 8 5 3
♥ K 9 8 7
♦ 10 9 5
♣ 9 7

SOUTH

♠ K 7 6 2
♥ A 3
♦ K J 6 4
♣ K J 3

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead – ♥ Q