

Daily Bridge Club

Simple Saturday

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Simple Saturday columns focus on basic technique and logical thinking.

“How much does a free finesse cost?” may seem a silly question, like “Who designed the Eiffel Tower?” But the cost in today’s deal was 730 points.

North-South bid easily to 3NT, and West declined to lead from one his four-card suits; he had no entry to cash a winner even if he established it. He tried a spade, and South took the “free finesse” by playing dummy’s jack.

EIGHT WINNERS

When East’s queen covered, South played low, won the next spade and let the queen of clubs ride. East took the king and led a third spade, forcing out dummy’s ace. South had only eight winners, and when he led a heart, East won and cashed two spades. Down one.

South must play low from dummy on the first spade and win with the king, keeping the A-J. He next finesses in clubs. When East wins, he can’t effectively return a spade. If he leads a diamond, South wins and forces out the ace of hearts. He is sure of 10 tricks.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A J 2 ♥ K 6 ♦ 9 5 4
♣ A 10 9 5 3. Your partner opens one

heart, you bid two clubs and he rebids two hearts. What do you say?

ANSWER: You can commit to game with your 12 good points and five-card suit. To raise the hearts would be hasty; partner may have six or more hearts but has not promised more than five. Bid two spades. If partner next bids 2NT, raise to 3NT. If he bids three clubs, bid three hearts. If he rebids three hearts, raise to four.

South dealer

N-S vulnerable

NORTH

♠ A J 2

♥ K 6

♦ 9 5 4

♣ A 10 9 5 3

WEST

♠ 5 4 3

♥ 10 8 5 4

♦ J 8 3 2

♣ 6 2

EAST

♠ Q 10 9 8 7

♥ A 9 2

♦ Q 10 6

♣ K 7

SOUTH

♠ K 6

♥ Q J 7 3

♦ A K 7

♣ Q J 8 4

South
1 NT

West
Pass

North
3 NT

East
All Pass

Opening lead – ♠ 5