

# BRIDGE

by W.T. Watson

So, do you want to play bridge? In this column every week, you will find various hands that will help you test your understanding of the game. Bridge is a game where one will probably never stop learning the finer points of the game. You may, of course, get to an expert level but you will still be challenged by new situations.

If you have some basic skills from playing games like "whist" (bridge without bidding), "hearts" or "up and down the river" (also called "screw your neighbour"), you already have some basic bridge skills. I did not mention "euchre" or "500" because there are no left or right bowers or jokers in bridge although the games still have similarities.

Bridge uses a normal card deck with 52 cards. Four players sit at a table with each player across from their partner. Each hand of bridge consists of three parts:

1. the deal;
2. the bidding; and
3. the play of the hand.

The deal involves cutting the cards and the dealer giving everybody 13 cards. The deal rotates clockwise from the first dealer (decided by drawing for high card).

The bidding determines the trump

and the declarer who plays his and his partner's hand. His partner is called the dummy for the hand consisting of 13 tricks.

The play of the hand consists of each player following suit which means placing one card face up in the middle of the same suit as the person who played first (the leader).

In one deal or hand there will be 13 tricks and 13 leads of which the very first lead is called the opening lead made by the right hand opponent (RHO) of the declarer.

The order of cards from low to high is 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 T Jack Queen King and Ace. A trick consists of four cards, one from each player.

The highest card wins the trick and makes the lead for the next trick.

What if you do not have the suit that was led? Well you can play a trump (ruff) to win the trick or a low card you do not want (sluff) if you are already winning the trick or you do not have any trumps.

With every trick, the highest trump wins the trick. If there are no trumps (NT), then the highest card in the suit that was led wins the trick.

What is trump? There are 2 situations with trump. Either there is no trump suit or one of the four suits is trump.

For example, consider the following deal with East having the opening lead.

North  
 ♠ 8  
 ♥ T 9 6 4  
 ♦ T 9 5 3  
 ♣ A T 7 4

West  
 ♠ Q 9 5  
 ♥ K J 3  
 ♦ K Q 8  
 ♣ J 8 5 2

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

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

With hearts as trump, how many tricks will East/West win?  
 The answer will be given next week.



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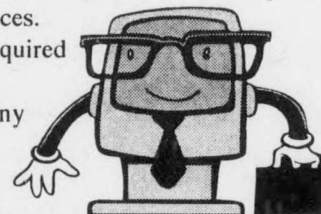
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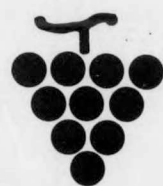
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