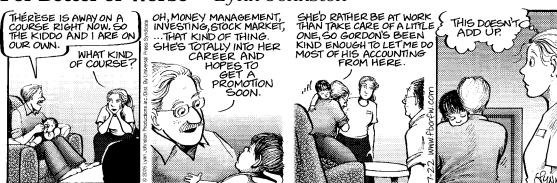
For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



Garfield • Jim Davis



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Crossword

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Bridge — **Bidding Quiz**

You are the dealer, neither side vulnerable. What would you bid with each of the following five hands?

1. S AQ7 H KJ965 D K9 C K63	
2. S KQ4 H K92 D AQ83 C AJ5	
3. S J743 H Q985 D A2 C AK6	
4. S A10876 H A7 D 4 C KQ652	
5. S KQJ9763 H 6 D 8 C KQJ4	

1. One notrump. This hand meets all the requirements for an opening one-notrump bid: 16 to 18 high-card points, balanced distribution (4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2 or 5-3-3-2) and stoppers in at least three suits.

It is far better to open with one notrump than one heart. Perhaps the most important reason is that the bid immediately pinpoints the type of hand held. As opposed to this, an opening heart bid could be based on many different distributions and a wide range of high-card points.

In addition, a one-heart opening would present a difficult rebid problem if partner responded with one spade, which would make a satisfactory rebid impossible. The way to avoid this problem is to open with the highly descriptive bid of one notrump and let partner do the rest.

2. One diamond. Balanced hands containing 19 points do not fall into the category of a one- or twonotrump opening bid. Such hands are opened with one of a suit followed by a jump in notrump at the next opportunity.

3. One club. Here you have no legitimate suit with which to open the bidding, since your spades and hearts are not long enough or strong enough to mention, and you have only three clubs. But since any 14-point hand qualifies as an opening bid, something must be done. One club is easily the best choice, since it keeps the bidding low and allows for the discovery of a major-suit fit if there is one.

4. One club. Here also, the best initial bid is one club. This permits you to bid spades at your next turn if partner responds with a diamond or a heart, and also serves to keep the bidding low. You plan to bid your spades again at your third turn, if necessary, to identify your 5-5 distribution. An opening spade bid would create an impossible rebid problem if partner responded with two of either red suit.

5. Four spades. This bid serves a dual purpose. It is an offensive effort that might easily succeed if partner has as little as an ace.

But even more important in the long run is the defensive value of the bid. If partner has a poor hand, it is odds-on that the opponents can make a game. However, because of the high level at which they must begin their search to find the game (or even a slam), there is a good chance they will miss their best contract.

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Performing an Impossible Task

When you're playing a seemingly hopeless contract, you can sometimes accomplish your mission by enlisting the aid of the enemy. For example, take

Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard





Cryptoquip

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Family Circus • Bill Keane



"I didn't bat in any runs, but I errored one in for the other team." this deal where South bid and made six spades.

This overly ambitious undertaking was entirely South's fault. His jump-shift to two spades on only 13 points in high cards, while marginally acceptable, suggested a possible slam.

But having already stretched his initial response by a couple of points, South should not have gone to six unilaterally, which is essentially what he did later. He could have bid four spades over three to indicate minimum values for the jump-shift, or four diamonds over three spades to learn whether North was interested in going beyond game.

West led a diamond, and declarer saw he had two apparently inescapable heart losers. But he also saw he might make the slam if he got phenomenally lucky. Accordingly, after winning the diamond in dummy and drawing two rounds of trumps, South cashed the club ace and three more diamonds, discarding the jack of clubs from dummy. Then he led the five of hearts.

West went up with the queen, and it was all over but the shouting. East had to win with the king and return a diamond or a club, either of which allowed South to discard his remaining heart as he ruffed in dummy.

West should have realized that declarer could not have the K-x of hearts and play the hand the way he did. Had South held the K-x, he surely would have led a heart from dummy toward his hand at some point. West should therefore have played the ace of hearts rather than the queen on the assumption that East had the singleton king.

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"How good for me?"