

ALEX'S BRIDGE TIP

Partner opens 1C and you have this hand:

S AQ753
H J1076
D 5432
C ---

You respond 1S. Partner now bids 1NT. What do you bid next?

- a. Pass
- b. 2H
- c. 2S

The correct answer is that you now bid 2H, even though you only have 6-9 points. This is the exception to the rule that a new suit by Responder is forcing. We are trying to find a safe spot in which to play even though partner has shown only 12-14 HCP and you have only 7 HCP. Your hand is further flawed because you have a void in partner's suit.

This bid is NOT forcing. You are saying: "I have a weak hand and five Spades and at least four Hearts and only 6-9 points."

This was partner's hand: She will now pass.

S 104
H KQ8
D AQ
C J86543

HOW TO BREAK UP WITH YOUR BRIDGE PARTNER

by Pieter VanBennekom



The last BBO monthly newsletter featured a lead article written by a psychologist on several ways to break up with a long-time bridge partner, which, as many of us have experienced first-hand, can be almost as traumatic as breaking up with a romantic partner.

Perhaps we didn't need a psychologist to tell us that, but having a very public spat with the partner – "You idiot; that's the dumbest lead I've ever seen – I'll never play with you again!" – is one method many of us may have used, but it is perhaps not the best way of doing it. Those public scenes are often triggered by a spectacularly bad result, of course.

The article didn't really break any new ground; it hardly told us anything we don't already know. You can gradually try to ease out of a long-standing partnership agreement, pleading you're busy the next three Thursdays, etc., hoping that the about-to-be-jilted partner will get the not-so-subtle message.

In the end, says the psychologist, the best way to break up is to sit down and have an adult conversation with the partner, be upfront about what you want to do and be as honest as you can be about the reasons without unnecessarily hurting feelings, as hard as that may be.

Note from Barbara: Over the years, I have found that many find this break-up so painful that they choose to give up the game. Don't you dare! Have that adult conversation: "It doesn't seem to be working out just now. How about we take some time off and maybe resume in a few weeks?"

TAKE ALL YOUR CHANCES by EDDIE KANTAR

North

S. K842
H. K75
D. AQJ102
C. A

South

S. 3
H. AQJ109643
D. 98
C. 104

After you (South) open 4H, partner makes sure you have an ace and gently sets you down in 6H. Opening lead: Club King. Plan the play.

You have two possible losers, a spade and a diamond and you have two chances to get rid of one or them.

You can take the diamond finesse. If it wins, you make an overtrick, if it loses you are down one as the SA is the setting trick. Alternatively, you can lead up to the SK first. If West has the Ace, you don't need the diamond finesse as a diamond goes off on the SK if West goes up with the ace. If East has the SA, you still have the diamond finesse.

When two lines of play are available, take the one that gives you a chance (you are still alive) to use the other if the first fails.

The West hand: S.A965 H. 2 D.7643 C.KQJ9

The East hand: S. QJ107 H. 8 D. K5 C. 876532