

THINKING BRIDGE

By Eddie Kantar

(From - NABC - SUMMER 2014 - LAS VAGAS (5) - -)

Dir: North Vul: Both	NORTH ♠ J3 ♥ KQ10 ♦ AQJ104 ♣ 632		West	North	East	South
			--	1 Diamond	Pass	1 Heart
			Pass	2 Heart	Pass	4 Heart
			All Pass			
WEST ♠ 954 ♥ 765 ♦ 732 ♣ AKJ9		EAST ♠ AQ876 ♥ 43 ♦ 965 ♣ 1084	Opening Lead = ♠A (ace from A-K at trick one versus suit contracts)			
	SOUTH ♠ K103 ♥ AJ982 ♦ K8 ♣ Q72					

Bidding commentary: Looks reasonable. Those who refuse to raise with three-card major support on the get go would rebid 2♠, probably resulting in a 3NT contract.

Defensive commentary: East will expect you, West, to have the A-K from the lead. Note: Those who lead the queen from the A-K-Q (moi, among others) deny the queen when the ace is led. This allows third hand to know that declarer has the queen and signal accordingly. Further defensive commentary: As East, deny the queen or a doubleton by playing the ♣4, standard carding.

Play commentary: As South, play the ♣7, concealing the 2, a card lower than third hand has played. This makes it harder for West to know whether East is signaling encouragement with the Q-4-2 or the 4-2 doubleton. You hope West, not knowing, will plunk down the king, ending the defense.

Further defensive commentary: As West, if you have decided that South is falsecarding and actually has the queen, you will try to get partner in to lead a club through declarer's hand.

It may be tempting to lead a diamond, hoping partner has the king, and get the club lead you want so badly.

That, however, is faulty reasoning. If partner has the ♦K, he is going to get in early anyway (declarer usually attacks strong suits early) and lead a club. Instead, you should assume declarer has the king and lead a high spade, showing weakness. You are hoping partner has the ♠A (he does - Am I good to you, or what?). Now the club lead through gives you the first four tricks. A diamond shift lets declarer make an overtrick!

P.S. The same defense defeats 3NT.

As a defender, stay away from dummy's long, strong suit(s). Far away! As declarer, try to withhold lower cards than the one played to your right or the one that has been led. If the opponents are playing standard carding, it can screw them up no end!