

THINKING BRIDGE - - By Eddie Kantar

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Take all your chances

♠K864

♥ K32

♦ 98

♣ K1032

♠AQ10932

♥ 632

♦ K

♣ AQ7

After you open 1♠, a simple limit-raise sequence lands you in 4♣. West leads the ♦Q. East wins the ace and returns the suit. Plan the play.

Solution

After ruffing the diamond return and drawing trumps, you have a 100% play. Did you spot it? It illustrates a theme entitled the safety-play finesse.

Cash the ♣A and ♣Q and lead a low club towards dummy's K-10. If West shows out, rise with the king and play the ♣10, giving up the lead to East as you discard a heart. What can East do? If East leads a heart, the most you can lose is one heart trick (one of your hearts goes on the ♣K). If East leads a diamond, giving you a ruff and discard, you know what to do. Discard a heart from your hand, the shorter heart hand, and ruff in dummy. With one heart remaining in your hand the most you can lose is one heart trick. You wind up losing a club, a diamond and a heart.

If West follows to the third club, stick in the 10. If it wins, discard a heart on the ♣K and lead up to the ♥K for an overtrick. If the finesse loses to the jack with East, East is faced with a choice of evils: leading a heart up to dummy's king or giving you a trick-costing ruff and discard. You can't lose this contract regardless of who has the ♣J as long as you take a safety-play finesse. The full deal:

Dir: Vul:	NORTH		West	North	East	South
	♠ K864					
	♥ K87					
	♦ 98					
	K1032♣					
WEST		EAST	Opening Lead =			
♠ 5		♠ J7				
♥ Q1095		♥ AJ4				
♦ QJ104		♦ A76532				
♣ J964		♣ 95				
	SOUTH					
	♠ LQ10932					
	♥ 632					
	♦ K					
	♣ AQ7					

If you don't play the ♣10 on the third round of the suit, you will go down on this layout. You will have to lead up to the ♥K, losing three tricks in the suit.