

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar

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Weak twos and percentages.

Dir: East Vul: Both	NORTH ♠ A J 10 ♥ 10 3 ♦ K 7 4 2 ♣ 10 8 7 6		West	North	East	South
				--	Pass	1 Club
			Pass	1 Diamond	1 Heart	3 Club
			3 Heart	4 Club	Pass	5 Club
			All Pass			
WEST ♠ Q 8 7 4 ♥ K J 6 5 ♦ Q 10 9 5 ♣ 9		EAST ♠ K 7 5 3 ♥ A Q 8 7 4 2 ♦ J 3 ♣ 7	Opening Lead = ♥5.			
	SOUTH ♠ 9 2 ♥ 9 ♦ A 8 6 ♣ A K Q J 5 3 2					

Bidding commentary: As East, you have an awkward hand. It is usually not a good idea to open a weak two-bid with a side four-card major, and the hand isn't strong enough to open 1♥. After North's 1♦ response to the 1♣ opener, you might try bidding 2♥ then! Why then? If you think about it, the delayed 2♥ jump overcall, should show six hearts and four spades, the reason for not opening 2♥ in the first place.

Defensive commentary: East does best to win the ♥A and continue the suit.

Play commentary: As South, you have two lines of play available. You can play three rounds of diamonds and hope they break 3-3 (about 36%). If they do, dummy's long diamond provides a resting place for your losing spade.

Alternatively, you can take two spade finesses. If East has one or both of the spade honors (75%), you can set up a spade trick for a diamond discard. The double spade finesse is more than twice as likely to produce the extra trick you need, so that is the better line of play.

It is nice to know a little bit about suit distributions. If you have seven cards in a suit between your hand and dummy, you can expect a 3-3 break about 33% of the time, a 4-2 break close to 50% of the time. If you need one of two finesses to work, you can expect one of them will work about 75% of the time. Of course, the bidding and previous plays must be considered, but those percentages are important to know.