

THINKING BRIDGE - - By **Eddie Kantar**
 (From - NABC -SPRING - 2013 ST.LOUIS - 5)

Responding to 1NT with 4-3-3-3, deception, placing the cards

Dir:South Vul: None	NORTH ♠ K J 8 5 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ 9 3 2 ♣ A K 5		West	North	East	South
			--	--	--	1 NT
			Pass	3 NT	All Pass	
WEST ♠ 4 3 ♥ J 9 8 7 6 ♦ K J 5 ♣ 10 8 7		EAST ♠ Q 7 2 ♥ A 10 ♦ Q 10 6 4 ♣ 9 6 4 2	Opening Lead = ♥7			
	SOUTH ♠ A 10 9 6 ♥ K Q 5 ♦ A 8 7 ♣ Q J 3					

Bidding commentary: As North, it is generally not a good idea to use Stayman with a flat hand. In this case, even though you have missed a 4-4 spade fit, 3NT is a better contract because your hand and partner's have the same distribution.

Defensive commentary: A normal fourth-highest lead. East wins the ♥A and returns the ♥10. As West, you can follow with the ♥6 to show a five-card suit or you can make an even stronger play, the ♥J. This play informs partner that the jack is your highest remaining equal informing partner that declarer has the ♥Q.

Play commentary: As South, win the ♥K at trick two, higher equal for deceptive purposes. As it happens, you can even misguess the ♠Q and take nine tricks, but if you were in 4♠, you would have to find the ♠Q to make your contract. Also, if you are playing in a tournament where overtricks are the heart and soul of the game, finding the ♠Q will give you a good score, perhaps a near top. There is a clue. West appears to have started with five hearts and eight "other" cards. East has two hearts and 11 other cards. Play the defender who has more "other" cards (East) for the missing queen.

Play commentary #2: As South, if you want to further confirm your "other-card," count, it can't hurt to cash three rounds of clubs. As it appens, both follow to three rounds of clubs, so you don't get any more information. Stick with plan A and play East for the ♠Q.