

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar

(From - NABC -SPRING 2013 - ST.LOUIS (9))

Responding to an opening bid. Dummy recognition

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

Bidding commentary: As North, you have a maximum raise to 2♥. It is not a good idea to start with 1♠ when holding three hearts and fewer than 10 HCP. If you do, and partner bids 2♣ or 2♦, you are not well placed. You aren't strong enough to jump to 3♥ (11-12 support points) and if you return to 2♥, you show a doubleton heart! As East, a non-passed hand, you are not strong enough to make a takeout double of 2♥. If you were a passed hand, you might chance it, but the double would be flawed lacking four spades.

Defensive commentary: As East, ask yourself, "How can declarer use this dummy profitably?" There are three possibilities: (1) long-suit establishment, (2) ruffing losers and (3) neither. Dummy is balanced. On this deal, long-suit establishment can be eliminated. You have the clubs covered and partner appears to have the spades. However, there is a possibility that declarer can ruff a diamond or two in dummy. Your counter move is to shift to a low heart at trick two. As West, if partner switches to a low heart and declarer ducks, win the king and follow partner's defense by continuing with a heart. When later on lead in diamonds, play a third heart, killing any possible diamond ruff in dummy.

Play commentary: As South, if the defense plays a heart and a heart at tricks two and three, give up on trying to ruff a diamond. Try to set up clubs instead. Lead a club to the queen and later play the ♠A and a club, hoping for a 3-3 break.

Sorry. Not this time. You gave it your best shot, but you are slated to lose two clubs, two diamonds and a trick in each major for one in the ash can.