

THINKING BRIDGE

By Eddie Kantar

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

Bidding commentary: North's double is negative. It shows four or more hearts. With exactly four hearts, the double is unlimited showing a minimum of 7 or 8 high-card points because it forces partner to bid at the two level. If the doubler has five or more hearts, the double is limited to 10 HCP. With 11 or more HCP, responder bids a direct 2♥.

Play commentary: A one-level overcall is assumed to be a five-card suit, minimum. With a six-card suit and 6-9 HCP, a weak jump overcall is often the choice. With a six-card suit and opening bid values, the suit is overcalled at the one level and repeated at the two level, if possible. As West did not rebid spades at the two level, it is likely that he has only five spades. As South, you can use this inference in the play.

Duck the first spade and win the second. After you draw trumps and take the losing heart finesse, East has no spade to return, so you can discard your losing spade on a good heart. Had you won the first spade, East would have a spade to return upon winning the ♥K and down you go. Winning the second round of a suit holding A-x-x facing x-x-x often cuts the communications between the defenders' hands when one defender has a doubleton and later wins a trick.

Besides the ducking example in this diagram, it is almost always right to duck the first trick holding A-x-x-(x) facing x-x in dummy or vice versa. Assuming the loser is inevitable, the ducking play snips communications between the defenders' hands when one opponent has a doubleton. It also leaves you in control of the suit.