

THINKING BRIDGE

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

Bidding commentary: Of course there are other ways of bidding the South hand, but 6♣ figures to be a reasonable contract facing most any sane takeout double of 2♠

Play commentary: Counting winners, you have 11: five clubs, three hearts, two diamonds and one spade. Counting losers, you have two, a spade and a diamond. So far so good. Your losers and winners add up to 13.

Play commentary #2: You have several chances to make this contract, including the unlikely ♦Q J doubleton. On a good day, hearts will break 3-3, but even if they don't, you still have a throw-in play available to force the opponents to break diamonds. Win the ♠A, noticing that both you and dummy each remain with one spade, the perfect setting for an eventual throw-in play, an evenly divided suit with a loser.

Draw trumps and play three rounds of hearts. Assuming hearts don't break (otherwise you have 12 tricks), ruff a heart, stripping hearts from both your hand and dummy, and exit with your spade, forcing a diamond return.

Take a good look at diamonds. You are missing the Q-J and *they* have to lead the suit. No matter which diamond they lead, (an honor is their best chance) your best bet is to play for *split honors*. For example, if West wins the spade exit and leads a low diamond, play low from dummy, capture East's jack and lead a low diamond to the 9, playing West for the queen. If West exits with the ♦Q, win the ace in dummy and lead a low diamond to the 10, playing East for the jack. Play the same if East wins the spade exit.