

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar

(From - NABC -Summer 2007 Nashville, TN - Eddie Kantar 2)

Dir: South Vul: Both	NORTH		West	North	East	South
	♠ 7 5 3		--	--	---	1 NT
	♥ K J 9 8		Pass	2 Club	Pass	2 Diamond
	♦ K J 10 4		Pass	3 NT	All Pass	
	♣ A 10					
WEST		EAST	Opening Lead = ♠K			
♠ K Q 10 8 4	22-07-2007	♠ A 2				
♥ 10		♥ 7 6 5 3 2				
♦ 7 3 2		♦ 6 5				
♣ 7 6 5 3		♣ Q J 9 8				
	SOUTH					
	♠ J 9 6					
	♥ A Q 4					
	♦ A Q 9 8					
	♣ K 4 2					

Bidding commentary: East needs longer and stronger clubs to double the 2♣ bid (Stayman). This lead-directing double typically is made with five or six clubs headed by three honors.

Defensive commentary: East overtakes the ♠K, unblocking the suit, and returns a spade. East-West rattle off the first five spade tricks. It is pretty close to automatic to overtake the lead of a king at notrump with A-x unless dummy has something like J-x-x or 10-x-x-x, in which case overtaking sets up an undeserved trick in dummy.

Defensive commentary #2. As an aside, East knows quite a bit about the deal from the bidding, the lead and dummy's strength. From the bidding, East knows that South does not have four spades. From the lead, East knows that West has at least five spades (South can't have four) headed by the K-Q-10 or K-Q-J. If West's spades are weaker, West leads fourth-best. From the strength of the dummy (12 high-card points), East knows that the opponents have 28 high-card points between them, give or take one point. (East assigns South 16 HCP, a middle count, to make this calculation). If the opponents have 28 HCP, East-West have 12. East has 7 HCP, and he knows partner has the ♠K Q for 5 HCP. That's 12!

Bidding, lead and strength calculations help defenders map out strategy.