

**THINKING BRIDGE** -- By Eddie Kantar

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

**Bidding commentary:** North has a 17-point balanced hand with a good five-card suit facing a strong 1NT opener. If this isn't enough for slam, what is? The one who knows goes. Certainly North is the one who knows.

**Lead commentary:** If you are lucky enough to have an honor sequence to lead against a slam contract, don't look a gift horse in the mouth - lead it! A spade lead is from outer space.

**Play commentary:** For declarer, this is the basic formula for notrump play:

(1) Count your sure tricks outside of the suit you plan to establish (clubs). You have one spade, three hearts, and four diamond tricks for a grand total of eight. This total tells you how many club tricks you need (four).

(2) What is the best play for four tricks? If clubs break 3-2, there is no problem, so no need to concern yourself with irrelevancies. Concern yourself with a relevancy, a 4-1 club division.

The best play for four club tricks is to cash one high club and then lead low to the jack. This play produces four tricks no matter which opponent has Q-10-x-x. (Play it out with the suit face up on a table if you are having trouble seeing it). Had the contract been 7NT, five club tricks would be needed and the best play for five tricks is to cash the A-K and hope the queen drops .