

THINKING BRIDGE - - By Eddie Kantar - 4
(From - NABC -SUMMER - 2013 - ATLANTA)

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

Bidding commentary: 3♦ is a splinter jump. It describes a game-forcing spade raise with a singleton diamond. South's 4♣ is a cuebid and 4NT is Roman Key Card Blackwood, the trump king counting as one of the five key cards. The 5♣ response shows one key card (the ♠K), and North bids slam expecting South to have both black kings.

Defensive commentary: A diamond lead would have defeated the contract, but a heart lead looks normal.

Play commentary: It looks for all the world as if there is a diamond and a heart loser, but there is a chance! Declarer must hope that the defender with the ♦A has fewer than three hearts. Declarer wins the opening lead, draws trump, plays four rounds of clubs, cashes a second heart (key play) and exits with a diamond, an equal-length suit. Sure enough, East, the player with the ♦A, started with two hearts and is forced to lead a diamond, allowing West to discard his remaining heart while ruffing in dummy. Holding the A-K-x-(x)-(x) opposite x-x-x in a side suit in a trump contract does not necessarily mean a loser! If you can eliminate one or more suits and cash a couple of tricks in the suit you're worried about, you can throw an opponent in and, if you're lucky, force him to give you a ruff-sluff for your contract. Something to think about.