

Thinking Bridge By Eddie Kantar

Third-hand play

Dlr: South Vul: E-W	♠ K 10 5 ♥ K 7 5 2 ♦ J 3 ♣ K J 9 6		West	North	East	South
			Pass	2 Club	Pass	1 NT
			Pass	3 NT	All Pass	2 Diamond
♠ 7 6 ♥ 9 6 ♦ 10 7 6 2 ♣ A 6 5 3 2		♠ A Q J 2 ♥ J 10 8 3 ♦ 9 5 4 ♣ Q 4	Opening lead: ♣3			
	♠ 9 8 4 3 ♥ A Q 4 ♦ A K Q 8 ♣ 10 7					

Bidding commentary: Not much. South's 2♠ normally denies four hearts. North's jump to 3NT shows four hearts. Otherwise, why bid Stayman?

Lead commentary: The lead of a low club promises a high honor. Neither East nor South can be 100% sure whether West has four or five clubs until the ♣2 hits the table.

Defensive commentary: As East, play the ♣Q at trick one, expecting to take the trick. Remember, the lead of a low card promises a

high honor. After the ♣Q holds, it is possible to count declarer's points and tricks. Dummy has 11 high-card points and declarer has 15-17, so assume 16, giving your opponents 27 HCP, give or take a point. Your side has 13, give or take a point. You have 10 HCP and partner has already turned up with 4 HCP (♣A) so declarer has 15, not 16, HCP. Time to count declarer's tricks knowing that declarer has all of the missing redsuit honors. Declarer has three heart tricks and is likely to have four diamond tricks. Furthermore, declarer can easily set up two more club tricks for nine unless you do something brilliant!

See it? Shift to a low spade at trick two! Yes, a low spade! You keep the A-Q-J over dummy's king. If partner wins the next club and returns a spade you can cash three spades to go along with two clubs for five tricks.