

THINKING BRIDGE

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

Bidding commentary: South is allowed to open 1NT with a low doubleton. If South is the nervous type, he might consider putting the ♦A or ♦K in with his hearts. North transfers to hearts and then gives partner a choice of game contracts- 3NT or 4♥ - by showing a five-card heart suit with a balanced-type hand. South, with a low doubleton in hearts, has no trouble choosing.

Play commentary: As South, look ahead! To make this contract, you have to bring in the hearts. If the opponents take the second heart, where is your entry to the hearts? If you play a low spade at trick one, there is no sure dummy entry in spades to the hearts once they are established. (West can duck the ♠K and East has the ♣Q over the ♣J). However, if you win the opening lead with the ♠K (key play) and drive out the ♥A, you have an entry (♠Q) to the hearts.

Defensive commentary: When the ♠10 is played from dummy, East plays the 8, a count card. The third hand rule is this: If partner leads low from length and dummy plays the queen or a lower card that third hand cannot top, third hand gives count. The opening leader knows it is count because third hand normally covers dummy's card when possible.

Defensive commentary #2: When declarer leads up to a strong suit in dummy missing the ace, the defender lacking the ace (West) gives count. Standard count is *low* from an *odd number* and *high-low* from an even number of cards. When West plays the ♥3, East, seeing the ♥2, knows West has three hearts (odd) and South has two. East takes the second heart, declarer's *last*, making it that much harder for declarer to get to dummy's hearts.