

# THINKING BRIDGE

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

**Bidding commentary:** North's raise to 4NT is not Blackwood, it is quantitative (invitational) and can be passed. Facing a 15-17 hand, 4NT shows 16-17 HCP. Opener should accept the 4NT invitation with all 17-point hands and most 16-point hands. Only 16-point hands that have some 4-3-3-3 pattern should pass, and that's why South passes. One can accept a 4NT invitation in several ways. The most common is to bid 6NT. Bidding a four-card minor at the five level might lead to finding a 4-4 fit, which usually plays one trick better than notrump. A jump to the six level in a minor shows a five card suit. One can also "sort of accept" by bidding 5NT. This says "Partner, I'm still not sure, you make the last mistake." In any case, one does not answer aces.

**Lead commentary:** One leads the same against 4NT as against 3NT. However against 6NT, it is not healthy to lead from broken honor strength. The ♠9 is best against 6NT.

**Play commentary:** After East plays the ♥J, denying the 10 or the ace, South wins with the king (higher equal, remember?) and counts sure tricks outside of his best suit, diamonds. South has three spades, one heart, and three clubs for grand total of seven. South needs three tricks in diamonds, not four, to make 4NT. There is also a little problem in the heart suit. South knows that West has the ♥A 10 x (x) from East's play of the jack, which has denied both the 10 and the ace. South must be careful not to let East, the danger hand, get the lead. Accordingly, all finesses are aimed into the non-danger hand, West. A diamond is led to the king and then a diamond to the 10. Even if the finesse loses, South has three diamond tricks and remains with hearts protected.