

Thinking Bridge By Eddie Kantar

Surrounding plays

Dlr: North Vul: None	♠ 7 6 ♥ J 7 6 ♦ K J 10 6 ♣ Q J 10 8		West Pass	North Pass 2NT	East 1 ♠ All Pass	South 1NT
♠ 9 5 ♥ 8 4 3 ♦ 8 7 3 2 ♣ A 6 4 3		♠ A K 4 3 2 ♥ A Q 10 5 ♦ 9 5 ♣ 7 5	Opening lead: ♠ 9.			
	♠ Q J 10 8 ♥ K 9 2 ♦ A Q 4 ♣ K 9 2					

Bidding commentary: As South, with only 15 high-card points, you really need a double stopper in the opener's suit to overcall 1NT. You do. As North, your raise to 2NT shows 8-9 HCP. As South, after partner digs up a raise to 2NT, you have the fastest pass in history.

Lead commentary: As East, it is clear partner has led from shortness. With ♠ 9 x x, an unsupported suit, partner leads low.

Defensive commentary: Defensive commentary: As East, there is no future in spades, so turn your attention to hearts. Assuming declarer has the king, the proper card to lead is the queen, a surrounding play. You have the jack surrounded with the queen and the 10 plus a higher unequal honor, the ace. Declarer takes the king, but when partner gets in with the ♣A, his heart return gives your side three hearts tricks to go along with the ♠A K and the ♣A. Down one.

When the dummy to your right has the J-x-x and you have A-Q-10-(x), attack with the queen. If you lead low and declarer has K-x-x, declarer play low and takes two tricks. If you lead the queen, declarer gets one. When dummy to your right has the 10-x-(x) and you have A-J-9-(x) or K-J-9-(x), attack with the jack. When dummy to your right has the 9-x-(x) and you have K-10-8-(x) or Q-10-8-(x), start with the 10. The common denominator of these three surrounding plays is having the dummy's jack, 10 or 9 perfectly surrounded by a higher and a lower card plus a higher non-equal honor.