

## Thinking Bridge By Eddie Kantar

### Responding to an opening bid

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

**Bidding commentary:** As North, you have a maximum raise to 2♥. It is not a good idea to start with 1♠ when holding three hearts and fewer than 10 HCP. If you do, and partner bids 2♣ or 2♦ you are not well placed. You aren't strong enough to jump to 3♥ (11-12 support points), and if you return to 2♥, you show a doubleton heart!

As East, a non-passed hand, you are not strong to make a takeout double of 2♥. If you were a passed hand, you might chance it, but the double would be flawed lacking four spades.

**Defensive commentary:** As East, ask yourself how can declarer use this dummy profitably? There are three possibilities: (1) long-suit establishment, (2) ruffing losers in the dummy and (3) Neither. Dummy is balanced. On this deal, long-suit establishment can be eliminated. You have the clubs covered and partner appears to have the spades. However, there is a possibility that declarer can ruff a diamond or two in dummy. Your counter move is to shift to a low heart at trick two. As West, if partner switches to a low heart and declarer ducks, win the king and follow partner's defense by continuing with a heart. When later on lead in diamonds, play a third heart, killing any possible diamond ruff in dummy.

**Play commentary:** As South, if the defense plays a heart and a heart at tricks two and three, give up on trying to ruff a diamond and try to set up clubs instead. Lead a club to the queen and later the ace and a club hoping for a 3-3 break. Sorry, not this time. You gave it your best shot, but you are slated to lose two clubs, two diamonds and a trick in each major for one in the ashcan