

N A B C SUMMER 2009 – WASHINGTON DC

Thinking bridge (8) - By Eddie Kantar

Dealer East Vul E-W	♠ K 7 ♥ A J 5 4 ♦ A K 10 7 6 ♣ J 8		WEST Pass 3 Heart	NORTH 1 Diamond Pass	EAST Pass Pass All Pass	SOUTH Pass 1 Heart
♠ J 10 9 8 ♥ Q 9 2 ♦ Q J ♣ K 10 4 3		♠ A Q 4 3 ♥ 8 ♦ 9 5 3 2 ♣ A 7 6 2				
	♠ 6 5 2 ♥ K 10 7 6 3 ♦ 8 4 ♣ Q 9 5		Opening Lead : ♠J			

Bidding commentary: Responder should not think twice about responding 1♥ or 1♠ to an opening bid with 5 HCP and a five -card major. Do it! However, after the 1♥ response, South shouldn't give any real thought to bidding 4♥. The North hand counts to 17 support points (forget the ♣J). North has 15 HCP plus one support point for each doubleton. The jump raises promises 16-18 support points, so North is on target. East, a passed hand, has a perfect takeout double if North opens 1♥, but can't come in intelligently over the 1♦ bid. A double is out of the question with a singleton in an unbid major, and overcalling on a crummy four card suit is also off the wall.

Defensive commentary: After East cashes two spades, he shifts to a low club rather than the ace. After all, declarer may have the king and mis-guess by playing low, thus losing two club tricks. As it happens, West has the king and returns the ♣3 (original fourth best, showing four clubs) to East's ace, and East gets out with a club to South's queen. South must have the queen as West won trick three with ♣K, denying the queen. Defenders take tricks with the lower or lowest equal.

Play commentary: South has to find the ♥Q holding nine trumps between the two hands. We've come too far to play by nursery rhymes. East, a passed hand, has turned up with the ♠A Q plus the ♣A for a total of 10 HCP. Most players open 12 point hands these days, so it is odds on that West has the ♥Q. South does best to cash the ♥K and lead a heart to the jack.