

THINKING BRIDGE (4)

Eddie Kantar Spring 2016 Kansas

Dlr: East	♠ A J 10		
Vul: Both	♥ 10 3		
	♦ K 7 4 2		
	♣ 10 8 7 6		
	♠ 9 2		
	♥ 9		
	♦ A 8 6		
	♣ A K Q J 5 3 2		
West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	2♥	3♣
3♥	4♣	Pass	5♣
All Pass			

Opening lead: ♥5.

Bidding commentary: After the 1♦ response by North, East enters the auction with a bid of 2♥, essentially a weak two-bid. Why didn't he open 2♥ as dealer? Probably because he has four spades on the side. Experienced players usually decline to open a weak two-bid with four of the other major on the side. This inference might come in handy in the play.

Defensive commentary: East does best to win the ♥A and continue the suit.

Play commentary: As South, you have two lines of play available. You can play three rounds of diamonds after drawing trumps and hope they break 3-3 (35-36%). If they do, dummy's long diamond provides a resting place for your losing spade. Alternatively, you can take two spade finesses. If West has one or both of the spade honors (75%), you can set up a spade trick for a diamond discard. The double spade finesse is more than twice as likely to produce the extra trick you need, so that is the better line of play.

It is nice to know a little bit about suit distributions. If you have seven cards in a suit between your hand and dummy, you can expect a 3-3 break about one-third of the time, a 4-2 break close to 50% of the time. If you need one of two finesses to work, you can expect one of them will work about 75% of the time. Of course the bidding and previous plays must be considered, but those percentages are important to know.

The full deal:

	♠ A J 10	
	♥ 10 3	
	♦ K 7 4 2	
	♣ 10 8 7 6	
♠ Q 8 7 4		♠ K 7 5 3
♥ K J 6 5		♥ A Q 8 7 4 2
♦ Q 10 9 5		♦ J 3
♣ 9		♣ 4
	♠ 9 2	
	♥ 9	
	♦ A 8 6	
	♣ A K Q J 5 3 2	