

THINKING BRIDGE (5)

Eddie Kantar Spring 2016 Kansas

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

Bidding commentary: As North, it is generally not a good idea to use Stayman with a flat hand. In this case, even though you have missed a 4-4 spade fit, 3NT is a better contract because your hand and partner's hand have the same distribution.

commentary: West's lead is normal (fourth-highest). East wins the ♥A and returns the ♥10, West follows with the ♥6 to confirm that he started with five hearts. Had he played the ♥J, West would be letting his partner (and you) know that the jack is his highest remaining equal. East then knows that declarer has the ♥Q.

Play commentary: As South, win the ♥K at trick two, higher equal for deceptive purposes. As it happens, you can even misguess the ♠Q and take nine tricks, but if you were in a contract of 4♠, you would have to find the ♠Q to make your contract. Also, if you are playing in a tournament where overtricks are the heart and soul of the game, finding the ♠Q will give you a good score, perhaps a near top. There is a clue. West started with five hearts and eight other cards. East has two hearts and 11 other cards. Play the defender who has more "other cards" (East) for the missing queen.

Play Commentary: #2: As South, if you want to further confirm your other-cards count, it can't hurt to cash three rounds of clubs. As it happens, both follow to three rounds of clubs so you don't get any more information. Stick with plan A and play East for the ♠Q.

The full deal:

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