

THINKING BRIDGE

By Eddie Kantar

(From – NABC-SPRING-2009-HOUSTON-5)

Dir: South Vul: None	NORTH ♠ 4 3 2 ♥ A ♦ Q 10 8 7 5 3 ♣ K Q J		West	North	East	South
						1 Diamond
			2 Diamond	3 Heart	4 Heart	5 Diamond
			All Pass			
WEST ♠ K Q J 7 5 ♥ K J 5 3 2 ♦ — ♣ 10 7 5		EAST ♠ 10 9 ♥ Q 9 8 4 ♦ 9 4 ♣ A 9 4 3 2	Opening Lead =♣K			
	SOUTH ♠ A 8 6 ♥ 10 7 6 ♦ A K J 6 2 ♣ 8 6					

Bidding commentary: West's 2♦ is a Michaels cuebid, showing 5-5 or 6-5 in the majors (either way) with typically 7-11 HCP. North has a choice of responses. One is to leap to 5♦, another is to cue bid 2♥, one of the opponent's known suits, showing a strong hand with diamonds. A third is to make a game-forcing jump in one of their suits to show a singleton in that suit with great support. No point in bidding hearts naturally when West is known to have at least five!

Lead commentary: Even though East has shown something in hearts, dummy has shown a singleton heart and a spade lead stands out like a beacon.

Play commentary: From declarer's perspective, the spade position is recurring. It is very likely that the suit is breaking 5-2. If so, by winning the second spade, you cut the spade communication between the East- West hands. Observe. You win the second spade, draw trumps and drive out the ♠A. East wins, but has no spade to return, so you can discard a spade on a high club. If you win the first spade (ugh!), East can return a spade upon winning the ♠A, and now you lose two spades and a club. The general rule when playing a trump contract holding A-x-x facing x-x-x in the suit that has been led – one high card to remove – is to win the second round of the suit.