

THINKING BRIDGE

By Eddie Kantar

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Dir: West Vul: E-W	NORTH ♠ A 9 6 3 ♥ A Q 3 ♦ K 6 ♣ J 10 9 7		West	North	East	South
			2 Diamond	X	Pass	2 Heart
			All Pass			
WEST ♠ J 5 ♥ J 10 ♦ Q J 10 8 7 5 ♣ A 6 3		EAST ♠ Q 8 7 4 ♥ K 9 8 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ K Q 5	Opening Lead = ♦Q.			
	SOUTH ♠ K 10 2 ♥ 7 6 5 4 2 ♦ A 9 ♣ 8 4 2					

Bidding commentary: West's 2♦ bid was weak. North's double is routine. The questionable bids are East's passes. It is usually right to try to push the opponents to the threelevel when your side has the security of a ninecard fit. Also, East's honors seem well placed. The downsides are that you are vulnerable against not, you have no ruffing values, and partner may make a costly opening lead playing you for a diamond honor. Certainly it is right to bid 3♦, not vulnerable.

Defensive commentary: Not much you can do here but sit back and wait for your tricks. If you can get a spade trick without leading the suit, you will defeat the contract.

Play commentary: As South, you start with three club losers, possibly two heart losers given the bidding, and a likely spade loser for six losers one more than you can afford. One trick to playing a contract with too many losers is to try to develop long-suit tricks in unequally divided suits that have *inevitable* (key word) losers, like clubs. You have to lose three club tricks anyway, but if you can set up dummy's fourth club for a spade discard you can make this contract.

Win the ♦K in dummy and lead a club. If spades are led, play for split honors. If they are not, finesse the ♥Q, later cash the ♥A, and then play a second and third club. As it happens, you can set up dummy's fourth club for a spade discard and make your contract. What can go wrong is playing spades before clubs and losing six tricks - an error that partners frequently make