

THINKING BRIDGE

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Dir: North Vul: Both	NORTH ♠ A 6 ♥ K Q 4 ♦ A 5 4 2 ♣ Q J 8 4		West	North	East	South
			--	1 NT	Pass	2 Club
			Pass	2 Diamond	Pass	3 Club
			Pass	4 Club	Pass	4 NT
			Pass	5 Club	Pass	6 Club
			All Pass			
WEST ♠ Q 9 8 ♥ 8 3 ♦ J 10 9 3 ♣ A 10 9 2		EAST ♠ J 10 6 5 3 ♥ 9 7 6 2 ♦ Q 8 7 6 ♣ —	Opening Lead = ♦J			
	SOUTH ♠ K 7 4 ♥ A J 10 5 ♦ K ♣ K 7 6 5 3					

Bidding commentary: North does well to raise clubs as there may be a slam. In my view, after four-level, game-forcing club agreement, 4♦, not 4NT, should be Roman key card Blackwood. 4NT is clumsy when clubs is the agreed suit and often leads to trouble when two key cards or even one key card and the queen are missing. However, all's well that ends well.

Defensive commentary: East should signal encouragement at trick one by playing the ♦8.

Play commentary: Sometimes the easiest hands to play are 'one suit problem' hands. This is one of them. The only loser is in clubs and the only thing that can go wrong is 4-0 clubs as the contract is frigid if clubs are 3-1 or 2-2.

Consider the two possibilities: First East having the ♣A-10-9-2. You should see that you cannot do anything about that, so forget it.

What about West? Now we are talking. If you correctly start trumps with the ♠K, West is helpless. Say West wins the king, remaining with the 10-9-2. No problem. Dummy has the Q-J-8 and you can easily pick up the remaining clubs with no loser. Playing the ♠K at trick two is an example of asking yourself, "what can go wrong?" and doing something about it.