

**THINKING BRIDGE** By Eddie Kantar  
(From - NABC Spring 2012 -Memphis - -3 )

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

**Bidding commentary:** The North-South sequence is routine. With a balanced hand, North needs 11-12 high-card points to raise to 2NT.

Notice West's pass to 1♥. Why not a takeout double? The West hand has several flaws: (1) With this distribution (a doubleton in opener's suit), 12 working HCP is considered a minimum for a takeout double. Unsupported jacks and queens in the suit(s) the opponents have bid are not considered working points either when making a takeout double or responding to one. The word garbage should come to mind. (2) West has only three cards in the unbid major. If West is going to cheat a point, West needs four cards in the unbid major(s). (3) West is vulnerable versus not facing a passed partner. If West makes an undisciplined takeout double at this vulnerability, East-West could be headed for trouble, even at the one level!

As responder, with a balanced hand, raise partner's 1NT rebid to 2NT with 11-12 HCP. Add an extra point for any five-card suit headed by three honor cards. Therefore, it is permissible to raise to 2NT with 10 HCP and a strong five-card suit or jump to 3NT with 12 HCP and a strong five-card suit.

**Play commentary:** As South, it looks right to work with hearts. Duck the first diamond and win the second in dummy, retaining an entry (♦A) to the hand of the suit you are establishing. At trick three, lead a heart to the queen (more deceptive than the jack). After this wins, try a spade to the king followed by a heart to the jack. When this wins, cash the ♥A and concede a heart to East, who exits with a diamond to your king. After you cash your established heart, you have seven tricks: four hearts, two diamonds and one spade, but figure to take at least eight before the smoke clears.

When leading toward equal honors in the closed hand (♥Q-J), play the higher equal. It is far more deceptive than playing the lower equal honor cards.