

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar
(From - NABC -Spring-2012 - Memphis-6)

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

Bidding commentary: As North, you have a terrible three-suited hand with short clubs. When partner opens 1NT, it is actually safe to use Stayman! You are planning on passing partner's rebid of 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠. You hope to wind up in a better contract than 1NT. Every so often when you pass 2♦ with a 4=4=4=1 pattern, partner turns up with two diamonds and five clubs and is stuck playing a 4-2 fit! Not to worry, you don't have to play this contract, partner does! Besides, playing a 4-2 trump fit builds character – which is what you intend to tell partner when the screaming starts.

Lead commentary: When responder uses Stayman and passes opener's two-level rebid, responder is telling the world of a weak, threesuited hand short in clubs. It is usually right to lead a trump against this sequence

Play commentary: : As South, if West leads the trump ace and another trump, cash the ♣ A K, ruff a club and lead a heart to the king. When that holds, ruff your last club in dummy. You wind up losing two hearts, two spades and a diamond. If North leads the ♠Q, arrange to ruff two clubs in dummy and take the same eight tricks.

Let's talk about 4-4 trump fits. Assuming the opponents' trumps are divided 3-2, declarer remains with one trump in each hand after three rounds of the suit have been played. These two trumps can usually be used separately, meaning they you should count two tricks for them. Say your trump suit is the A-K Q-x facing x-x-x-x.in the dummy. If you start with the A-K-Q and the suit breaks 3-2, leaving one trump in each hand, count five trump tricks.

However, if you can ruff two losers in the dummy before drawing trumps, count six trump tricks. Knowing how to count trump tricks is important because it determines your line of play.