

**THINKING BRIDGE** -- By Eddie Kantar  
(From - NABC -Spring-2012 - Memphis-8)

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

**Bidding commentary:** As North, the system opening is 1♦ with this hand pattern. This is the only distribution one should have for a short diamond opening. A 1♦ opening with this distribution occurs about 5% of the time 1♦ is opened. As responder, assume your partner has four or more diamonds when you hear partner open 1♦. Don't play for exceptions! If you do, you will be wrong 95% of the time!

West's passed-hand takeout double shows 9-11 high-card points with four cards, minimum, in each of the two unbid suits. South is entitled to reevaluate upwards with a likely nine-card spade fit (worth an automatic 2-point upgrade) plus wild side-suit distribution, worth another 2 points. The South hand logs in at about 13 revalued points and is worth a shot at game. If 4♠ seems a bit rich for your blood, try 3♠. North, with a maximum, will raise to 4♠.

**Defensive commentary:** As East, assuming the lead of the king is from the K-Q and not the A-K, tend to encourage holding the jack. However, with your diamond holding, it is better to discourage in clubs (♣2) to encourage a shift to diamonds.

**Play commentary:** As South, fearing a diamond shift, win the ♣A, cross to the ♠A and run the ♥K to West's ace, discarding a diamond. Assuming West wins and shifts to a diamond, win the ace, discard your remaining two diamonds on the ♥Q-J and concede a club. The most you can lose after this is maybe a spade trick. The idea is not to cash the ♠K before the dummy is void in clubs. If you do, and the player who wins your club exit is able to cash the ♠Q depriving you of a club ruff in dummy, down you go. You could lose two clubs (instead of one) the ♥A and the ♠Q. Be areful about surrendering trump control (♠K) until dummy is void in the suit you plan to ruff.