

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar

(From - NABC FALLS 2006 - HONOLULU - HAWAII - 10-26-11-2006-)

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

Bidding commentary: South is not strong enough to bid clubs and North is not strong enough to bid again after South responds 1NT.

Lead commentary: Clear cut. The queen is led from suits headed by the Q-J-10 or Q-J-9. If the third card is lower than the 9, fourth highest is led. As an aside, when the response to 1♦ is 1NT, responder frequently has long clubs.

Play commentary: As declarer, looking only at spades (a big mistake), the proper spade play is to win the first trick with the king and later lead low to the 10 to garner three spade tricks. But at what price?

By going for three spade tricks, you have put the club suit to rest! If West wins the second club, taking dummy's last club with the ace, you cannot get back to your hand to cash your three winning clubs. You wind up with one club trick instead of four! Best is to win the ♠A and lead the ♣K.

Even if West expertly wins the second club, you still have the ♠K to get back to your precious clubs. Playing properly, you score four clubs, two spades and the top diamonds for eight tricks. If you win the ♠K at trick one and West wins the second club, six tricks!

Defensive commentary: When declarer tries to set up a suit in the closed hand (clubs), and dummy has two cards in that suit, a strong defender holding the ace or king does best to win the second round. This may make it difficult for declarer to return to the closed hand to take winning tricks.