

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar
(From - NABC Fall 2006 Hawaii - 4)

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

Bidding commentary: North has neither the strength nor the distribution, mainly the distribution, to double 2♠ (for takeout), but is strong enough to raise 3♥ to 4♥.

Defensive commentary: West starts with three rounds of spades, South ruffing. There is no pressing need for West to attack either minor suit.

Play commentary: Declarer has lost two spades and must lose a club, so the problem is picking up hearts for no losers. With no bidding as a guide, the normal play with nine cards missing the queen is the ace-king. However there has been bidding. West is known to have six spades and seven other cards known as "vacant spaces." East has two spades, so 11 vacant spaces. Who do you think is more likely to have the queen, the hand with seven vacant spaces or the one with 11? Right. Declarer plays East for the ♥Q, leads a heart to the king and runs the jack. Length attracts shortness, shortness attracts length.

Defensive commentary: If at any time the ♥J is led, East should not cover. One covers an honor with an honor only when promotion is possible. In this case, it is impossible. West is marked with a singleton or doubleton heart and South has no promotable spot cards