

# THINKING BRIDGE

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

**Bidding commentary:** South has a near maximum, weak-two opening and North has a choice of responses. A raise to 4♥ is reasonable as is 2NT asking for more information. If North tries 2NT, South bids 3♣ showing a feature – the ace or king. This might encourage North to bid 3NT, which happens to be cold.

**Lead commentary:** As East, give count in spades. After declarer has preempted or bid two suits and partner leads the ace, presumably from A-K and dummy has the queen, third hand gives count playing the ♠2 – the lowest from an odd number of cards. As West, it looks right to switch to a low club at trick two. Partner figures to have an honor or two in the suit given the fact that South has a weak hand. As East, play the ♣K at trick two, the higher of unequal honors. If you had equal honors such as the Q-J, you would play your lower equal.

**Play commentary:** As South, you start with nine top tricks: six hearts, the ♦A and ♦K and the ♣A. Rather than pin your hopes on the diamond finesse, use the ♠Q-J in dummy to develop your tenth trick. Win the ♣A, draw trumps ending in dummy and lead the ♠Q, discarding a club. West wins the king, cashes the ♣Q and leads a third club that you ruff. All that is left is to cross to dummy with a diamond and discard a diamond on the ♠J. No diamond finesse is necessary. When dummy has the second- and third-ranking cards in a suit – the ♠Q-J, (the ace has already been played) facing a void – think loser-on-loser play. Lead a spade equal and discard a loser. After the opponents take the trick, use the other equal to discard another loser. You gain a trick