

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

**Bidding commentary:** As North, if you were thinking about slam, it's an overbid. An opening three bidder usually has about 5-8 HCP, but more important, the ability to take about six tricks. Unless you can contribute another six tricks to the mix, forget slam.

**Lead commentary:** As West, avoid leading suits headed by unprotected aces. The lead costs a trick if declarer has the king or if the opponents have the king and queen. The lead of an ace from A-x has more going for it because of the ruffing possibility. Once a diamond lead is ruled out, try the stronger of the other two side suits: spades.

**Play commentary:** As declarer, after winning the ♠A, you are looking at a quick spade loser along with three possible diamond losers - if West has the ace and East gets in and leads a diamond through your king.

East is the danger hand. The idea is to keep the danger hand from getting the lead for as long as possible. On the plus side, you have a nice club suit to work with for two tricks. Your singleton is facing the ♠A Q J, so the ingredients are there for a loser on loser avoidance play. Draw two trumps, keeping a trump entry to dummy, cash the ♠A and lead the ♠Q. No matter who has the ♠K, you are destined to take two club tricks without letting East in. If East has the ♠K and covers, ruff it and return to dummy with a trump. The ♠J, your 10th trick, can be used to discard a diamond.

If East has the ♠K and doesn't cover, discard a spade. Again, you score two club tricks. If West has the ♠K and captures the ♠Q, West can't attack diamonds safely, so you have time to discard a second diamond on the ♠J. If West is the danger hand, (♦K in dummy) lead a club to the jack, finessing into the East hand.