

THINKING BRIDGE

By Eddie Kantar

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

Bidding commentary: South has a reasonable passed-hand takeout double, somewhat flawed lacking four spades. West's passed-hand redouble is limited to 10-11 HCP. North has an automatic 1♠ response, and both you and East have nothing more to say. As East, do not bid over 1♠ unless you have an unbalanced hand. West promises at least one more bid if you pass. West competes with 2♥, showing a minimum redouble with three hearts. East is thrilled to pass.

Defensive commentary: After the normal lead of the ♠Q, it is likely that declarer will play low from dummy. If so, North signals with the ♠10, the higher equal to show interest. If that happens, South continues with the ♠J (the higher of two remaining cards) and North winds up taking the third spade trick.

Further defensive commentary: As North, peering at this dummy, it is clear that clubs is the suit to attack, but which club? When the dummy to your right has the 9-x-(x)-(x) and you have the Q-10-8-(x) or K-10-8-(x), attack with the 10, your second-highest honor, called a "surrounding play." You have the 9 surrounded with the (10 8) plus a higher non-touching honor, the definition of a surrounding play. It also applies when East, the dummy, has the 10-x-(x)-(x) and you, North, have the K-J-9-(x) or the A-J-9-(x). This time you have the 10 surrounded with the J-9 plus a higher non-touching honor and again you must start with the second-highest honor, the jack.

If North leads the 8, East plays low and South wins the king, but East remains with the A-J hovering over the queen and the defense gets one trick. If the 10 is led and East covers with the jack, South wins and returns a club, North having the Q-8 sitting over the 9-7. The defenders establish two club tricks to go along with three spades and the ♠A, down one.