

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

Bidding commentary: West has an automatic 4♥ opening with eight strong hearts and less than opening-bid values. South, needing so little in partner's hand to make a slam, can do no less than bid 6♠. A 4♠ bid is beyond the pale, even a leap to 5♠ is conservative. After all, South, how often do you expect to ever hold a hand like this? Live it up!

Lead commentary: Normal. Do not try to be a genius when holding an honor sequence.

Play commentary: As South, before playing to the first trick, review the bidding! West has shown a likely eight-card suit, in which case East is void. If the ♥A is played from dummy, East will probably ruff and you will be at the mercy of the club finesse. Why not duck the opening lead, and if a heart is continued, duck again, ruffing high in the closed hand? Now trumps can be drawn ending in dummy and the ♣Q pitched on the ♥A.

More contracts are lost at the first trick than any other, so slow down, review the bidding and take a good look at the entire deal before playing to the first trick.

As South, when ruffing with a powerful trump holding (the second heart), avoid ruffing too low. That low trump (the ♠2) may be the only way you can get to dummy!