

**THINKING BRIDGE** -- By Eddie Kantar  
(From - NABC -Spring 2007-St Louis -8 )

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

**Bidding commentary:** North's jump shift shows 19 or more high-card points (possibly 18 with a 6-4 pattern) but South's major-suit distribution is not clear. For the time being, the responder (and the defenders) assumes five spades and four hearts. To raise to 4♥, opener's second suit, responder needs four hearts.

Responder is allowed to prefer to 3♣ with a doubleton, but with stoppers in both minors, 3NT is a more descriptive rebid. North passes 3NT knowing South has minor-suit strength and that South knows of five spades in the North hand.

**Defensive commentary:** East rises with the ♦A and returns the ♦7, the higher of two remaining cards. With three remaining cards, the lowest is returned. South plays the 9 and West wins with the 10. West knows, or should know, from the return of the 7 that the ♦K is not going to bring down the queen. West must be patient, lead something else, and wait for partner to get in and lead a hoped-for third diamond. West does best to exit a club in case partner has the ace and declarer has the ♠Q and ♥J. As it happens, East doesn't have the ♣A, but has enough strength in clubs and spades that declarer cannot come to a ninth trick without letting East in. Once East gets in and leads that remaining diamond, it's curtains for South. More often than not, third hand's return of the suit partner has led (♦7), sets the tone for the defense.

**Play commentary:** Against this defense there isn't much declarer can do but take the spade finesse for a ninth trick. Not this time.