

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar
(From - NABC -Spring 2008-Detroit-Michigan - 5)

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

Bidding commentary: Notice North's raise to 2♥, not 3♥. No opening hand divided with 4-4-3-2 shape that is not strong enough to open 1NT is strong enough to give partner a jump raise. North has a maximum raise to 2♥. Period.

Lead commentary: When there are two unbid suits, the general rule is to lead from the one that does not have the ace. If neither has the ace, lead from the stronger.

Play commentary: Woe be the declarer who does not count sure tricks (winners) before playing to trick one. South has 10 top tricks: one spade, five hearts and four diamonds. Taking the spade finesse at trick one represents an unnecessary risk. For the sake of an overtrick, it puts the contract in jeopardy.

Playing tournament bridge, where overtricks are important, declarer has a problem.

Defensive commentary: If declarer takes the spade finesse at trick one, East wins and, eyeing dummy's diamond suit, shifts to a low club, promising a high honor. If declarer inserts the ♣9, West wins the jack and then plays ace and a club to East's king to defeat the contract one trick.

As declarer, count your top tricks before playing to the first trick. If you are used to counting losers, do that too, but be sure to factor in extra winners (dummy's fourth diamond).

Unless you are playing tournament bridge, don't even think of risking your contract for an overtrick. If you do, you should have a reason to think that the odds are in your favor.