

THINKING BRIDGE -- By Eddie Kantar

(From - NABC -Spring - 2016 - Reno 7)

Dir: West Vul: E-W	NORTH ♠ KJ2 ♥ AJ102 ♦ 872 ♣ A62		West	North	East	South
			--	--	Pass	1 Spade
			Pass	1 NT	Pass	4 Spade
			All Pass			
			Opening Lead = ♦A			
WEST		EAST				
	SOUTH ♠ AQ10864 ♥ Q4 ♦ A54 ♣ K4					

Opening lead: ♦A. East plays the ♦3, standard attitude, and West shifts to the ♣Q. East encouraging. Spades are 2-1, Plan the play.

1. How would you play this contract at matchpoints?
2. How would you play at IMPs?

This contract should be played identically at both forms of scoring because the bidding has tipped you off that East has the ♥K. West, a passed hand, has already turned up with the ♦A K and the ♣Q J for 10 HCP. If West had the ♥K, he would have opened the bidding. Therefore, forget the heart finesse. You can't stand for East to win and ram a diamond through your queen.

Try this: Knowing that East has the ♥K and that East is the danger hand, you simply have to avoid the heart finesse! But how?

By ducking the ♣Q! Assuming West leads a second club, win the king, draw two rounds of trumps ending in dummy, discard a heart on the ♣A and play the ♥A, killing your queen, and then run the ♥J through East. Assume East covers. You ruff, cross to dummy with a spade and discard a diamond on the ♥10. Ten tricks: Six spades, two hearts and two clubs.

If East doesn't cover, discard a diamond and ruff a heart. If the king falls from East, you can ruff and make an overtrick, discarding your last diamond on the ♥10.

If East shifts to a heart at trick two, win the ace, cross to the ♣K, draw two rounds of trumps ending in dummy, discard the ♥Q on the ♣A, and run the ♥J as before.

You have at least 10 tricks if you stay away - far away - from an early heart finesse. That's what can go wrong. The full deal:

Dir: West Vul: E-W	NORTH ♠ KJ2 ♥ AJ102 ♦ 872 ♣ A62		WEST ♠ 73 ♥ 953 ♦ AKJ6 ♣ 1093	EAST ♠ 95 ♥ K876 ♦ 1093 ♣ 10875	
					SOUTH ♠ AQ10864 ♥ Q4 ♦ A54 ♣ K4