

## THINKING BRIDGE - 7

By **Eddie Kantar** > Suit combinations, part 7

(From - NABC - Summer 2010-New Orleans)

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

**Bidding commentary:** North is too strong to open 1NT, and East has a perfect weak jump overcall, the equivalent of a weak two-bid. North doubles for takeout, South has an easy 2NT bid, and North should raise to 3NT, knowing partner has a spade stopper plus West figures to have the ♥K, given the bidding, if partner doesn't have it.

**Defensive commentary:** The spade lead is obvious, and East should realize that partner cannot have three low spades and lead the 9. When leading a suit that you have bid and partner has not supported, the proper lead from three low cards is low. Had partner supported spades, the proper lead would be the highest of three low. Given that East needs partner to have two spades, it is important to keep that second spade in partner's hand in case he has a side suit entry. Accordingly, East covers the 9 with the 10, telling partner his spades are very strong.

**Play commentary:** Assuming East ducks the first spade, as South you can read the spade position and dare not let them in as they have five spades to cash! Your best chance is to play West for the ♥K, a card that figures to be in the West hand given the bidding and the lead, and lead the ♥J at trick two, the only card in your hand that allows you to counteract East's strong defensive play and take the next eight tricks. The trick is for declarer and third hand to picture the layout of the suit that has been led and play accordingly. If you lead a low heart from hand for the finesse, it will win but you will not be able to return to your hand to repeat the finesse without letting West in, and he will return his other spade to sink your contract.