

Thinking Bridge, by Eddie Kantar

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 8 5	♠ K 4 2	♠ A 9 7 6 3									
♥ A 6 5	♥ 7 4	♥ 9 8 3									
♦ Q 9 7 2	♦ A K 6 5	♦ J 10 8									
♣ Q 10 9 7	♣ A K 3 2	♣ 8 5									
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	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ Q J 10										
	♥ K Q J 10 2										
	♦ 4 3										
	♣ J 6 4										

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 NT
All pass			
3 NT by North			
Lead: ♠ 6			

BIDDING COMMENTARY: North is allowed to open 1 NT with a small doubleton. If North is the nervous type he might consider putting the ace or king of diamonds in with his hearts. South transfers to hearts and then gives partner a choice of game contracts, 3 NT or 4 ♥, by showing a 5 card heart suit with a balanced-type hand. North, with a small doubleton in hearts has no trouble choosing.

DEFENSIVE COMMENTARY: When the ♠ 10 is played from dummy, West plays the ♠ 8, count. The third hand rule is this: If partner leads low from length and dummy plays the queen or a lower card that third hand cannot top, third hand gives count. The opening leader knows it is count because third hand normally covers dummy's card when possible.

PLAY COMMENTARY: As North, look ahead! To make this hand you have to bring in the hearts. If the opponents take the second heart, where is your entry to the hearts? If you play a low spade at trick one, there is no sure dummy entry in spades to the hearts once they are established. (East can duck the ♠ K and West has the ♣ Q over the ♣ J). However, if you win the opening lead with the ♠ K (key play), and then drive out the ♥ A, you have a spade entry (♠ Q) to the hearts.

Defensive Commentary #2 When declarer leads up to a strong suit in dummy missing the ace, the defender lacking the ace (East) gives count. Standard count is low from an odd and high-low from an even number of cards. When East plays the ♥ 3, West, seeing the ♥ 2, knows East has three hearts (odd) and North has two. West takes the 2nd heart, declarer's last, making it that much harder for declarer to get to dummy's hearts.