

NABC - Fall - 2017 - San Diego
THINKING BRIDGE by EDDIE KANTAR 6

Dir: South		♠ 4	
Vul: E-W		♥ Q 10 9 4	
		♦ K 5 4 2	
		♣ K 7 5 4	
♠ K J 8 5			♠ 10 9 3
♥ 7 3			♥ 5 2
♦ Q J 9 6			♦ A 10 8 7 3
♣ Q J 2			♣ A 9 8
		♠ A Q 7 6 2	
		♥ A K J 8 6	
		♦ —	
		♣ 10 6 3	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♥
All Pass			4♥

Bidding commentary: As South, the value of your hand increases significantly after partner's raise to 3♥, showing four hearts. With 5-5 distribution and the strength all concentrated in the two long suits, take a whopping 5-point upgrade!

If the strength is not concentrated in the two long suits, the hand is still worth a 4-point upgrade: 5-5, come alive! Be wary, however, about counting for jacks or queens in unbid short suits.

Lead commentary: The bidding makes it clear that North is short in spades. Translation: South is sure to try to ruff as many spades as he can in dummy. As West, in order to cut down dummy's ruffing power, lead a trump. With a doubleton trump, lead low. High-low in the trump suit shows an odd number of trumps. The ♦Q is a reasonable second choice of opening leads.

Play commentary: As South, if West leads the ♦Q, crossruff diamonds and spades for 10 tricks. You take the ♠A, four spade ruffs in dummy, plus five hearts in your own hand. A heart lead makes life more difficult as you can ruff only three spades in dummy. However, ruffing three spades in dummy, even if the king doesn't fall will probably develop the fifth spade in your hand. If hearts break 2-2, you can draw trumps and cash your long spade for your 10th trick. If hearts are 3-1, you still survive if West has the ♣A by leading up to the king.

As declarer, when your hand and dummy have short suits, consider a crossruff.

A trump is a strong lead when holding strength in declarer's first bid suit and the opponents wind up in declarer's second-bid suit.