

NABC - Fall - 2017 - San Diego
THINKING BRIDGE by EDDIE KANTAR 8

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

Opening lead: ♥Q.

Bidding commentary: Routine, if you go along with “No Stayman with a 4-3-3-3 hand pattern.” Most top players abandon Stayman with this distribution.

Defensive commentary: As East, when partner leads the ♥Q and you have K-x or A-x, overtake and return the suit to drive out declarer’s lone stopper without blocking the suit. If you do that, partner can clear hearts, keeping the ♣A as the entry to the established hearts.

Play commentary: As South, assuming East plays the ♥K at trick one (indicating shortness), duck the first heart, win the second, and lead the ♣J! Why? You have eight tricks outside of clubs and need at least one club trick to make the contract. If West has the ♣A plus a likely five-card heart suit, you are a dead man walking. Alternatively, if East has the ♣A, you can’t lose the contract. The reason for leading the jack is that it looks for all the world like you are taking a finesse.

If West is taken in by this little piece of skullduggery and ducks, you have stolen your ninth trick!

Defensive commentary #2: As West, assuming South wins the second or third heart and leads the ♣J, don’t be greedy! Take the money (the setting tricks) and run. If you stop to work it out, partner can’t have the ♣Q! Dummy has 13 and declarer has 15-17, so assume 16. This means the opponents have 29 HCP give or take one point. Your side has 11 HCP give or take a point. You have 8 HCP and partner has shown 3 with the ♥K for 11. So guess who has the ♣Q? Good thinking: They do. Nonetheless, leading the jack from the Q-J towards the king in dummy is a neat way to hypnotize second hand into ducking with the ace. You are becoming so tricky.