

NABC - Fall - 2017 - San Diego
THINKING BRIDGE by EDDIE KANTAR 9

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

Opening lead: ♦K.

Bidding commentary: How should one respond to a 2♣ opening bid with a bust (no ace, no king and no two queens)? One method is to respond 2♥ directly. Another is to start with 2♦, denying a strong suit. If opener bids 2♥ or 2♠, a rebid of 3♣, artificial, shows a bust. If opener bids 3♣, a 3♦ rebid by responder, artificial, shows a bust.

Another possibility is to show high-card points at once by steps. A fourth method is to show controls (ace and kings) by steps. Each method has its pluses and minuses. What's important is a partnership agreement. Even a bad agreement is better than no agreement. In this case, 2♦ followed by 3♦ over 3♣ was used to show a bust.

Defensive commentary: East plays the ♦10 at trick one, higher equal when encouraging. Given the looks of this dummy, a passive defense (avoid breaking new suits) is in order. As West, continue with a low diamond at trick two as requested. **Play commentary:** As South, ruff the second diamond high! If clubs divide 2-2, you can pull trumps then use ♣9 for an entry to dummy – assuming you saved the precious ♣4. After clubs divide 2-2, it can't cost to play your spades in case the suit breaks 3-3. It's your lucky day: they do! Now it is easy enough to cross to the ♣9, discard a heart on dummy's ♠8, and take the heart finesse for an overtrick. Be sure to tell your partner after you make an overtrick that in the future you expect her to bid more aggressively with wonderful hands.

When holding a powerful trump suit facing a bleak dummy and forced to ruff early, consider ruffing high rather than low. That low trump may be your salvation – it may be your only entry to dummy!