

THINKING BRIDGE - - By Eddie Kantar

(From - NABC -Fall - 20o15 - Denver - Co;orad 2)

♠ 9 2
♥ Q J 5
♦ A K Q 6
♣ J 9 4 3

♠ A K Q J 10
♥ A 6 2
♦ J
♣ A 10 8 7

Partner opens 1♦, you respond 1♠, and after partner rebids 1NT, you jump to 3♣, forcing, as you play. Partner rebids 3NT and you throw caution to the wind and leap to 6♠. West leads the ♥10. Plan the play.

Solution

You actually have 12 top tricks without any finesses if you play a low heart from dummy and win the ace. Draw as many trumps as needed, discarding clubs from dummy, cash the ♦J and now a heart, forcing a heart entry to dummy after someone takes the king. You have 12 tricks: five spades, four diamonds, two hearts and one club. Three of your clubs go away on dummy's diamonds.

Playing a heart honor at trick one is fraught with danger as it may hold the trick. Now you no longer have an entry to dummy's diamonds without overtaking the jack, costing you a diamond trick. In order to make up for the lost diamond trick, your best chance to recover is to take two club finesses starting at trick two while you still have a return diamond entry to dummy. You have a good chance of surviving your trick-one blunder, but if there is any justice West will have both club honors.

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

Take your time before playing to trick one and count your sure tricks first. Also, notice any blocked suit (diamonds) and the entry problems they often create.

As East, there is no good reason to play the ♥K at trick one if declarer calls for the queen. South is marked with the ace, and ducking may deprive declarer of a later needed dummy entry.