

Thinking bridge By Eddie Kantar

NABC Summer 2018 - Atlanta 9

Defense to weak two-bid. Responding to invitational 4NT. Two-way suit counting

Dlr: East		♠ 7 3 2	
Vul: None		♥ K 7	
		♦ A Q 5 3	
		♣ A K 10 2	
♠ 6		♠ K Q J 9 8 5	
♥ 10 8 6 4 3 2		♥ 9 5	
♦ 7 4		♦ 9 6 2	
♣ J 8 4 3		♣ 9 7	
	♠ A 10 4		
	♥ A Q J		
	♦ K J 10 8		
	♣ Q 6 5		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		2♠	2NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	6NT
All Pass			
Opening lead: ♠6.			

Bidding commentary: As South, your 2NT overcall shows 15-18 HCP. North's raise to 4NT is invitational, not Blackwood. There are several ways to accept a 4NT invitation. One is to bid 6NT directly, another is to hedge by bidding 5NT, not forcing, giving partner the last say. A third is to name a four-card minor at the five level, which is forcing to at least 5NT or six of the minor. If partner happens to have the matching four-card minor, you can play slam in your 4-4 fit. A 4-4 fit frequently plays one trick better than notrump. On this layout, 6♦ is cold, 6NT is not.

Lead Commentary: A weak two-bid bid is supposed to show a decent suit, the reason for the lead.

Defensive commentary #1: As East, play the ♠J at trick one. If the jack holds, return the king. Standard third-hand play with three or more equal honors when partner leads the suit is lowest then highest. Defensive

Defensive commentary: #2: If South cashes red-suit winners, discard spades, the suit where your length is known. Do not discard from shortness, it exposes partner's holding when you show out.

Play commentary: As South, you have 11 top tricks and have to bring in clubs for four tricks. If clubs are 3-3 or the jack drops, no problem. However, if West has ♣J x x x, the winning play is the king, the queen, and then low to the 10. Clubs is a two-way suit, meaning that (1) clubs should be the last suit played; (2) this is a counting hand. It can't hurt to duck the first spade, win the second and rattle off four diamonds and three hearts, discarding a spade from dummy. If you do, you discover that East, the player with the known long suit, the hand to count, started with six spades, two hearts, three diamonds and, therefore, two clubs. If East has two clubs, West has four. Cash the ♠K, return to the ♠Q and lead a club to the 10. The finesse has to work! You counted!