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Bridge Tips Tannah Hirsch

1st June 2010 East-West vulnerable. South deals.

	NORTH A 5 7 6 4 A K Q 2 9 8 6 4	
WEST J 10 9 8 6 A Q J 3 2 Void 10 7 3		EAST K 7 4 10 9 8 J 10 9 5 4 3 J
	SOUTH Q 3 2 K 5 8 7 6 A K Q 5 2	

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 Club	2 Club	2 Diamond	X
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: Jack of

Here's another "Thinking Bridge" deal, part of Eddie Kantar's excellent series for players who are eager to improve their game.

"The two-club overcall (a Michael's Cue-Bid) typically shows 5-5 in the majors with 7-11 high-card points. It can also show 15+ HCP, but partner assumes the minimum for the time being. North's two-spade cuebid shows opening bid strength with a spade stopper. It asks partner to bid no trump with a heart stopper. East doubles two spades to make sure partner leads a spade against any eventual contract.

"East has asked for a spade lead and West obliges. West hopes East has a quick spade entry and will lead a heart through declarer's king.

"... Judging from the double of two spades, East has the king of spades and will surely punch a heart through your king if he gets on lead. You, on the other hand, barring 4-0 clubs, have at least nine tricks by simply winning the ace of spades and cashing out: five clubs, three diamonds and the ace of spades makes nine.

"So what's the problem? In case you didn't notice, the problem is, if the clubs break 3-1 the suit is blocked! If you cash the A K Q, playing low clubs from dummy, the fourth round of clubs will be won by North. ... You have no way back to your hand to cash the fifth club and, if the diamonds don't break 3-3, down you go. ...

"If you notice the club block, you can survive it. Unblock the 9, 8 and 6 under the ace, king and queen. Now when you play the 5 you can triumphantly underplay dummy's 4 and take a fifth club trick with the 2."

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