

# Kantár on Kontract



*Eddie Kantár*

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*Why did I write this book?*

## *Introduction*

I have been writing bridge columns since my university days, and even back then I was ghosting syndicated columns, too (you don't want to know what they paid me). Then, finally, in the early sixties I got my own column in the *Valley Green Sheet*, a San Fernando Valley paper with a large circulation. Eventually though, after some years, the paper bought into a syndicate which supplied them with a bridge column, so out I went. Then I landed a column in the *Evening Outlook*, a now defunct Santa Monica newspaper. All this time I was still feeding material to several syndicated columnists who always seemed to be in need of another 'good hand'. The bottom line is that I saved all these columns over the years (never throw away a good bridge hand, there's always someone out there who hasn't seen it).

So the process of 'writing' this book was to read through all this material, toss out the losers and keep the winners. I wound up with about two hundred real winners; don't ask how many real losers I pitched. Then my publisher helped to refine the list even further, to the *crème de la crème* that you will find in these pages. There's been some discreet editing, too, of course: we all had a good laugh over the column that originally described Benito Garozzo as a 'promising new young player'.

In making the final selection, I hoped to combine equal amounts of humor and instruction, along with some great stories and great bridge hands. But most of all, I wanted it to be something people would enjoy reading. So — enjoy!

*Eddie Kantar*

*Bridge players like to set records. Well, here's one Paul Soloway and I set that we would both like to forget.*

## The Hall of Shame

Neither vul.

	<b>North</b>		
	♠ A K Q 6		
	♥ K		
	♦ A Q 10 4		
	♣ K 7 6 4		
<b>West</b> (Soloway)		<b>East</b> (me)	
♠ J 5 4		♠ 10 9 8 2	
♥ 6 5		♥ A 10 9 3 2	
♦ K J 9 3 2		♦ 8	
♣ Q J 5		♣ A 9 8	
	<b>South</b>		
	♠ 7 3		
	♥ Q J 8 7 4		
	♦ 7 6 5		
	♣ 10 3 2		

West	North	East	South
	2♦	pass	2♥
pass	2♠	pass	3♣
pass	4♣	all pass	

*Opening lead: ♣5*

Are you impressed with the contract? Perhaps an explanation is in order.

North-South were playing a Roman 2♦ opening which showed a powerful three-suited hand with 17-24 HCP, the short suit unknown. South bid 2♥, telling North that if hearts was one of his suits, 2♥ would be a wonderful contract. North's bid of 2♠ showed heart shortness. South decided that it would be better to play in clubs rather than spades and bid 3♣; North didn't get the joke and raised. So now you know.

The best lead against one of these auctions is usually a trump so Paul decided to lead the five from the ♣Q-J-5.

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

Dummy played low and I cleverly inserted the ♣8 which lost to the ten. At Trick 2 declarer led a heart to the king and ace. Never dreaming that Paul had underled the queen-jack of clubs, and under the delusion that South had four of them, I exited with the ace and a club.

And so it came to pass that Paul and I, with a combined defensive trump holding of the AQJ985, took one trick! Surely this record will stand forever. Oh yes, we still managed to beat the bloody hand one trick. Two people who had never played bridge before in their lives would have beaten it two or three tricks.

*Can you do worse?*

*How many times has your partner started with ten tricks and ended with less? How does starting with twelve and ending with eight grab you? It's called a multiple compression play.*

N-S vul.

**West**

♠ 7 6 3  
 ♥ K Q 9 7 4  
 ♦ 10 5  
 ♣ 6 5 3

**North**

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



**East**

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

**South**

♠ A Q 9 5 2  
 ♥ J 5  
 ♦ K J 4  
 ♣ K Q 2



<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
		1 ♦	1 ♠
pass	2 ♠	pass	4 ♠
dbl!	all pass		

*Opening lead:* ♦ 10

South, Harvey Cohen, Los Angeles bridge expert and stock-broker (in that order — until this hand) was faced with playing 4♠, doubled by West.

‘What could West possibly have for his double?’ mused Cohen as East rose with the ♦ A at Trick 1 and returned the ♦ 9 to Harvey’s jack. Certainly he must have the ♠ K and a high heart honor, but what else? Well, if West has three spades headed by the king, the hand is hopeless. West will win a spade finesse and lead a heart over to East to get a diamond ruff.

Cohen hatched a plan. He would try to sneak a spade by West. Cohen led a low spade towards dummy. If West has the king and ducks, dummy’s jack wins, a spade can be led to the ace and clubs started. If West has at least three clubs, one heart can be discarded before West can ruff in with the ♠ K. It was a wonderful plan...

A low spade was led and when East won the king, Cohen turned purple. East returned a diamond, West ruffed and two hearts later Cohen was down 500. As the cards lie, declarer can actually take twelve tricks! Say Cohen enters dummy with the ♣ A at Trick 3 and takes a winning spade finesse by leading the jack. A low spade is led to the ace and when the king appears, Cohen wins the ace, cashes the king and queen of clubs and enters dummy with the ♠ 10, chucking both of his hearts on winning clubs.

Harvey swears that his advice on stocks and bonds does not match his play of this hand.

## *Everyone's favorite bridge writer!*

Eddie Kantar scores again, this time with a collection of some of his best pieces from more than forty years of writing. In this treasury of short articles, you'll find

- Great stories
- Great bridge hands
- Some of Eddie's greatest bridge disasters
- Tips to help your own game
- Problems to test your play and defense

...and much., much more.



**EDDIE KANTAR:** World Champion, many times National Champion, Bridge Hall of Famer, is the author of dozens of books on bridge. He is a regular contributor to numerous bridge magazines, and frequent bidding panel member. He is also much sought-after as a lecturer and teacher, and frequently hosts bridge cruises. His most recent books have included *Modern Bridge Defense*, *Advanced Bridge Defense*, *Topics in Declarer Play* and *Classic Kantar*.

