

# 14. Beating the Robots

By Ron Klinger

East dealer : North-South vulnerable

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	?

What would you do as South with:

♠ J853  
♥ A3  
♦ AK  
♣ KQ1087

In this situation, North's raise will be based on 4-card support and about 6-9 points. You have 17 HCP and you can count one more each for the doubletons. It is reasonable to take a shot at game.

One of the attractive options when you play on BBO ([www.bridgebase.com](http://www.bridgebase.com)) with robots is that you can choose to play deals that have been previously played in top-level tournaments. This arose in a USA National Open Teams Knockout:

East dealer : North-South vulnerable

	North	
	♠ Q762	
	♥ KJ106	
	♦ 43	
	♣ J65	
West		East
♠ K109		♠ A4
♥ Q754		♥ 982
♦ Q10765		♦ J982
♣ 3		♣ A942
	South	
	♠ J853	
	♥ A3	
	♦ AK	
	♣ KQ1087	

Playing on BBO with a friend (North), I had the above problem and jumped to 4♠, all pass. Robot West led the ♣3 to the ♣A. Robot East returned the ♣4: king – ♠9 – ♣6. There were still two top trumps to lose and so the result was one down, East-West +100.

We were in august company, namely:

West	North	East	South
<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Lee</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Glubok</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Steve Weinstein (W) led ♦5: three – jack – ace. Brian Glubok (S) played ♥3 to ♥K and the ♠2: four – jack – king. West switched to ♣3: five – ace – eight. Bobby Levin (E) returned the ♣2. West ruffed, East-West +100.

At the other table, Ralph Katz (S) did much better after 1♣ : 1♥, 1♠ : 2♠. He jumped to 3NT!

Everyone passed 3NT and Bob Hamman (W) led the  $\diamond 6$ : three – jack – ace. South knocked out the  $\clubsuit A$ , won the diamond return and ran the clubs. When West let the hearts go, South made ten tricks, +630 and +12 Imps. Even if West had kept his hearts,  $\heartsuit A$  and the  $\heartsuit 3$  to the  $\heartsuit J$  would see 3NT make.

With neither side vulnerable, South deals and opens  $1\diamond$ . What would you do as West with:

$\spadesuit$  A1087652  
 $\heartsuit$  5  
 $\diamond$  7  
 $\clubsuit$  AQ93

In this problem, Robot West overcalled  $1\spadesuit$ .

South dealer : Nil vulnerable

	North	
	$\spadesuit$ J3	
	$\heartsuit$ KQ972	
	$\diamond$ J63	
	$\clubsuit$ K54	
West		East
$\spadesuit$ A1087652		$\spadesuit$ K4
$\heartsuit$ 5		$\heartsuit$ J8643
$\diamond$ 7		$\diamond$ KQ9
$\clubsuit$ AQ93		$\clubsuit$ 1072
	South	
	$\spadesuit$ Q9	
	$\heartsuit$ A10	
	$\diamond$ A108542	
	$\clubsuit$ J86	

West	North	East	South
		Pass	$1\diamond$
$1\spadesuit$	Dble <sup>(1)</sup>	1NT	Pass
$2\spadesuit$	Dble <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	$3\diamond$
Pass	Pass	Pass	

(1) Takeout, 4+ hearts

(2) Takeout

The result was one down, East-West +50.

The deal originated in the 2007 Australian Open Teams Playoff and the East-West humans did better than the East-West BBO robots.

West	North	East	South
<i>Hans</i>	<i>Lazer</i>	<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Gumby</i>
		Pass	$1\diamond$
$1\spadesuit$	$2\heartsuit$ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	Pass
$2\spadesuit$	Pass	$3\spadesuit!$	Pass
$4\spadesuit$	Pass	Pass	Pass

(1) Natural, not forcing

North led the  $\spadesuit J$ : four – nine – ace. West played the  $\diamond 7$ : six – king – ace. South returned the  $\heartsuit A$ , then  $\heartsuit 10$ . West ruffed, crossed to the  $\spadesuit K$  and pitched the  $\clubsuit 3$  on dummy's  $\diamond Q$ . Next came the  $\clubsuit 10$ : six – nine – king and West had ten tricks, +420.

At the other table, Peter Gill (S) opened  $1\diamond$ , Murray Green (W) bid  $4\spadesuit$ , Paul Gosney (N) doubled ('do what's right, partner'), all pass. North led  $\heartsuit K$  and switched to  $\clubsuit 4$ . West lost a heart, a diamond and a club, +590, +5 Imps.

*No game was ever won by resigning. (Chess master, Savielli Tartakower)*