

Maritha's Teaching Points

Sometimes The Bots Do Double

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Hands are from Instant Tournament on BBO, October 8, 2021.

Hand #9

North
(Robot)
♠K6
♥A8754
♦97
♣K762

West
(Robot)
♠J8
♥QJ10632
♦A32
♣AQ

East
(Robot)
♠97532
♥—
♦Q8654
♣954

South
(MarithaP)
♠AQ104
♥K9
♦KJ10
♣J1083

E W Vulnerable; Dealer North

The Bidding:

West	North	East	South
	P	P	1♣
1♥	P	1♠	P
2♥	X	P	P
P			

The bots rarely seem to make low-level penalty doubles. Today was an exception. Bots North and East passed. I opened 1♣. (Some people would open a “chunky” 14 HCP NT with all the 10s and honors backing each other up, but that’s not my style.)

West overcalled 1♥, and partner passed. (The bots evidently DO trust that partner will reopen with a double when short in hearts in this kind of auction.) East tried running to 1♠, but Bot West rebid 2♥. North then doubled—clearly for penalty on this auction. I was happy to pass.

North led the ♠K—presumably top of a doubleton. I played the ♠4, and Bot North continued to my ♠Q, as the ♠J fell from West. I could have played another spade so North would have a chance to overruff, but partner has to hold something in clubs, so it looked like it was more imperative to lead clubs from my side. The ♣J went to the ♣Q and ♣K. North returned the ♣7 which I ducked to the ♣A—holding the ♣108 over Dummy's ♣9.

West tried the ♦A and a diamond to the ♦Q and my ♦K. I led a spade. West ruffed with the ♥10, and North discarded a club. West played a third round of diamonds, and North discarded another club as I won with the ♦J. I played a fourth round of spades, and West ruffed with the ♥J, overruffed by North's ♥A.

North next played the ♥8 (??) to my ♥K. I played a top club, and West ruffed with the ♥3 as North overruffed with the ♥5. North returned the ♥4 to my ♥9 and West's ♥Q. West's ♥6 lost to the ♥7 in the North for 1100 our way and a near top board.

Hand #12

North (Robot)		East (Robot)
♠109762		♠A53
♥—		♥AJ106
♦109432		♦A87
♣J72		♣1086
West (Robot)		
♠QJ84		
♥9543		
♦65		
♣K43		
	South (MarithaP)	
	♠K	
	♥KQ872	
	♦KQJ	
	♣AQ95	

N S Vulnerable; Dealer West

The Bidding:

West	North	East	South
P	P	1♣	1♥
X	P	1NT	P

P P

This hand was a **lesson for the people who have not learned the value of “Pass” as a bid**. West and North passed, and East opened 1♣. I overcalled 1♥ and West made a negative double—showing 4 spades and at least 6 HCP. North passed. East rebid 1NT.

My 20 HCP is now down to 17 HCP because my ♠K is a useless card. Furthermore, partner has 0-2 HCP on this auction, and we are vulnerable. Some people rebid 2♥ and usually went down two or more tricks. Some people doubled 1♣ originally and North kept on “correcting” to spades—not a happy ending. 4♠ was down four—miraculously undoubled two or three times, and 3♠ was down 3, doubled.

Since East had opened 1♣, I decided to hope that partner had long diamonds, and led the ♦K. Everyone ducked. Thrilled with Dummy’s diamond holding, I continued with the ♦Q and ♦J. East won the third round of diamonds with the ♦A and cashed the ♠A as my ♠K fell.

Bot East took a strange line at that point. It never tried leading a club toward the ♣K. It led a spade to the ♠Q, as I showed out, discarding a heart. Then a heart to the ♥A (!) as North discarded a spade. East played a spade to the ♠J, and gave North a spade trick.

My conclusion is that Bot East’s algorithms had concluded that NORTH was likely to hold the ♣A. [I have shown up with ♦KQJ; stiff ♠K; and was known to hold the ♥KQ from the bidding.] East was hoping that North would cash two diamonds and one spade, but then be forced to give Dummy a club trick.

Alas for East! North did win the spade and two diamonds as I discarded all my low clubs. A club to my Ace, and I had two more heart winners. ♣