

# Board of the Week 78

By Dick Chapman

BBO "Just play bridge" solitaire is even less real than the weekly tournament. Check this hand and auction I had recently:

	♠3 ♥KJ32 ♦AKQJ1072 ♣K		
♠ ♥ ♦ ♣		♠ ♥ ♦ ♣	
	♠AK ♥AQ754 ♦853 ♣A85		
North	East	South	West
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♠*	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥*	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♣*	Pass	6♦*	Pass
6♥	All pass		

\*3 spades (alertable) is a splinter in support of hearts. Non-alertable calls: 5 hearts is 2 key cards without the queen, and 6 clubs is I have the club king." Do you remember what 6 diamonds is? I described this in a couple of previous articles. It says "bid the grand slam if you have the king of this suit." So why did North Bot stop at 6 hearts? What would you do? I will get back to this question later.

But here we are in 6 hearts and I get the 4 of diamonds. The bot doesn't hear me screaming at the contract, and I shouldn't be screaming anyway...I should be thinking about playing the contract I am in. About this time I began to see a problem. Why did West Bot lead a diamond? I know now...I'm about to get ruffed. Sure enough, East Bot plays the heart 10. I won the return (club) and breezed to easy 12 tricks.

Here's that question again: As North Human, would you bid 7 hearts? The correct answer is no. The solid long diamond says "beware of a ruff." So should North bid 6 hearts? NO! North should bid the safe-ish 7 diamonds. Besides, it's 150 honors that way. Just kidding about the honors, but I'm not kidding about the final contract.

One more question. If you ask partner to bid 7 hearts holding the diamond king, and partner bids 7 diamonds, do you silently curse your partner and unilaterally bid 7 hearts anyway? Or do you trust your partner and pass 7 diamonds? The TV show was ungrammatically named "Who Do You Trust?" and in this case the answer had better be "My partner." If you

can't trust your partner, what time is it? Answer: time to get another partner.

By the way, you have to have a partner who trusts you to pass 7 diamonds. In other words, you must be a partner that your partner can trust. It works both way.

Now a second question. As East, if the contract is 7 hearts, what is your call? Answer: double. This is a Lightner double asking for an unusual lead, generally the suit first bid by dummy. Without the double, West might make a "normal" lead against a grand slam, which would be a trump. The full hand:

	♠3 ♥KJ32 ♦AKQJ1072 ♣K	
♠QJ1064 ♥6 ♦964 ♣J962		♠98752 ♥1098 ♦ ♣Q10743
	♠AK ♥AQ754 ♦853 ♣A85	

A third question is whether BBO "cheats" by causing the auction to stop at 6 hearts. Or does BBO Standard not include a response to my 6 diamonds? I don't think it's a cheat, because a cheat would bid the laydown 7 diamonds.

The BBO "Just Play Bridge" room is not "bridge." South Human is almost always the declarer, and weak BBO bots are defending.

You want real bridge? Come to the Curtis Finch Bridge House and find lots of it, with your LRDBC friends and guests. You can't cuss them like you cuss the bots, but you will have a lot more fun. And your friends play better than those @\$\*#@ bots. And your partner will surely bid 7 diamonds. If you get there, I don't want to be your defenders because I'm getting a zero on the board.