

Bridge ♠ By Phillip Alder

WHERE TO FIND THE EXTRA TRICK?

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: Neither

North 02-28-19

♠ A K 9 4 3 2

♥ 7 2

♦ J 7 6 4

♣ 4

West

♠ J 8 5

♥ 10 6 4

♦ A K Q 10

♣ 6 5 3

East

♠ Q 7 6

♥ Q 9

♦ 8 3

♣ A J 10 8 7 2

South

♠ 10

♥ A K J 8 5 3

♦ 9 5 2

♣ K Q 9

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	All Pass

Opening lead: ♦ A

Wernher von Braun, he of rocket technology fame, said, "The best computer is a man, and it's the only one that can be mass-produced by unskilled labor."

There were nine entries in last year's world computer bridge championship, one each from China, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Japan and the Netherlands, and two from the United States: Bridge Baron

and Meadowlark Bridge. The programs were written by skilled labor -- and they took many, many man-hours to produce.

This deal featured an excellent defense by the Indian entry, TCS (Tata Consulting Services) BridgeBot. How did the play proceed in three hearts by South? What do you think of the auction?

Considering the bidding first, North's raise to three hearts was debatable, despite having only seven losers and a singleton. South had indicated 12-14 points, and although at teams scoring one pushes hard to reach game, settling for a partscore is right occasionally. North might have rebid two spades on the theory that then the North hand would have generated more winners by collecting several trump tricks. But since hearts was known to be at least a 6-2 fit and spades could have been 6-0, not bidding two spades was understandable. (Two spades probably would have made.)

Against three hearts, the West TCS BridgeBot took its three top diamond winners, East showing its doubleton before discarding an encouraging club. Then West, realizing that there was no hurry to cash the club ace, led its fourth diamond, which East correctly ruffed with the heart queen to promote a trump trick for West. It was a textbook uppercut.