

INTRODUCTION

The game of hearts is an ancient game that dates back to the Greek city of Ephesus located on what is now the Turkish coast of the Aegean Sea. It was originally called "Leona" for Helen of Troy's sister who was as ugly as Helen was beautiful. To attract Leona's notice (the taking of hearts) was considered bad for a Greek's health, and to win her hand (the queen of spades) was considered lethal. One of Aristophanes' later comedies maintained that Leona's face could sink a thousand ships.

HOW A COMPUTER PLAYS HEARTS

In much the same way that Santa's reindeer are able to fly, the "chip" inside your computer is able to think. The computer doesn't play like you do, but rather as you think you do. It is a rule-based "Expert System" that uses human advice to make its own choices. It develops general rules based on specific examples, i.e., leading high hearts when not Shooting the Moon is bad policy.

These rules allow your computer to look at any trick, in the context of the whole game, and decide which card to play. This choice does not always turn out for the best. Most choices are gambles and sometimes the computer gambles poorly. The evaluation of these possibilities is how the different playing styles, discussed below, are achieved in **Hearts Deluxe**. A careful reading of the strategy guide will tell you much about how **Hearts Deluxe** plays hearts.

"You have a world model and you consider alternatives. If this thing could talk, it could describe this internal process, and it could tell you, 'Yeah..I considered going around there, but it didn't seem like a good idea because...'"

Hans Moravec

The telepathy window under the Show Me menu is an attempt to get "this thing to talk." I hope you find it interesting.

YOUR OPPONENTS

(READ THIS ONLY IF YOU DON'T LIKE MYSTERIES.)

ZAK is the most aggressive player. He will attempt to Shoot the Moon more frequently than Rob or Jen, and will be more willing to take a heart in pursuit

of the jack of diamonds or other goals. He's also a member of the Hair Club for Men, but that's neither here nor there.

Rob is the most conservative. Don't expect him to Shoot the Moon too often, and when he does, be very afraid. Rob is the bully who used to beat you up in elementary school. During his wild frat days, he did lots of coke, which explains why he's so thin.

Jen is somewhere in between. An enthusiastic participant, she is there to play, as well as to win. She learned this positive attitude during her years in the N.Y.P.D. Her investigative skills serve her well in her current profession -- Swedish Hearts Master.

Depending on your own style, any one of your opponents could be the "best."