

TALES OF AKARANA

TAUGHT IN THEORY: PROVEN AT THE TABLE

If you were forced to write down good and bad aspects of a bridge hand, then theory suggests that where you only have a 4-4 trump fit, having a singleton in partner's first bid suit is not a great asset. Half the North-South pairs at Akarana this week would agree ruefully with that statement as they recorded minus scores on Board 15.

How good is the following North hand after the uninterrupted sequence?

North	South
	1♣
1♦	1♥
?	
♠ J62	♥ AK84
♦ AQ854	♣ 4

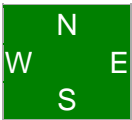
Good trumps, a nice five card side-suit, a singleton and 14 hcp. Is it worth any more than a raise to game? It almost is but it isn't because the singleton is in partner's first bid suit.

Similarly, how good is the South hand after this uninterrupted sequence?

North	South
	1♣
1♦	1♥
4♥	?
♠ KQ4	♥ QJ76
♦ T	♣ AQJ73

OK trumps, a good unbid suit, a singleton and an above average suit of your own. 15hcp. Are you on the cusp of moving? If the answer is “yes”, then have you considered the one really poor aspect, that the singleton is in partner’s first bid suit? So, do you make a move? Some did...and paid the price.

Board 15 ♠ J 6 2
 South Deals ♥ A K 8 4
 N-S Vul ♦ A Q 8 5 4
 ♣ 4

♠ A 8 7 ♥ 10 9 5 2 ♦ 7 6 2 ♣ 10 8 6		♠ 10 9 5 3 ♥ 3 ♦ K J 9 3 ♣ K 9 5 2
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♠ K Q 4
 ♥ Q J 7 6
 ♦ 10
 ♣ A Q J 7 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♣
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

Slam was never going to be easy even if the trump break was friendly. Even “Deep Finesse” who knows which way to take the club finesse and not to take the diamond finesse could only come to 11 tricks. With that ♠A a certain loser, you had to be a very good guesser in the minor suits to score more than 10 tricks. While one or both minor suit kings might have been in a 2 or 3 card suit, the odds are against that occurring.

I watched partner misguess where the ♣K was and carefully come to just 10 tricks. That was worth a lot of imps Swiss Pairs scoring, because others had ignored the fact that singletons, two of them, in partner’s first bid suits were just not great assets. Case proven.

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