

TALES OF AKARANA



Playing with Stanley...and like him!
Well, that has to be a compliment. It certainly would be true on the following board from play at Akarana. The moral of what follows is:

Never be fazed

By the difficulty of the contract
By a lack of trumps ... Or both!
So, Owen Camp held the following:

♠A96 ♥874 ♦654 ♣K1085

and heard his partner, Stanley, open 1♦
and his right hand opponent overcall 1♥.

What should he bid? Enough to be in the action but nowhere to go. A negative double shows a 4 card spade suit. Owen did not have four. So, he could not double. Instead, he bid 1♠.

What? You think that shows more than four spades?
Shh..do not tell Owen. Three is enough for him!



Owen's left hand opponent supported hearts and pretty soon, Owen found himself in 4♠ on the lead of ♥A. These were the four hands:

Board 9	♠ Q J 10		
North Deals	♥ J 3		
E-W Vul	♦ A K Q J		
	♣ A J 9 4		
♠ 7 4 3 2		♠ K 8 5	
♥ A 10 5		♥ K Q 9 6 2	
♦ 10 7		♦ 9 8 3 2	
♣ Q 7 6 3		♣ 2	

A good dummy? “Thanks partner”. Stanley spread out his trumps. The number did not increase by doing so!

The defence started with three rounds of hearts with Owen ruffing the third round in dummy. Next came ♠Q and then ♠J covered and won with the ace. West must have been mildly surprised when their partner followed to the third round of trumps. (Remember, Stanley was literally playing the dummy hand: it is not as though he had been the creative one.)

However, West’s surprise turned to agony by what happened next... four rounds of diamonds. West could ruff or not ruff but not ruffing meant throwing a couple of clubs while ruffing meant leading away from the ♣Q.

West could choose their poison but either way, this “sub moysian” fit had enabled Owen to make 10 tricks.

A couple of North-South pairs were successful in 3NT (heart lead out of turn?) but a couple were not and the rest of the field played and made club partials.

Maybe we have a new definition to the bid of 1♠ in the sequence:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	1♠

In olden days, it used to show a five card or longer spade suit. Nowadays, the correct definition is “any number of spades but not four”.

Never ever be put off or fazed. If you find yourself short in the number of spades. In trumps, quality not quantity is extremely handy

And a decent dummy provided by Stanley. *Richard Solomon*