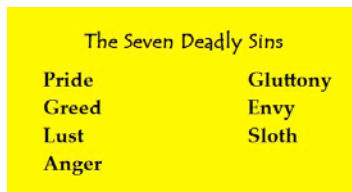


TALES OF AKARANA

PREEMPTING A PRE-EMPT: The Eighth Deadly Sin



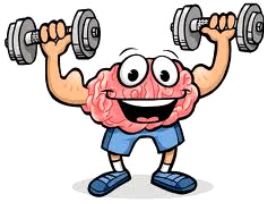
Do you? Should you? What are the dangers? Can your partnership pull up short of disaster?

These are some of the questions generated by Board 23 this week.

Look at the West hand and decide if you would overcall with this hand after South opened 3♣ in first seat. Both sides are vulnerable.

♠ AJT65 ♥ 5 ♦ QJT543 ♣ 9

If you bid, are you indeed guilty of the sin (it normally is) of preempting a pre-empt? The pre-empt does make it more likely that you will find a fit somewhere unless partner is overburdened with hearts and clubs. Partner may be flat and if so, may not be strong enough to re-open in the pass-out seat. If they do, with say both majors, will you ever know how high to bid on your hand, which is so full of potential?



Are you strong enough?

These questions explain why we continue to pre-empt. Pre-empts cause problems for the opposition. Partner too. However, there are two opponents and just one partner.

If I can I like to bid and did call with the above hand. Not showing a two-suiter with 4♣. That's too rich for me. Just a gentle 3♦. The plan was to allow partner to call a major, realistically hearts and then I could bid out the shape of my hand.

Of course, it did not work out like that. North used up space with 4♣ with partner making a very strong slam try with 5♣. I would have loved to have accepted and all would have been good on the day but we subsided in 5♦.

Board 23
 South Deals
 Both Vul

♠ A J 10 6 5 ♥ 5 ♦ Q J 10 5 4 3 ♣ 9	♠ 9 8 4 ♥ A 10 9 4 3 2 ♦ K 2 ♣ K 7	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W S E </div>	♠ K 7 3 ♥ K Q J 8 ♦ A 8 7 6 ♣ A 2
	♠ Q 2 ♥ 7 6 ♦ 9 ♣ Q J 10 8 6 5 4 3		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
3♦	4♣	5♣	3♣
5♦	All pass		Pass

Maybe partner could have used Key-Card after 4♣. Two key-cards would make slam reasonable. However, I had only one, meaning we could have been missing two aces.

What would have happened had I passed....in tempo! North may have bid hearts, forcing at the three level with East not having an appropriate bid despite being 17 high. South would retreat to 4♣ and someone in our partnership would need to find a bid. I would rather find it at the three than at the four level.

Most played the board in 4♠, sometimes by East but mainly by West. Only Bev and Allan Morris found their way to slam, 6♠, making an overtrick. I was both happy and sad that partner passed 5♦, though our slam was no better than 50%. One might wonder what values South had for their pre-empt after North led the ♣K. Only if North had made a constructive bid would West feel North might have the ♦K.

All East-Wests recorded a plus score. This board almost feels like the exception to the bridge rule that “you never pre-empt a pre-empt”. As we all know, you “never” say “never” in bridge and the opposition will always continue pre-empting!

Richard Solomon