

Tales of Akarana

Passing...and Doubling

What is the highest number of high card points you have ever held when you passed your partner's opening three-level pre-empt?

Secondly, would you double the following 4♥ contract after the following bidding:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	2♣	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
?			

With both sides vulnerable, as West you hold:

♠ 432

♥ AT8

♦ QT8654

♣ J

A Heavy Pass

I am not sure that my passing partner's first in hand 3♣ pre-empt on the following would make that Guinness Book of (Bridge) Records but it seemed a very conservative action at the time...and might be construed when the board result was decided, to be incorrect.

<i>Board 2</i>	♠ J 7 5	
East Deals	♥ —	
N-S Vul	♦ 10 9 8 7 2	
	♣ A J 9 5 4	
♠ 8 4 3 2		♠ K 6
♥ A K 9 7 5	W N E	♥ J 8 2

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

Pretty good red suits but where were all those spades going...and the odds of partner having three hearts seemed anti-percentage? So, everyone passed out 3♣ with South, Owen Camp, leading a heart. On the sight of dummy, he offered declarer 9 tricks, an offer which should have been accepted as the contract went two down!

Rising with the ♥A did not help declarer but the club break scuttled the contract. Had I called 3♥, I would certainly have been raised to the 4 level...which our "machine expert" has at down 1. That presumably would be after a spade lead. Yet, it seems North may well lead a diamond...and then? Declarer will play a spade...and South a trump...and it becomes rather interesting. It is unlikely to be a worse score for E/W than failing by two tricks in 3♣.

Double Trouble...but for whom?

What though of the second problem? You have three nice trumps and a singleton in your partner's overcall suit, a vulnerable two level overcall at that. Surely "unders" were more likely than "overs"? Red card time. Right?

<p>Board 4 West Deals Both Vul</p> <p>♠ 4 3 2 ♥ A 10 8 ♦ Q 10 8 6 5 4 ♣ J</p>	<p>♠ A J 8 7 6 ♥ K 5 4 ♦ 3 ♣ K 7 3 2</p> <div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border: none; text-align: center; width: 40px; height: 40px;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		<p>♠ K Q 9 5 ♥ J ♦ A 9 ♣ Q 10 9 6 5 4</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ Q 9 7 6 3 2 ♦ K J 7 2 ♣ A 8</p>
	N										
W		E									
	S										

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♠	2 ♣	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Dbl	All pass		

There seemed bad and good news in the first two tricks. The bad was that partner's clubs were not quite what you expected..or hoped for. Your ♣J went to declarer's ace. That was the bad news. The good was the round of trumps played by Owen at trick 2 which set you up with two trump tricks.(small to the king.) Trick number 3 for the defence came soon as declarer led dummy's singleton (to East's ace).

Back came ♣Q. I could ruff and cash ♥A but the second diamond loser in declarer's hand would disappear on the ♣K. It looks like discarding a spade would work for the defence. The ♣K wins the trick to be followed by ♠A and a spade ruff and then a diamond ruff. Another spade ruff follows which you over-ruff and cash ♥A, thus denying a second diamond ruff in dummy.

Wonderful.... but there is a rule which says when you win a trick, you must play first to the next trick. With no black cards left in your hand, and no trumps left, you must exit into ♦KJ. Contract made.

You were right. There were no over-tricks but no under ones either. Since we all know that if you do not double a making contract, you are not doubling enough, partner should be happy. The making contract for this week, this month, hopefully this year, was merely a game contract not a part-score. Minor damage.

3♣ down 2 instead of 4♥ possibly making? Maybe I will bid with my AKQ AK next time. There seemed more upside from doing so.

Richard Solomon

