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:

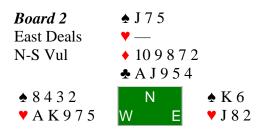
West	North	East	South	
Pass	1♠	2*	2♥	
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	
2				

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.



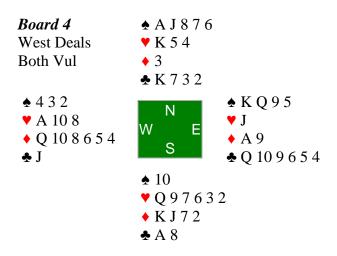


Pretty good red suits but where were all those spades going...and the odds of partner having three hearts seemed anti-percentage? So, everyone passed out 3. with South, Owen Camp, leading a heart. On the sight of dummy, he offered declarer 9 tricks, an offer which should have been accepted as the contract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



West	North	East	South
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