

Tales of Akarana


Tales of Disruption



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Surely there should be a rule about the number of times you can disrupt the opponents' bidding?! That's what you would wish for if you were the side who had reached a sensible game contract. Not so if you were the disruptors! The problem on the following hand was who was disrupting who the most!

Board 27
 South Deals
 None Vul

<p>♠ 8 ♥ Q 10 7 ♦ A K Q J 8 ♣ 9 8 4 3</p>	<p>♠ K J 10 5 4 ♥ K J 6 5 4 ♦ — ♣ A K 6</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>♠ A 7 ♥ A 3 2 ♦ 10 9 7 6 5 3 2 ♣ 10</p>	<p>♠ Q 9 6 3 2 ♥ 9 8 ♦ 4 ♣ Q J 7 5 2</p>
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West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 ♦	2 ♦	3 NT	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
Pass	5 ♠	Pass	Pass
6 ♦	Dbl	All pass	

The above was the auction we had to the par spot of 6♦x. East's 3NT looks an extremely cheeky bid though with North showing the majors (2♦), it would be a miracle if South could find the winning low club lead to beat this contract.

This day, though, was one of disruption and not miracles! There was to be no bad lead as South competed to 4♠...and East to 5♦...and North to 5♠...and finally West (why should he not join in?) to 6♦.

Everyone had done well as apart from the last contract, every contract could have been made. In 5♠, South will eventually have to guess the location of the missing heart honours which three of the four declarers in spades managed successfully. In two cases, it was damage minimisation mode as they had bid all the way to 6♠, while one table declared 5♠ and the last declarer was in the comfort of 4♠.

The auction would have been different from the above had South opened 2♠, spades and a minor.

West	North	East	South
			2♠
3♦	4♠	5♦	Pass
Pass	5♠	?	

Would East now bid 6♦ as a sacrifice or to make...or not bid it at all?

However, at three of the other four tables, the “disruptors” were busy at work as the final contract was 6♦x. I have to confess to an awful feeling of “deja vous” when I led my top club against 6♦x and saw East’s singleton. I exited the ♠K and watched as East ruffed three clubs and drawing trump in the process with no great discomfort! I was awaiting the ♣Q to appear on my right and had started to work out the score for 6♦x making.. at least no overtrick! However, on this day, that did not happen.

West can come down to a five-card ending with:

West	East
♠ -	♠ -
♥ QT7	♥ A32
♦ AK	♦ T9
♣ -	♣ -

Either the Michaels bid or the 2♠ opening should guide the declarer to the correct play in the heart suit of leading a low heart from East...and inserting one of West’s honours. North will not enjoy the return...just one down doubled being a very good save as long as the opposition were successful guessers in 5♠.

I like Michaels bids but they seem to work better when the suits are of equal length. East-West had the diamonds once again on Board 9 though, this time, there was no disruption at our table. My “wimpiness”? You be the judge.

<u>Board 9</u>		♠ Q 10 9 8 5 4									
North Deals		♥ K Q 7 6 5									
E-W Vul		♦ —									
		♣ 5 4									
♠ K 7	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; 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		♠ 3 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 4 3		♥ A 10 2									
♦ A K J 8 6 4		♦ Q 10 7 3									
♣ A 9 3		♣ K J 6 2									
		♠ A J 6									
		♥ J 9 8									
		♦ 9 5 2									
		♣ Q 10 8 7									
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>								
	Pass	Pass	Pass								
1 ♦	2 ♦	Dbl	Pass								
3 NT	All pass										

With no opening to show the North shape, I passed but was there with Michaels a round later. South’s pass of 2 ♦ x was intended to show equal length. West relied on their partner to take care of hearts and I had to decide whether “equal length” was two voids, two four card suits or, rather more likely which number in-between!

I guessed wrong and passed with declarer soon claiming 9 top tricks after my high heart lead. All other tables made it as far as 4 ♠. Three East-Wests played a version of Russian Roulette by defending this contract, once doubled. Fortunately for them, South had the ♠A and they survived!

Bidding on to 5 ♦ seemed better as a sacrifice if the ♠A had been in the long spade hand. When it was not, the aim was to make this contract but there was no joy in the club department and it failed.

However, West could have tried 4NT, cold on a spade lead, though not so easy on a high heart. However, as long as West ducks two rounds of hearts, winning the third round, South gets into a mess on the run of the diamonds. Discarding two spades and a club will see a spade led off table leaving South forced to lead a club while the discard of two clubs and a spade leaves West no choice but to put up the ♠K if South ducks. Of course, declarer could test clubs unsuccessfully but most routes should lead to 10 tricks.

Yet, no disruption meant this time a very poor score for North-South as they could hardly get a worse score than conceding to the making 3NT. No disruption: much pain!

Richard Solomon