

## Tales of Akarana

### Viva “The Law”

Many pairs use cue-bids of the opponents’ suits to make serious game tries when our partner makes an overcall. This enables a jump raise, or in certain circumstances, even a simple raise to be of a pre-emptive make them guess nature. Sometimes, they will guess right. This does not diminish the worth of such bidding.

Here are three pre-emptive raises for you to untangle from this week’s play at Akarana.

#### 1. Dealer West, All Vul.

**North** holds: ♠K984      ♥J      ♦KT2      ♣A6543

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

1♣ promises as few as you like while 2♥ should show club support.

#### 2. Dealer North, N/S Vul.

**South** holds: ♠AQJ92      ♥43      ♦T87      ♣KQ8

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
2♥	x	3♥	?

As in the previous example, 3♥ was not invitational.

#### 3. Dealer West. Nil Vul.

**West** holds: ♠J      ♥AQ954      ♦QT943      ♣KQ

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2NT <sup>1</sup>	4♠
?			

<sup>1</sup> Jacoby, game force with heart support.

So, to the four hands.

1. Dealer West, All Vul.

**North** holds: ♠K984      ♥J      ♦KT2      ♣A6543

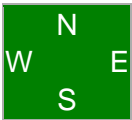
West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	1♥	2♥
3♥	?		

1♣ promises as few as you like while 2♥ should show club support.

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On the first question, if you chose to bid 4♣, you will find yourself in the club game which is a somewhat fortunate make. If your choice was 3♠, partner will again raise to game, in that suit. Passing, allowing your partner to bid 4♣, (if they know you have clubs) or try an action double if they do not, will often be the right decision with 10 tricks in clubs often being the limit. Passing out 3♥, whether doubled or not, would not be a good idea:

**Board 4**  
 West Deals  
 Both Vul

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

♠ A J 7  
 ♥ Q 3  
 ♦ J 6 4 3  
 ♣ K Q 9 7

Of the six times this board was played, East-West won the auction three times in a heart partial with only one table playing the board in clubs, in game. The heart raise makes it hard for North-South to gauge the right level. "Viva The Law".



3. Dealer West. Nil Vul.

West holds: ♠J ♥AQ954 ♦QT943 ♣KQ

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	2NT <sup>1</sup>	4♠
?			

<sup>1</sup> Jacoby, game force with heart support.

On then to the decision over 4♠. Surely it is correct to move with 10 cards in the red suits? The question is should one be satisfied with a competitive 5♥ or seek a higher level, either by ace asking or by cueing? Most chose the conservative action, 5♥. For slam to be good, partner needs four out of five specific cards: ♠A, ♥K, ♦AK and ♣A. That's a minimum 14 count which is quite possible but unless you are in catch-up mode in a match, the down side seems a big risk as partner does not always have "the perfect cards":

Board 8  
 West Deals  
 None Vul

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

♠ 9 8 7 6 4
♥ J 2
♦ 5
♣ A 7 6 5 3

Without that ♦J, even 5♥ would not be certain. As it happened, slam was 50% with the aggressive bidders in the minority but winning the day. What was certain was that North-South had done well to bid quickly to their limit in spades. Next time, East will have "the perfect cards" and most will still be in 5♥.

Three boards which showed there can be lots of imps won or lost with pre-emption, even at a modest level. Viva the Law!

*Richard Solomon*