

## TALES OF AKARANA

### DESPARATE MEASURES



Whether you are a declarer or a defender, when the chips are down, you do not want to go down without a fight. The odds may seem against you but there may just be a chance. Can you take it?

Firstly, you are in the driving seat but it looks like your contract is about to crash! What's to be done?

#### **Board 20**

West Deals

Both Vul

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

West	North	East	South
<i>dummy</i>		<i>declarer</i>	
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	2 ♦	4 ♠	All pass

Why did North only intervene after West had shown 15-17 balanced? Why call second time? South led ♦9, an interesting card with the ♦8 in dummy. With just one spade loser, your contract would be secure even if the club finesse lost. So, at trick 2, you play a spade to the ace. The secure contract becomes a little less so when North discards an encouraging low heart. Along with the ♥A, the defence awaits to take 3 spade tricks. Can you stop them?

Another grim fate seemed to await, this time for the defence on the following board. What, as West, do you play at trick 4:

<b>Board 2</b>	♠ 10 8 3 2
East Deals	♥ 9 4
N-S Vul	♦ J 5 4 3
	♣ K Q 10
♠ K J	N

♥ K 10  
 ♦ K Q 10 9  
 ♣ A J 6 4 2

W	E
S	

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

1♣ showed hearts. Your first double was take-out of hearts but denied 4 spades. Your second double was again take-out but was passed out by your partner who did not appear to have a stack of hearts. You led ♦K to be greeted by the horrible sight of ♦J in dummy and the ace soon appearing from declarer's hand. Your partner contributed ♦6, reverse count style.

Declarer continues with ♥A and a low heart to your king, partner following low both times. **What now?**

Back to our declarer in 4♠. You have to lose a trick to the ♥A. So, lose it. North takes it and exits a heart to your king. You absolutely need that club finesse to work and play so that when South does get the lead with a trump, they have only trumps left. So, after one round of diamonds, a trump and two rounds of hearts, these cards remain:

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

Take the club finesse (♣Q covered) to be followed by ruffing the ♥Q. Cash ♦K to be followed by a second spade to the king. Remembering that ♦9 opening lead with the 8 in dummy), cash two top clubs, knowing then that South would be left with just three trumps (QT9) in the end-game. You have 9 tricks as you play the ♦Q. You and South have to ruff but you will make a trump at trick 13 as you still have J87. The four hands were:

**Board 20**  
 West Deals  
 Both Vul

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

♠ A K  
 ♥ Q 7 3  
 ♦ Q 8 6  
 ♣ A J 8 7 3

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

♠ Q 10 9 4 3  
 ♥ 10 6 5  
 ♦ 9 4  
 ♣ K 5 2

West	North	East	South
<i>dummy</i>		<i>declarer</i>	
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	2 ♦	4 ♠	All pass

Meanwhile, back to trick 4 as our West defender. You have already blown one diamond trick by leading ♦K. Can you turn the opening lead to your advantage?

**Board 2**  
 East Deals  
 N-S Vul

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

♠ K J  
 ♥ K 10  
 ♦ K Q 10 9  
 ♣ A J 6 4 2

♠ Q 9 7 6  
 ♥ J 6 5  
 ♦ 6  
 ♣ 9 8 7 5 3

♠ A 5 4  
 ♥ A Q 8 7 3 2  
 ♦ A 8 7 2  
 ♣ —

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

The good news about your seemingly bad opening lead was that you did not get a second diamond thrown back at you at trick 2. Maybe there was a reason. Play ♦Q and find out. Partner discards. You follow with ♦10 which declarer has to cover.

Partner ruffs and switches to a spade. Declarer wins but cannot escape without losing a trump, ♦Q, diamond ruff, a second diamond trick and two black suit losers. Tight but down 1. Good pass, partner, as East-West's last making contract was 2♣.

Your partner could have helped you by playing ♥6 then ♥5 on the first two rounds of trumps, the "peter" indicating they wanted an immediate ruff.

On both the above boards, the chances for declarer in the first case and the defence in the second case looked grim...but there was still a chance. Never give up.

*Richard Solomon*

*A reader pointed out kindly that my bridge knowledge is greater than my musical knowledge. Last week, I commented that "the music and the bidding died just as in Simon and Garfunkel's American Pie". I do love Simon and Garfunkel's music but I also love "American Pie" by Don McLean. Just as we "know" a finesse is going to fail but still take it, so I rather knew I was falling into a deep hole in making the above statement but just kept on "falling".*

*As you can see above, this week the outcome of the contracts was much more positive. No need to seek musical quotes unless I was to quote "We are the champions" by... now, I am not that stupid to say!*