

## Tales of Akarana

### For Successful Finessers Only.

If you do not know how to take a successful finesse, then this week's hand is not for you. Pack up, accept that you will get a minus score, never upgrade any hand again (just because you have a good 5-card suit and three potentially useful looking 10's) and move on to the next board.

For those of you who are left, try making the following 4♠ contract on the lead of the ♥9 from West.

<u>Board 23</u>	♠ 6 5 3									
South Deals	♥ A K 6 5									
Both Vul	♦ 9 7 5 3									
	♣ Q J									
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	N									
W		E								
	S									
	♠ A K J 10 7									
	♥ 10 7 2									
	♦ A Q 10									
	♣ 5 4									

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

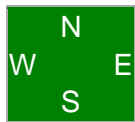
1NT was 15-17 (OK with adding high card points?) and 3♣ showed no slam interest and checked on opener's majors. 3♠ showed 5 spades.

You have two certain club losers and almost certainly one in hearts. A small clue: West has **not** led away from ♥QJ9! Also, when you play ♥A at trick 1, East plays an encouraging low heart.

One approach might be to play for ♠Q to be doubleton and then after drawing trumps, play for a 3-3 heart break, ducking the second round and eventually discarding ♦10 on the 4<sup>th</sup> round of hearts (who said that 10 was useful!) and finally taking one successful diamond finesse for 10 tricks. That seems to be about 2%...and that line would have failed.

At our table, declarer played a diamond to the 10 at trick 2...successful finesse no 1. Next came ♠A and a heart to dummy for a trump finesse (successful finesse no 2). Trumps broke 3-2. After drawing trumps, declarer exited a heart

but East could win and play a second high heart which declarer had to ruff. The ♦K and J would not come down in the same trick! Down 1. Good try. Can you do better?

<p><u><b>Board 23</b></u>          South Deals          Both Vul</p>	<p>♠ 6 5 3          ♥ A K 6 5          ♦ 9 7 5 3          ♣ Q J</p>	<p>♠ 9 4          ♥ 9 8          ♦ 8 6 4          ♣ A 10 9 8 7 2</p>		<p>♠ Q 8 2          ♥ Q J 4 3          ♦ K J 2          ♣ K 6 3</p>
	<p>♠ A K J 10 7          ♥ 10 7 2          ♦ A Q 10          ♣ 5 4</p>			

Three finesses working but only two entries to dummy to take them. You did not only have to take successful finesses but to squeeze East or end-play West as well.

Win the first trick and play a diamond to the 10. Cash ♠A (in case the queen appears) and exit a club. It does West no good to win this (we will see later). So, East wins to continue with ♥Q. Dummy wins to take the successful spade finesse.

At this point, leaving the ♠Q outstanding, exit a second club. West has only minor cards left (you just about know that) and either has to give you a ruff and discard (which you can use to win in dummy for a second diamond finesse) or take the finesse for you by playing a second diamond.

It does East no good to exit a second club when in with ♣K. West wins to play a second heart. Declarer wins in dummy and proceeds to play out all their trumps via the finesse. On the 4<sup>th</sup> round, East can throw ♣3 but which card do they discard on the 5<sup>th</sup> trump from:

♥J4   ♦KJ   ?

Throw ♦J and the game's over but throw the little heart and declarer will exit to East....who must now take the third successful finesse for declarer.

A similar ending occurs were West to win the initial club exit and then play a second heart or a second club for East to win and to exit a heart. 5 rounds of

spades will finish East. In the first case, East's last four cards will be ♥J, ♦KJ ♣K and in the second after an extra round of clubs, the same three- card ending as shown above. (no safe discard from ♥J4 and ♦KJ).

The key for South was to give up at least one club trick while there was still at least one trump on the table. If you cannot take all the successful finesses yourself, make the defence take them for you!

Of the 5 declarers in 4♠, three were successful, twice after club leads and once after a rather helpful diamond lead. No-one mastered the heart lead though most of those who received it had decided "24 high" was not enough for game and were in the safety of part-score. Fortune favoured the brave but only accompanied by good timing.

*Richard Solomon*