

WHERE THE REAL ACTION WAS.



Not on the Gold Coast, of course. Take a trip to the Akarana Bridge Club where “the cinderellas” did battle, victory in the end going to the team of Owen Camp (he came back especially from Broadbeach for this night at Akarana! No fake news here!), Mike Dunn, Hamish Brown and Kevin Hu by the huge margin of 1 imp.

♠ T953 This following board gave plenty of potential for swings. At
 ♥ Q2 one table, their own convention gave one pair a huge
 ♦ AK43 problem. Let’s look at it from West’s point of view with only
 ♣ AT6 East-West vulnerable:

The auction proceeded:

West	North	East	South	
1NT ¹	2♠	3♦ ²	3♠	¹ 12-14
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass	² transfer to hearts
?				

With no particular support for hearts, West chose to double which proved not to be wise on the night.

At other tables, the spotlight fell on the other flattish hand after a different style auction:

West	North	East	South	or:	West	North	East	South
1♦	1♠	4♥	Pass	West	1♦	4♠	5♥	?
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass					
5♥	Pass	Pass	?					

South held: In all three cases, the winning decision by the flattish hand
 ♠ A86 was based on their own trump holding in the opponent’s
 ♥ T854 suit...a four-card suit headed by the 10. In each case, West
 ♦ Q972 and then South could be almost certain that their partner
 ♣ 75

had either a void in that suit or at worst a singleton, meaning that bidding on was correct:

Board 3

South Deals ♠ K Q J 7 4 2
 E-W Vul ♥ —
 ♦ 8 6
 ♣ K Q J 8 4

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

W
E

N
S

♠ A 8 6
 ♥ 10 8 5 4
 ♦ Q 9 7 2
 ♣ 7 5

4♠x made for 10 tricks thanks to the favourable club position while the fate of 5♥ depended on that diamond finesse (though after a normal spade lead, the contract would make even if this finesse lost).

In our first sequence:

West	North	East	South
1NT ¹	2♠	3♦ ²	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass

?

¹ 12-14 ² transfer to hearts

East let system overcome practicality. East was always going to bid 4♥ and should have done so over 2♠ in what was a competitive auction rather than trying to right-side their own contract by transferring the contract to West. When West doubled 4♠, East could not be sure that pulling the double was correct.

West's best action over 4♠ was "pass" leaving East to call 5♥. (5♥ is indeed a better contract played by **East** as South would hardly find a club lead..so much for right-siding the contract!)

In our other auctions, South was facing a long spade opposite, whether North had got to 4♠ quickly or slowly. Like West when they bid 5♥ over North's 1♠, then 4♠, South had a fair idea of their partner's enemy trump suit holding. It looked to them like 5♠ would go down thus making it wrong to bid if 5♥ met a

similar fate. It seems to break the basic "5 over 5" rules to bid 5♠ though the vulnerability is in South's favour.

The over-riding reason to bid 5♠ was for a cheap sacrifice but, tomorrow, when the diamond finesse fails, the player who bids 5♠ turns from hero to villain.

High level Russian Roulette! Would you have dodged the bullets this evening..the double of 4♠ and the pass of 5♥? Or were you enjoying the quiet life on The Gold Coast?

Richard Solomon