**Week 10**

This week's hand is a play problem and has a history so one or two of you may have seen it before but it is well worth another outing.

 You reach the excellent contract of 7d in a team's event (only 3 pairs out of around 50 achieved this) and your reporter is at the helm

 Axxx

AKQx

Kxx

Ax

x

xx

AQJxxx

Kxxx

the lead is a trump with RHO following suit so plan the play from here.

You have 12 top tricks in the form of 6 diamonds, 2 clubs, 3 hearts and 1 spade and so a club ruff in the dummy is your 13th trick so you inwardly beam at your fine bidding !

So you conclude that you can draw 2 rounds of trumps with the AQ and if they break 2-2 you are claiming. Trumps are 3-1 with LHO holding 3. Now you play 3 rounds of clubs ruffing the third in dummy with the king in order to avoid an over ruff lest the clubs should break 5-2.This all passes off peacefully enough so now you just need to return to your hand in order to draw the last trump and since you hold 5 spades and 6 hearts you try SA spade ruffing low and our ready to table your hand but of course you have guessed it the spades break 7-1 on your right and LHO over ruffs the second round.

  This line of play is around a 97% chance !

**Week 9**

 Bidding over an opposition pre-empt can be tricky and is a test of both method and judgment.

At game all you hear 3h to your right and hold:

Qx

A

QJTx

AKJTxx

what do you say ?

 If we opt for double partner may bid 3s or 4s which could be a horrible 4-2 fit .

 A better shot is 3nt but this is probably dependent on being able to run 9 tricks on a heart lead and that may require partner to turn up with the other fitting club honour together with  the  ace of diamonds and also something in spades so in other words quite a few high cards.

 The best bid is 4c here I believe since with a vulnerable 3h bid on our right it is likely that partner holds little in the suit so 3nt will struggle whilst 4c or 5c may be  lay down .

 Dummy is

ATxx

xxx

Kxx

xxx

 So 3nt is hopeless (even with 6 club winners we only have 8 tricks) whilst 5c is on, bringing in the clubs for no loser.

The best defence to weak 2s and 3s is certainly double for take out (penalty doubles were popular many years ago) with natural NT bids. In addition to bid a suit over a 3 level pre-empt requires a reasonable quality 6 card suit.