**WEEK 14**

For the next couple of weeks I thought I would provide some interesting bidding hands which came up during the Spring Fours weekend.

On the first deal you pick up a big hand

void

AKQx

AQ

AKJTxxx

 you open 2c and partner responds 2s (8 + with at least 2 honours to 5) 3c -3s -4c -5c are the next bids. So now how do you like your hand? do you pass or raise to 6c? To me things do not look ideal so in my typically conservative style I would pass but if you raise to 6c partner tables

 AKJTxx

Txx

xxx

x

 I can tell you there was a trump loser so you may think you are off unless you receive a diamond lead and you also need the hearts to break 3-3 or the jack to drop. In fact you can make on a heart lead by playing 2 top trumps and continuing with 3 rounds of hearts (they are 3-3) now exit with a trump and  the defence must return a diamond and low and behold the DQ holds for your 12th trick.

Our second hand was an interesting test of judgement and method

AKxxx

Axx

Qx

Axx

Jxx

x

AKxx

KQxxx

South deals and opens 1c -1s -2s ( far better than rebidding 2c ) now what? The hand is a perfect fit with 6s excellent and cold. North with a control rich hand and a 5th spade should not just bid 4s and the choices are 3c or 3h or a jump to the 4 level if you play cue bids rather than splinters. I like 3c since partner now has an opportunity to make a critical bid which would be 4h to show a singleton now the north hand will drive to the good slam.

**WEEK 13**

Good bidding requires the essential ability to visualise how the hands fit and then to count the winners and losers. Certain aids assist the evaluation process namely Roman Key Card Blackwood, Jacoby 2nt, fourth suit forcing and splinter or cue bids. I will provide two example hands.

First a well bid hand from a league match last week where both pairs reached the top spot

AKJxxx

x

Ax

Qxxx

at one table a precision club is opened by partner who subsequently shows clubs so now the responding hand is enormous and just requires a knowledge of the presence of all the key cards to be able to bid 7c (partner had denied 3 card spade support in the bidding so xxx in the suit was not possible) you ascertain that this is the case and duly  bid 7c. Partner has:

x

AKJx

Kx

AKJxxx

My teammates had a natural bidding sequence to the same contract.

Next a more difficult bidding problem

void

Jxx

xxx

AKQxxxx

Jx

AKxxxxx

Ax

Jx

This is another cold grand slam in either hearts or clubs and illustrates a very difficult hand type where you hold 2 running suits plus first round controls in both side suits.

At most tables the bidding began 3s on the left and North bid clubs and now depending on whether east raised, South had a tough decision. 4h was the popular choice where East passed which ended matters. Where East bid 4s this was in fact a help since it increased the likelihood that partner had short spades and at a few tables allowed south to bid a small slam. Sometimes bidding by the opposition helps the assessment and visualisation process.