**WEEK 16**

After a number of bidding problems I thought we might consider some defensive situations this week. Try the following defence as East you hold

ATxxx

9xx

x

Q9xx

the bidding from the opposition has gone

1h -1nt -3d-3h -4h

Partner leads the SQ and dummy is

Kxx

8xx

Axx

Txxx

Declarer ruffs the second round of spades and continues with a diamond to the ace and a second diamond from dummy ?

The fate of the contract hinges on your next play if you ruff with a "useless" trump the contract cannot be defeated whereas if you discard it cannot be made. Declarer has

x

AKQJx

KJ9xx

AJ

The ruff gains nothing for the defence since the diamond is a loser anyway and in fact aids declarer since it gives him trump control .If you ruff declarer can now draw trumps and  ruff his 4th diamond in dummy and score up the game for the loss of one diamond ,one club and one spade discard on the second diamond and the defence must score either a second diamond or an overruff with the H9 to set the contract.

Now  on our second deal we look at promotion of trump tricks

South opens 3s and all pass you hold

K8x

Ax

J9xx

JTxx

Say you decide to attack with HA ( as an aside following a weak 2 or 3 an attacking lead is sound since any extraneous strength will lie with dummy or partner normally )

Dummy is

x

Jxxx

AKxx

Kxxx

you win the HA and continue the suit and partner wins the Q with declarer following .He continues hearts and declarer ruffs with the queen ? If you overruff with the King the CA in partner's hand will be the last trick for the defence. Although you cannot be certain that a trump is capable of promotion it is correct on general principles to discard here rather than over ruff since nothing can be gained by so doing .

The other hands are

9x

KQT9x

QTxx

Ax

AQJTxxx

xx

x

Qxx

When you discard declarer  continues with SA SJ which you win and put partner in with CA and a further heart will promote your S8 for the setting trick .

**WEEK 15**

Two more interesting bidding hands from the Spring Fours.

void

KQJTxx

Kxx

KQxx

you hear a weak 2s on your right so overcall 3h 3s to your left and partner bids 4d which is natural and forcing.

An important thing to do during the bidding is to re-evaluate and here your hand has improved considerably with 3 card support for a 6 card suit opposite and first round spade control so you bid 4s and partner bids roman key card blackwood you decide to show 1 key card but not your void which you could show by bidding 6c and partner bids 5s.

Your method here is 5nt asks for specific kings and 5h for the DQ so 5s is a general grand slam try so still liking your hand you decline to sign off in 6d and instead bid 6c and he bids 7d -do you feel constrained to do anything ?

I should have corrected to 7h here as partner held

AKx

Ax

AJTxxx

Ax

but partner played the non pre emptor for the DQ ( percentage play ) so finessed the Knave to make the contract. They were in the cold 7nt in the other room after no weak 2s from team mates which brought some comment from partner and myself.

Then

Axxxxx

x

KQxx

Qx

the bidding goes 1d from partner -pass -1s (2h) pass (3h) your hand has potential but is awkward to describe since you would like to show spades and also diamond support. You play a convention called the support double so partner's pass over 2h denies 3 card spade support.

On complex hands of this nature double is the best choice which is for take out when the opposition have shown a fit.  Partner responds 4d showing 5 or 6 cards so again your hand has improved so can now bid 4h (cue bid) rather than 5d and you will reach the thin but superb 6d facing

Kx

xxx

AJTxx

Axxx

spades can be established to discard club losers to secure 12 tricks.

These two examples show hands which improve dramatically as the bidding progresses and it is essential to re evaluate your hand as the bidding develops.