**Week 42**

Two hands this week from a recent teams event. The first of which is an interesting play problem. You play in 4h

 QJx

KJxx

void

AQJxxx

AKxx

T98x

xxx

Kx

LHO has overcalled 2d and the lead is the DA.  You ruff the lead in dummy and play a spade to hand and a heart up.

Say you run the ten it loses to the HQ on your right and a diamond is returned which you are forced to ruff in dummy leaving you with only the HK in trumps .If you exit a trump LHO wins the ace and puts their partner in with the DQ to collect a club ruff as the full lay out is

 xxxx

Axx

AKJxxx

void

xx

Qx

Qxxx

xxxxx

 certainly unlucky but can you do better? To make the hand you need to play a heart to the king at trick 3 and then a second heart will draw the enemy trumps with the exception of the Ace so a ruff gains nothing for the defence and will leave you safe.

Secondly we have a bidding problem

 AK

KQTx

xx

AKxxx

Qxx

J9xx

AKxx

xx

 With north as dealer the auction typically went

 1c -1h -4h -p

 I could not improve on the following auction which was the one of the Steves Tomlinson and Turner

 1c -1d -2h -4d -4s -5d -6h.

 2h showed a strong hand with longer clubs and shorter hearts and 4d ,4s and 5d were cue bids. Nicely done to bid an excellent slam missed by most pairs.

**Week 41**

This week I have two interesting bidding problems from recent events.

 Ax

KQTxx

Qx

Axxx

KJxxx

Ax

Jx

KJxx

North is the dealer and the uncontested auction goes 1h -1s -2c -2d (4th suit) now north has a difficult bid some chose 2nt and were duly raised to 3nt when south thought they were not strong enough to show the club support (3c is game forcing following 2d). Others chose 2s and some souths prematurely bid 4s which like 3nt  was also unsuccessful .

 1h -1s -2c-2d-2s -3c looks good and now north bids either 3d over which south bids 3h -4h or bids 3h -4h .Note the careful 3c and 3d bids which pave the way to reach the only making game 4h.

 Secondly a more simple auction

 AK9xx

x

KQ

QJxxx

JTx

xxxx

Axx

Kxx

 the bidding went 1s -2s -3c -4s.

A few points of interest .The 2s raise is predicated on the basis that 1s will be a 5 card suit nearly all the time (playing weak no trumps it will only be 4 if 4-3-3-3 provided you open all other strong no trump shapes 1m) and look how easy it makes the later bidding since north knows of the fit they try for game with 3c which is a long suit try and now with 2 known good cards plus the trump holding south bids 4s. A good rule as responder to a game try is to accept the try with 2 or more "working cards" which include the Queens of both trumps and partner's game try suit (clubs here).