**Week 49**

The splinter bid is my favourite convention and I give two hands this week highlighting its value.

 First you hold

 AK

QJxxx

Xxx

QJx

The bidding is uncontested and goes 1d from partner 1h from you and 4h from partner?

 Your values suggest you may be in the slam zone but lacking a club control the only possible way to proceed is by making a spade cue bid and if partner bids 5d in response you bid 5h pinpointing the club problem. Partner holds

Qx

AKxx

AKQJx

Xx

 So 5h is the limit.

 The negative aspect of the hand is partner did not bid 3s or 4c to show shortage in either suit so we know they  will be balanced and thus there will be 2 potential club losers or else a loser there and another in diamonds ( 3 small cards in a suit partner has bid is a dreadful holding )

Our next hand is as follows

X

KQJxx

AQxxx

Kx

Axx

Xx

KJxxx

Axx

 The bidding starts 1h 2d?

 The north hand is now huge following the 2d response and we can rebid either 4d or 5d but much better is to show our fit and the spade shortage with a splinter bid of 3s .This will excite partner a lot holding the spade ace facing a singleton spade and we will bid the cold 6d with ease.

 A splinter is an unnecessary jump bid where the level below is natural.

 So 1h 1s 4c or as above 1h 2d 3s.

 It is one of the best methods presently available for evaluating fits for game and slam purposes and is highly recommended.

**Week 48**

The hand this week is complicated in both the bidding and play and cropped up in an afternoon session at the club.

Axxx
Xx
Qx
AQxxx

Void
AKTx
AKTxxx
KJx

With north the dealer the bidding typically began

1c 1d
1s 2h

North now had an awkward choice and the choice is 3c or 3D I prefer the latter since the sequence by opener already normally shows 5-4 distribution.

Now the south hand knows a slam or indeed grand slam is in the frame and might bid either 4c or 4d ( note that 4th suit forcing is game forcing here and the easiest way to play the method is game forcing throughout )

What is the best contract here ? either 7 c ,7d or 7nt are all possible the latter requires both minors to come in or some magic ( more of that shortly ) whereas 7c just needs trumps to break 3 -2 and 7d similarly just needs the trumps not to produce a loser .So 7 of either minor are both around 70 percent and 7nt a little less.

Anyway 7c fails as we shall see and 7d is cold but 7nt is a fantastic card play hand

The other hands are as follows

Kxxx
Qxx
Jx
JT9x

QJTxx
Jxxx
Xxx
X

So with clubs not breaking we have 6 diamond tricks 3 clubs 2 hearts and 1 spade .

If we cash 6 diamonds and also 3 clubs we reach the following end position :

                Ax
                X
                 X

                AKTx

Dummy has Ax spade together with a heart and a club loser and south has 4 hearts .

LHO retains

H jxx
CJ

RHO holds

S QJ

H Qx

So now declarer cashes the SA and lho is forced to discard a heart from jxx since they must keep the CJ so now declarer scores 3 heart tricks to make the no trump grand slam .

The position is quite an unusual squeeze since each opponent has been squeezed rho in spades and hearts and lho in hearts and clubs .It is therefore a variety of double squeeze with neither opponent able to guard the hearts.