

### Slam Bidding Recap

Do not be "afraid" to bid slams. If you have the right cards and enough strength then it is often very satisfying to bid a slam.

The mathematics of slam bidding say that if a small slam has a greater than 50% chance of making then you should bid it. For a grand slam you need to be much surer. You need to be about 70-75% certain that a grand slam will make before you bid it.

There are two basic elements to bidding and subsequently making a good slam.

1. Sufficient Strength. The two hands must combine to be able to produce twelve (small slam) or thirteen (grand slam) tricks. This roughly equates to 33+ and 37+ points for the two types of slam **including distribution points in a suit contract**. These ranges are merely guidelines and are subject to.....
2. Controls. It's no good having twelve tricks available if the defence cash the first two tricks. In simple terms this means that a small slam requires a minimum of three aces (assuming no voids), and a grand slam requires all four aces.

Strength can be assessed in the general bidding approach where you should be able to learn of the combined strength of the two hands.

Other "gadgets" you might use to assess the strength of the hands are:

Quantitative bids in NT

Benji strong opening bids (2♣ and 2♦)

Jacoby 2NT convention

4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing convention

Controls can be checked using a variety of "gadgets". You should be able to use the following:

RKCB or (simple) Blackwood

Gerber

Splinter bids

Cue Bids

All of the ideas above are not mutually exclusive and you may be able to use two or more of the above ideas on the same hand

### Opener

♠ K T 6 4 2

♥ J 7 3

♦ A J 2

♣ A J

1♠

4NT

6♠

### Responder

♠ A J 7 5 3

♥ 6

♦ K Q 7 4

♣ Q 6 4

4♥

5♣

Here the responder makes a splinter bid showing a heart shortage. This improves opener's hand significantly and after asking for Aces (via RKCB) he can bid the small slam. At first sight it looks as though the slam depends on both the spades behaving and the club finesse being right. However the Jack of clubs can be thrown on the fourth diamond, and this slam will make when the trumps are 2 -1 or we lead them from the correct hand first. A slam bid on just 26 points!

### Opener

♠ A Q 6 3

♥ K 4

♦ A K J 9 2

♣ J 3

1♦

3♠

4♠

6♠

### Responder

♠ K J T 8 2

♥ A 6 5

♦ Q T 3

♣ K 4

1♠

4♥

5♣

Here the responder can cue bid the heart Ace on the way to game. Over four spades it becomes clear that opener is worried about clubs, but a cue bid (which must show the King) allows the opener to bid the slam with confidence.

**Opener**

♠ A Q 4

♥ K Q 7

♦ K J 6

♣ A J 7 3

2NT (19-20)

**Responder**

♠ K 7 3

♥ A T 4 2

♦ Q 9 4

♣ K Q 5

6NT

Responder knows that the combined holding is 33-35 and knows both hands are flat. There is not likely to be enough in opener's hand for a grand slam so he should bid the small slam straight away, without giving anything away. The slam is a good one and has ten tricks on top. The diamonds will provide the other two necessary tricks.