

## Splinter Bids

Can you imagine your partners ever bidding like this ?

1Sp ----- 4Cl

Probably not , for if they had an average hand with clubs they would bid

1S-----2Cl

and if they had a strong hand with clubs they would bid

1S-----3Cl.

Now in the mists of time the triple jump 1S----- 4C was used to denote a preempt, the responder was showing a 7 or 8 card club suit with a weak hand.

Now that was never a very useful meaning for the bid and the idea of preempting ones own partner was dubious at best. { one reason that it was a fairly silly bid was that it bypassed the 3NT level }. Most players whether they knew the bid or not very seldom used it .

Jump ahead from the 1930s to present day bridge and a more useful meaning has been made for the bids 1S----- 4C , 1S-----4D , 1H-----4C and 1H-----4D.

They are known as *splinter bids* and they show a singleton or void in the bid suit and support for partner's suit.

e.g 1H -----4D \*

Qxx  
Axxx  
x  
KQJxx

e.g 1H ----- 4C

AQxx  
Qxxx  
KJxxx  
void

There is still some disagreement as to exactly how many points a *splinter bid* should show but in practise it is reasonable to use it with a hand with a singleton that is prepared to go to the game level. It falls somewhere between a *delayed game raise* and a *gambling raise*.

We might briefly compare these three approaches:

i) 1Sp-----2C  
(2D----- 4Sp)

Axxx  
Kx  
QJx  
Kxxx

ii) 1Sp----- 4Sp  
Pass.

QJxxxx  
xxx  
Kx  
Ax

iii) 1Sp-----4C

Axxx  
QJ  
AQxxx  
x

Example (ii) the gambling raise is the weakest raise of course but the splinter bid is not necessarily stronger or weaker than the delayed game raise. It just specifically shows a raise with a singleton or void in the bid suit. Over the page we will see what happens next.