


221 . The Last Train

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♠ Q1054		
♥ QJ109		
♦ AK32		
♣ 2		
♠ 62		♠ AJ98
♥ 53		♥ 82
♦ 7654		♦ QJ98
♣ KQJ43		♣ 765
♠ K73		
♥ AK764		
♦ 10		
♣ A1098		

N	E	S	W
	P	1 ♥	P
4 ♣	P	4 ♦	P
5 ♦	P	6 ♥	All Pass

--None Vulnerable--

This is the penultimate column on cuebidding sequences. The Last Train is the last bid below game and indicates a strong interest in slam but an unwillingness to commit the partnership to the five-level. Bidding the last suit below game does not promise first round control but indicates the holding of a good hand.

The bidding:

South opens One Heart and North has enough to commit the partnership to game with four-card support and a shortness in Clubs so he makes a double jump shift to Four Clubs. This is called a splinter bid. If North's hand evaluates to 15 points or

more, his hand is too strong to splinter and he must use Jacoby Two No Trump instead. Here a splinter bid is perfect.

People, not used to splinter bids, should realize that if partner is weak and has a Club pre-empt, he would never pre-empt once partner has entered an auction with a Major. The exception is a weak jump shift which is a jump to two of a major over one of a minor.

Furthermore, one would never make a weak jump shift to the three or four-level because one would never want to be stranded at the three level or higher with a double misfit. In addition, you may be just pre-empting partner who may have to figure out how to bid his strong hand, now at the three-level.

So what does one do if one has a long minor and partner opens a major? He bids One No Trump and then rebids his minor as a drop-dead bid.

South has extra values and has no wasted values in partner's splinter suit, so he bids the Last Train bid of Four Diamonds. North is happy going to the five-level and shows his Ace of Diamonds. South bids slam.

The Lead:

Although clubs is dummy's shortness, the King of Clubs is a safe lead.

The play:

Declarer must make either his hand or dummy's hand good. To make his hand good, he must pitch a Spade on a top Diamond, and ruff three clubs. He cannot touch trump.

He wins the Ace of Clubs and ruffs a Club. He then plays a small Spade to his King which holds. East ducks to keep his Ace-Jack over dummy's Queen-Ten.

Declarer ruffs another Club, and ruffs a Diamond back to his hand, after cashing only one top Diamond honour, to ruff the last Club. He cashes dummy's last trump,

itches a Spade on the remaining Diamond Honour and ruffs the last Diamond. He draws trump, loses a Spade and claims.

Result:

Six Hearts making for +980.