2016 QLD Open Pairs by Richard Wallis

The Qld Open Pairs Championship was once again held by the QBA at QCBC, and whilst the quality was very high, numbers were again so low as to not require a qualifying on Saturday followed by a final on Sunday. Thus it was a complete Howell, where everyone plays everyone and all score count!

Originally there were 37 pairs entered, which meant a 3-board sit-out, and that is how we started on Saturday morning, but when a Rockhampton pair had not arrived 15 minutes after the start, the Director (Alan Gibson) then made inquiries and found out they were not coming, but had not bothered to advise the QBA!

This is unsatisfactory, to say the least, and to avoid a double sit-out, the second round was delayed by 30 minutes while Therese and I played the pair originally sitting out and Alan changed the movement and reset the Bridgemates, but at least now with only 36 pairs, the sit-out was no longer required.

Therese and I had a horrible Saturday, languishing in last place after 3 matches, and only climbing to 50% by the end of the day, but a more enjoyable Sunday pulled us up to 9th place at the end. There was a ding dong battle in the top half, but at the end Jim Wallis and Liz Zeller held on for a good win, with Richard Ward/ Tony Hutton in second place and Tony Treloar/ Peter Evans third. This is a repeat for Jim, as he won it last year with Nathan Van Jole.

M 1 Bd 2 Dir E Vul NS K JT QT832 QJ983	J5 K975 J9 AKT8	3	986 Q83 AK65 752	In the and of The denied As it my validely
	AQT A64	7432		4S is disca
	74			Liz le
	4			overd
W	N	E	S	single
2NT! //	3H	/ 4D	1S 4H	This for N

In the first match we were against the eventual winners, Jim and Liz, and on board 2 we started them on their road to success.

The 2NT overcall was for the minors, and my 3H was natural and denied 3 spades, which Therese had no trouble raising to game.

As it is, with my absolutely minimum hand I should have just shown my values with a double, after which Therese could rebid 3S over the likely 3D from Liz and I could raise to game!

4S is cold, even if declarer loses a trump, as a heart loser can be discarded on the CK.

Liz led the top diamonds and switched to a club, and after the 2NT overcall and Jim following to both hearts, I knew he had at most a singleton spade, so I took the spade finesse and went 1 off!

This was only 24% score for us, as the dominant contract was spades for NS, not always in game but still scoring better than us.

J63 Q AQJ64 9872		
		KQ972 AKJ87532 -
AT854		
6		
AJT65		
N	E 2C	S /
Χ	2H	/
	Q AQJ64 9872 AT854 6 98 AJT65 N	Q AQJ64 9872 AT854 6 98 AJT65 N E 2C

//

6H

On board 13 in the fifth match I had a very shapely 2-loser hand, so opened with a forcing 2C, and was pleased to get a 2D response from Therese, showing at least one Ace or King.

This response gave North the chance to double for the lead, but that did not trouble me with my void, and actually gave me hope that Therese did not have any wasted diamond values.

Therese had club values and a void, along with trump support, so she did the practical thing and jumped to slam!

South duly obliged with a diamond lead, but I was able to ruff 3 spades in dummy, then draw the last trump and give up a spade for 12 tricks and +1430.

Even a trump lead does not stop 12 tricks, as the ruffing finesse works, and declarer just loses a spade at the end, but many other Souths led one of their Aces to the slam, and one doubled, thus making only 12 tricks was only 41% for us.

M 6 Bd 17 Dlr Ni Vul Nil T98 KJ K6 KQ8743	A532 QT4 Q3 AT95 KQJ76 965 T2	4	- A8732 AJ98754 J	On board 17 in the sixth match I had a Michael's 2NT overcall available after North opened 1C, but with 2 Aces and much longer diamonds, I decided to bid out my shape. Therese showed her club stopper with 1NT, and then tried for a spade stopper with 3S, but my 4H rebid forced her to choose 5D as the final contract Since I have at least 11 cards in my 2 suits, slam was a possibility from Therese's hand, but there is no sure way to get there with any confidence. South led the SK and I ruffed this and led the CJ, leading to 12 tricks
W	62 N	Ε	S	when everything was so friendly. However the friendly hearts meant that 11 tricks were available in a heart contract.
1NT 3S 5D	/ 2S / //	1D 3H 4H	1S 3S	Since +920 or +450 was available, this looked like a loss, but 3 EW pairs played in a part score, and 4 NS pairs escaped for a small loss in a spade contract, we actually got 71 %.
M 7 Bd 20 Dir W Vul All 9732 T AKQJ653	K4 AK93 98 K9754		Q6 8764 742	On board 20 in the seventh match NS succumbed to the lure of the pre-empt! Therese's 3NT opening bid shows a solid minor, and in spite of the Vulnerability, I upped the ante by jumping to 5D. Systemically this is correctable, but my club honours clearly show her suit is diamonds, so I knew she would pass. North was the most culpable in my opinion as he doubled for takeout with a minimum hand and less than ideal shape. South does have a
3	AJT85 QJ52		AQ86	good hand with both majors, but no way of knowing the best suit, so bid the obvious 5S.
w	T JT2 N	E	S	Therese led the C3, an obvious singleton when South played low at trick 1, so I won the first 2 clubs and gave her a ruff. The DA was our 4 th trick for +200 and a fine 88% score.
3NT! //	X	5D	58	Since South does have both majors, a better action over 5D is to double, which gives North the winning option of passing for penalties, as the double will also show defensive tricks.
M 14 Bd 14 Dir E	KQJ7 A72 Q5			On board 14 in the fourteenth match Match Point Pairs syndrome took us over and we stopped in 3NT when clearly a diamond contract is safer, and would have been selected at teams scoring.
Vul Nil 532 KT9	9875		T94 6543	Therese could have bid an aggressive invitational 3D over my 1S response, but instead chose a conservative 2S raise, which promises at least 3-card support.
T6 JT642	A86 QJ8		J4 AKQ3	My 2NT rebid is game-forcing and the 3D response confirms 5+ diamonds and only 3 spades, therefore a likely shortage somewhere else.
	AK98732	32		I did not have primary support for diamonds, and I did have a solid heart stop and potential club help, so I opted for 3NT.
W /	N 1S	E / /	S 1D 2S	East led the top clubs and a 4 th club and West cashed out for 1 off and only 24%. There were 8 others going off in 3NT, while 1 North made 10 tricks!
	2NT 3NT	/	3D	2 pairs played in 4S making 13 tricks, but only 3 pairs bid the diamond slam, and one pair played in just 3D, but got 53%.

M 14 Bd 15 Dir S Vul NS T9764 K832 K QJ6	AQ83 AT JT32 A73 KJ Q9765 A4	((52 J4 Q98765 Г54	Board 15 in the fourteenth match was a classic example of how the defenders should count the suits thoroughly throughout the play and also not cash a trick without some purpose in mind. Our bidding was natural and East led the D7, which was simply 4 th highest, although it looked like MUD or top of nothing to me. Since I have a solid second diamond stop, I rose with the DA to start setting up my tricks and was surprized to see the DK played by West under the DA. I picked the hearts wrongly by playing low to the HT, and East was in and under the spotlight!
W	K982 N	Е	S	East had the DQ as a winner and cashed it before exiting with the H5, on which I played the HQ, just in case West was in auto mode.
/ /	1S 3NT	/ //	1H 2C	West did not stop to count the hearts and realize my HA was singleton and covered, and suddenly I had 11 tricks for +660 which was worth 82%.
M 18 Bd 25	T763 T73			Board 25 in the eighteenth and last match om Saturday was extremely lucky for us and one of our few tops for the weekend!
Dir N Vul EW AK954	75 A864		Q82	2S by Therese over the 2H weak-jump is not forcing to game, and therefore while a 3S raise describes my strength, I wanted to be in game so I bid 4S.
6 AJT2 QJT	J	ŀ	(QJ (Q963 92	Therese read the jump to game as showing extras, and launched into RKCB for spades. My 5C response showed 3 or 0, and 6D was a choice of slams, which is puzzling since I cannot have 3 Key cards.
	A9854 84 K753	2		I was surprized to see 2 Aces missing when South led the SJ and dummy tracked, but 10 tricks are the limit in spades anyway even if the spades break.
W 2S	N /	1D 4S	S 2H /	I guessed that South was more likely to lead a singleton in our 5-3 suit than any other combination, so I drew trumps finishing in dummy and took the spade finesse, then cashed the SQ.
4NT 6D	/ //	5C	/	The trump entry to the table allowed me to cash 2 more spades to discard my clubs, then concede the HA for 12 tricks and +1370.
M 20 Bd 6	JT5 T			On board 6 in the twentieth match we had a natural auction to 4S, and North was on lead with a number of options!
Vul EW AKQ3	AKQ3 Q84 J97		9742	South is known to have length in hearts, since Therese did not support my suit at any time, so leading the singleton may destroy South's holding, and set up winners for declarer.
J97 AT5		P	K9762 A4 K3	The DK is thus the normal lead, but North went for the ruff by leading the HT, and duly got it when South won the HA and returned the suit. The DK came next, but it was too late!
	AJ53 T532 Q72			Therese won the DA, drew trumps and cashed the HQ and entered dummy with the CK to discard her diamonds on the top hearts, making 11 tricks for +650.
W 1S 4S	N / //	E 1H 2S	S / /	This was worth 79%, whereas 10 tricks after the DK lead would have been just 32%. 2 EW pairs played in 4H, going off on the bad break, but 2 declarers made 10 tricks in 4H, and everyone else was in 4S.

M 23 Bd 13 Dir N Vui Ali K62 AT7652 KJ7 K	J4 K4 9842 QJT98 Q753 QJ9 Q	1	AT98 83 AT653 A4	On board 13 in the twenty-third match we had a 4 th suit auction after my 1S rebid and Therese had 2 options after I showed a club stop with 2NT. Firstly show a 6-card heart suit with a forcing 3H rebid, or secondly simply raise to 3NT, as the CK was likely to be a big help in the higher scoring contract. South led the C7, which I won on the table, perforce, and cashed the DK, getting the good news in that suit, so I turned to another suit for an extra trick. Two tricks must be lost in hearts to set that suit up, and the clubs will
w	76532 N	Е	s	be running for NS before then, so the obvious suit is spades. A 3-3 spade break will yield the 11 th trick, but an extra chance is a
1H	/	1D 1S		doubleton honour in either hand, so I cashed the top spades for 11 tricks and a second top.
2C! 3NT	/ //	2NT	- /	Hearts are also easy for 11 tricks, but that is the limit, and is a mere 650, which was only 44%!
M 27 Bd 25	QJ9 K962			Board 25 in the twenty-seventh match was the end of our resurgence, when I failed the basic bridge logic of counting points!
Dir N Vul EW K63	Q193 Q9	QT93 Q9	AT85	East's 1NT was strong, and Therese's 2H overcall showed hearts and a minor, which made my hand look pretty good for a sacrifice if EW finished in game.
4 54 KJT5432			A75 KJ7 A87	North bid 2S as a transfer to clubs over 2H and this could be just to play, or forward going, but when South showed a liking for clubs, North raised to game.
	742 QJT83 A862 6	}		Having already shown preference for hearts, I thought, for some reason known only to my inner self, that it would be useful to show my second suit, but Therese preferred the 4-4 fit and passed 5DX.
W 2S!	N / 3H	E 1NT 4C		East led the CA, then switched to the SA and EW played 3 rounds of spades, won by my SJ, and now was the time to think and count points!
5C X	5D //	/	/	I was blinded by West's double, and played the DA and another, leading to 4 off and a near bottom, instead of a near top for 3 off. Since East opened 1NT, they are odds on to hold the DK.
M 32 Bd 13 Dir N	97 953 T75			Board 13 in the thirty-second match was a great hand to bid and play, made all the more interesting by South's bid over my near gameforcing 2C opening.
Vul ALL T864 T87642 9	QJT93	}	AKJ53 A A832	Therese's pass of the 2D overcall showed nothing of interest, but her jump to 4D was a splinter in support of spades, which interested me in a slam, and possibly a grand slam if Therese had the SQ.
52	Q2		AK4	If South leads the DK I have sufficient entries to ruff 3 diamonds and 1 club and return to hand to lead the top spades for 13 tricks.
	KQJ KQJ64 876			However South had a surprize for me and led the HK, which took away and entry too early. I was still able to ruff a diamond, then a club followed by 2 more diamonds, but I could not get back to hand without
W	N /	E 2C	S 2D	allowing South to over-ruff the heart return to my hand, so I only made 12 tricks, but +1430 and a top score.
/ 4D 5C 5H	/ / /	2S 4NT 5D 6S		In discussion after the match a trump lead was suggested to be the killing lead, but that gives the SJ to declarer and while only 3 ruffs are now available, that is still 12 tricks with South winning the last trick with a diamond.

M 34 Bd 21 DIr N Vul NS AKQT653 K2 6 QJ9	J98 954 T85 AT72 N	763 E 4NT	742 - AK743 86543	Board 21 in the thirty-fourth match was very distributional, and I started the ball rolling by opening 4H as North, even though we were Vulnerable and EW were not! East got into the action with a distributional hand but very little strength, possibly with a view to a later sacrifice, and West made a very puzzling decision to play in their 5-3 club fit, rather than bid his very good 7-card spade suit. I led the HA, which was ruffed in dummy, but did not really help declarer except to prevent a force, and declarer set about drawing trumps by leading the C4 from the table, ducked to my CK. Declarer could not avoid the loss of 3 club tricks, so finished 1 down for +50 to us, and surprizingly a complete top. Of course everyone else played in spades, or hearts, with one intrepid
5C!	//			West bidding and making 6S!
M 35 Bd 24 Dlr W Vul Nil AK87 QJT42 T83 3	Q32 A6 AQJ9 A64 J65 K853	5	T94 97 K64 QJ952	On board 24 in the thirty-fifth match I upgraded my hand to 18 points because of the good 5-card diamond suit and rebid 2NT over Therese's 1H response, raised to game by Therese. East could obviously lead a black suit, either the ST or CQ are standard, although a case could be made for leading a heart, as West is likely to have at least 4 hearts, Unfortunately for East he chose to lead the CQ, and by winning in hand with the CA, dummy's club holding gave me 4 club tricks. I finessed the next club in dummy and took the diamond finesse, and
W / / //	72 KT87 N 1D 2NT	E / /	S 1H 3NT	after winning the DK East responded to West's signal on the second club by leading a heart, but with diamonds 3-3 I had 11 tricks for +460 and 94% After an initial lead of the H9, declarer has no real chance of 9 tricks, but the CQ was a standard type of lead that was wrong on the day. While it is a standard lead, the combination in dummy is common.