

2018 Qld Open Teams by Richard Wallis

The tradition continued in 2018 when Therese Tully and I played with Lindy Vincent and Richard Ward in the Open Teams at Toowong. I do not remember how long we have been playing in this event, but with the odd substitution it is about 20 years.

We started out with 2 good wins to hit the front, followed by a small win in match 3 to put us up against the top seeds where we suffered our only loss by 5 Imps. While we won our remaining 4 matches, the margins were on the small side, and we came in second by less than 1 VP.

Overall winners were Jill Magee/ Terry Strong and Nevill Francis/ Magnus Moren, with Paul Hooykaas/ Martin Doran and Peter Evans/ Tony Treloar a close third place.

Toowong put on a great show and in spite of a few minor problems with the Bridgemates at the beginning, Jan Peach was her usual calm self and there were very few disgruntled players at the end of the day (it is impossible to please everybody).

M 1	AT872			On board 2 in the first match Therese overcalled 1S when East
Bd 2	T5			opened the bidding with 1C and I did not know how high we could go
Dlr E	AQT6			as the overcall showed 5 spades but did not necessarily promise an
Vul NS	J2			opening hand.
-		Q95		However, when I have 5-card support for partner's major suit, I
J9842		A7		generally bid to game, as even if it does not make the opponents often
98743		J52		have something on and it puts the last guess onto them.
KT4		AQ763		West led the D9 and Therese was in no trouble in this contract, so she
	KJ643			won the opening lead in hand and led the SK, intending to draw
	KQ63			trumps finishing on the table and make 11 tricks.
	K			The 3-0 spade break seemed to put an end to 11 tricks, but when East
	985			obliged by playing the DJ on the DQ there were 11 tricks after all.
W	N	E	S	At the other table NS stayed out of game, also making 11 tricks, but
/	4S	1C	1S	that was +10 Imps.
		//		
M 1	Q764			Board 13 in the first match clearly illustrated how different systems
Bd 13	J87			play a big part in the results.
Dlr N	J			At our table West opened a 15-17 1NT in 4 th seat and it was passed
Vul All	KJT84			out. I led the CJ, denying the CQ but could have a higher honour, and
AKJ2		985		Therese played the CA and continued the suit, allowing me to cash
KQ95		T3		out the clubs, and the HA was our 6 th trick for -90. A flat board maybe?
Q42		AKT73		At the other table with Richard and Lindy playing Acol, Richard
Q9		752		opened 1H, Lindy responded 1NT, and finished up in 3NT with South
	T3			on lead.
	A642			South has no reason to lead the CA, and selected the H2, which won
	9865			on the table giving Lindy her 8 th trick, but where was her 9 th coming
	A63			from with such fragile clubs?
W	N	E	S	However the run of the diamonds caused discard problems for NS
	/	/	/	and she finished up with 10 tricks for +630 and 11 Imps.
1NT	//			

M 2	QT			
Bd 22	KQ94			
Dlr E	QJ74			
Vul EW	T73			
986		J73		
A73		T62		
A532		T98		
QJ2		A965		
	AK542			
	J85			
	K6			
	K84			
W	N	E	S	
/	2C	/	1NT!	
	3NT	//	2S	

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M 3	Q864			
Bd 5	J7532			
Dlr N	-			
Vul NS	AQJ9			
AT52		J3		
K4		A96		
AT5		QJ742		
K832		T76		
	K97			
	QT8			
	K9863			
	54			
W	N	E	S	
//	1H	/	2H	

M 3	KQJ9765			
Bd 11	Q54			
Dlr S	2			
Vul Nil	Q5			
A83		T4		
A96		K72		
JT3		KQ965		
AT74		KJ8		
	2			
	JT83			
	A874			
	9632			
W	N	E	S	
1C	2S!	3D	/	
3NT	//		/	

On board 22 in the second match the good 5-card suit was enough for Therese to promote the 14 HCPs into a 1NT opening bid.

After first checking for a 4-4 heart fit I settled in 3NT and West decided to lead through dummy's known suit by leading the H7!

Therese won in hand and with the H9 in dummy led back a second heart, ducked by West and now she set up 2 diamond tricks by leading to the DK, taken by West who now led the CQ, but far too late!

Since the spades were 3-3 all along, 3NT is cold after the heart lead and now the late club switch gave her 10 tricks for +430.

An opening lead of the CQ and continuation leads to 5 tricks for the defence as long as East encourages but does not take the CA at trick 1 or 2 to keep communication with West.

At the other table NS stopped in 2NT and made 9 tricks for -150 and 7 Imps to us.

On board 5 in the third match I opened 1H on a minimum hand and poor suit and got lucky when Therese supported hearts and EW did not compete. I think this is a clear opening bid with the minor suits swapped, but not with the diamond void as if Therese responded 2D to my opening I have nowhere to go!

East led the SJ and I won the SQ and led back the S4 to finesse, but West won the ST and cashed the SA on which East discarded a diamond, Next West led another spade ruffed by East and over-ruffed in dummy.

The CQ won the next trick and I followed with the CA and C9 ruffed in dummy, and ruffed a diamond back to hand to lead the last club also ruffed in dummy so I could ruff another diamond.

I still had 3 trumps for a third diamond ruff, so the poor 8-card fit had yielded 6 ruffs for 9 tricks and +140 versus 2H 1 off at the other table.

On board 11 in the third match I got too conservative for once in my bridge life when I only overcalled 2S after West opened 1C, instead of the full-blooded 3S.

East had an easy 3D, and I am sure with some trepidation, West took a shot at the 3NT game, although 5D is actually cold on the club guess.

I led the SK and West ducked and won the next spade to lead the DJ, and was visibly pleased when I did not have the DA, so he could later take the club finesse through me for 11 tricks and -460.

At the other table North did bid 3S and Richard and Lindy took the sensible option to play in 3SX, which has 5 top losers thus finished 1 off and +100, but 8 Imps out.

2S was a silly bid and gave EW too much latitude and room to explore. Even though 5D is cold on the actual layout, 3NT is the normal spot to try and make game.

M 4 AJ852
Bd 20 AT876
Dlr W 87
Vul All 4
 T76 9
 J94 52
 J62 K943
 Q985 AJT732
 KQ43
 KQ3
 AQT5
 K6
W N E S
 / 1S! / 3C!
 / 3D! / 4NT
 / 5H! / 6S
 //

On board 20 in the fourth match I had only 9 HCPs, but that included 2 Aces, and all of my points were in my two 5-card majors, all of which equates to a 7-loser hand, which is the normal expectation for an opening bid.

Accordingly I opened 1S, to which Therese bid a Jacoby 3C, and my 3D reply was a minimum! Over 4NT, RKCB, my 5H shows 2 Key Cards, so Therese knew that we were off an Ace and settled for 6S.

East led the CA to look at dummy and continued with the D9 next, but I had 12 easy tricks for +1430.

Even an initial diamond lead fares no better, as I could take a successful finesse and later discard the clubs in dummy on the hearts for 13 tricks, or eschew the finesse, draw trumps and then discard the clubs on the good hearts and give up a diamond.

At the other table declarer was not in slam so finessed the DT, losing 2 tricks for -650 and 13 Imps. On a negative lead declarer could draw trumps and then run the hearts and finesse the DQ for 13 tricks.

M 4 KT9752
Bd 28 AT54
Dlr W AT
Vul NS 6
 63 AQJ84
 87 -
 QJ974 8652
 K972 QJT3
 -
 KQJ9632
 K3
 A854
W N E S
 / 1S / 2H
 / 4C! / 5S!
 / 6H! X XX
 //

Board 28 in the fourth match was the biggest score I have been involved in for a long time, and also involved an act of faith!

I have an easy 1S opening bid and when Therese responded with a game-forcing 2H, I showed my 4-card support and singleton club with a splinter jump to 4C!

When Therese rebid 5S over 4C, there was room for doubt as to its meaning, and I informed East that 5S should be Exclusion Blackwood, BUT it was risky in my opening bid suit.

My correct response to EB would be 6D, showing 2 Key Cards, and Therese was planning to rebid 7H over this bid, but I wanted to make sure we were playing in hearts, AND my spades were poor, so I jumped to 6H.

East still doubled 6H for a spade lead, and Therese promptly redoubled! West led the S6 as requested, but 7H was cold, and the redoubled contract with an overtrick scored +2470, for 14 Imps. The grand slam would still have been 13 Imps, unless doubled.

M 5 A
Bd 5 J2
Dlr N 3
Vul NS AKJT87643
 Q964 T852
 QT853 K94
 AQ52 J9864
 - 2
 KJ73
 A76
 KT7
 Q95
W N E S
 2H 1C / 1S
 // 3H / 3NT

On board 5 in the fifth match my hand was very powerfull opposite a fit, but not enough defence to open with an artificial 2C, although that would have worked out much better for our system.

When West overcalled 2H, I could have jumped to 5C, but if Therese has a heart stop, 3NT will almost certainly be better, since I have a spade entry in case Therese is void in clubs, so I cued hearts, looking for a stop.

Her hand was much better than it need to be, and it had 3 of the outstanding clubs, so on the lead of the H5, 12 tricks were easy for +690.

At the other table North rebid 5C with my hand and South bid to slam, also making very easily for -1370 and 12 Imps away.

This was still a small 4 Imp win to our team, but a flat board would have seen us comfortable winners of the event. Sometimes it pays to blast into contracts.

M 6	QT3		
Bd 25	J63		
Dlr N	974		
Vul EW	JT82		
K874		J52	
972		84	
AKQ2		JT863	
Q7		953	
	A96		
	AKQT5		
	5		
	AK64		
W	N	E	S
	/	/	1H
X	2H!	/	4H
//			

On board 25 in the sixth match I pushed the responses to the limit when I gave Therese heart support following her third-in-hand 1H opening and West's take-out double, so it was with some trepidation that I put my dummy down on the table following her jump to game.

However if I had passed, I am sure that Therese would have doubled East's 2D response for take-out and we still would have found our heart game.

West led the DA and Therese ruffed the DK at trick 2 and drew trumps in 3 rounds, then sat back to consider possible lay-outs based on West's double.

As West is marked with most of the outstanding HCPs, she next cashed the top clubs and was rewarded by the fall of the CQ making 10 tricks a certainty, and the SK was also likely to be with West so that was +450.

At the other table South miss-picked everything and finished 1 off so that was another +50 and 11 Imps.

M 7	6432		
Bd 7	KQ42		
Dlr S	J		
Vul All	KJT3		
Q98		KJT75	
JT5		83	
8543		T92	
752		Q86	
	A		
	A976		
	AKQ76		
	A94		
W	N	E	S
			1D
/	1H	/	4D!4N
/	4H	/	T
/	5C!!	/	5H
//			

On board 7 in the seventh match I had a brain explosion that almost cost us the match and definitely cost us the Championship.

Therese's 4D rebid was a power-raise to 4H, showing 18+ HCPs and 4 hearts, and I signed off in 4H. However Therese was not finished yet and trotted out RKCB 4NT.

As I was writing my response I was repeating in my head, 3041, and then wrote down 5C!

When I saw dummy I was surprized that we were not in slam and proceeded to wrap up an easy 13 tricks when East conveniently covered my CJ later in the play for +710, and thought 13 imps out.

At the other table slam was never in the picture, and declarer only made 12 tricks for +1 to us after all.

It was only before the next match started that Therese asked me why I had shown 0 Key Cards in response to her RKCB inquiry, when in fact I had 1, the HK and I realized it had been my silly mistake that we had missed the slam.

M 7	AQJ94		
Bd 11	-		
Dlr S	98743		
Vul Nil	Q82		
T6		82	
AJ72		Q96	
Q52		AKT	
A953		KJT74	
	K753		
	KT8543		
	J6		
	6		
W	N	E	S
			/
/	1S	2C	4S
//			

Board 11 in the seventh match was very unusual in that Therese passed as dealer, then raised my third-in-hand 1S opening to game on her 7-count, albeit holding 4-card support and a singleton in the suit overcalled!

East led the DA and DK, and switched to a club won by West with the CA who then attempted to cash the HA, which I ruffed.

A club ruff and another club pitched on the HK and I could ruff to hand and ruff the diamonds good, drawing trumps to claim 10 tricks for an effortless +420.

At the other table Richard was left to play in 4C, which made exactly 10 tricks for another +130 and 11 Imps.

I need 3 ruffs in dummy to make 10 tricks, so East would have fared better by switching to trumps after the opening lead, and West does not have to hurry to cash the HA as any heart I have can never get away.

M 8	KJ98		
Bd 28	J2		
Dlr W	AQ53		
Vul All	KJ9		
QT64		753	
8763		AK954	
J9874		2	
-		8532	
	A2		
	QT		
	KT6		
	AQT764		
W	N	E	S
/	1NT	2C!	3NT
//			

On board 28, in the eighth and final match, East's 2C overcall of my 1NT showed at least 4 clubs and another suit, and Therese bid a practical 3NT, although in retrospect 5C would have worked out better.

Having bid his particularly bad suit, East picked a good time not to lead 4th highest of his longest and strongest, choosing instead the HA and followed with the HK and H4 so the suit did not get blocked!

Thus I was 1 off before I even gained the lead, whereas on a 4th highest lead I would have had 12 top tricks and squeeze West in spades and diamonds for 13 tricks.

After East showed a minimum of 4 clubs it is hard for us to get to 5C, but things were even worse at the other table where NS bid all the way to 6NT!

Richard had a Senior's moment when he forgot he was on lead to 6NT and did not double, so that was only +400 but 7 Imps to us.