

2008 PABF Open Teams by Richard Wallis

The PABF Congress has to be acclaimed an outstanding success for all involved in setting it up at the GCI Hotel at Surfers Paradise. China had a great tournament, winning 3 of the 4 events, with Australia winning just the Seniors Teams.

In alternate years the event is open to any team, even cross-nationalities, which increases the number of participants significantly. This year there were 88 teams in all 4 sections, with the largest number 39 in the Open Teams. The Seniors (19), Womens (18) and Youth (12) were played as complete round-robins, but the Open was too large for this, and was spilt into 2. The top four (top two in each section of the Open) played off in semifinals and finals.

Mike Robson and Betty Lee, John Brockwell and Fred Whittaker, and Tony Jackman and I formed a team for the Seniors, although I also played 3 matches with John and 1 with Fred. We were off to a terrible start when we were thrashed by Queensland in the first match, but gradually recovered to rise to 4th after 12 matches, with only teams below us to play. Alas, that is a fatal conclusion, as the team that came last, 49 VPs behind second-last, beat us by 7 Imps in the 17th match, which ended any chance we had of finishing in the top 4.

Our only claim to fame was beating both Australia and Japan, who finished 1st and 2nd in the round-robin, but our 8 losses were not all against highly fancied teams. None-the-less it was a great week and I look forward to the next appearance of the PABF Open event in Qld.

M 1	6			Board 2 in match 1 was a bad loss for us due to wrong information from North as the meaning of South's 2D bid, and a fixation on my part as to the meaning of Tony's double.
Bd 2	5			
Dlr E	K876			
Vul NS	KJT7432			Even though my 1D only promised 2, I did not think that 2D was natural as told to us by North, and I thought that Tony's double confirmed this, so I was always looking for slam in our 'diamond' fit.
AQT3		975		
T872		AK		
AQT		J9543		The 2H rebid confirmed that South had the majors, and as he seemed to be missing a heart stop, 2NT by Tony was a surprise, but seemed to me to confirm he had diamonds since he did not double 2H either.
Q9		A65		Still looking for slam I cue-bid 4C and was disappointed that Tony could not cue-bid in spades, so accepted 5D as the final bid reluctantly.
	KJ842			
	QJ9643			
	2			
	8			
W	N	E	S	
		1D!	2D	When dummy went down I could see we were not on the same wave length and then foolishly played for South to have Kxx in trumps by running the DJ, and could not safely draw trumps so went down.
X	/	/	2H	
2NT	/	3H	/	
3NT	/	4C	/	At the other table Mike and Betty did play in their mis-fit, and lost 800 in 3HX for 14 Imps away.
5D	//			

M 2 AT62
Bd 8 J7
Dlr W J9
Vul Nil 87643
 J 83
 K6432 QT5
 K76432 AQ8
 9 KQT52
 KQ9754
 A98
 T5
 AJ
W **N** **E** **S**
 / / 1NT 2C
 2D / 3D 3S
 4D 4S / /
 5D //

The trend in bidding over 1NT today appears to be to make an artificial bid (X, 2C, 2D etc) as a prelude to showing a single-suiter, but the system came unstuck on board 8 in match 2.

Over the 2C overcall, Tony had a convenient 2D bid available to show a long suit and a few points of his own, and with such good diamonds, I tried to steal the hand by bidding 3D before South could show their suit.

South was not to be denied however, and came in at the 3-level, prompting North to show support when Tony rebid his diamonds.

When 4S was passed around to Tony, with another undisclosed 5-card suit he had a relatively easy 5D bid, which may make, or at worst be a good sacrifice. If my clubs had included the Ace instead of KQ, he would have made 5D, as it is he was 1 off for -50.

It would have been much harder for Tony to come in if South had bid 2S instead of 2C, and even harder over 3S.

At the other table John and Fred played in 4S and contrived to make it for +420 and 9 Imps.

M 5 KQT83
Bd 20 KT63
Dlr W Q85
Vul All 7
 954 AJ62
 J742 -
 KT9 A64
 943 AQT652
 7
 AQ985
 J732
 KJ8
W **N** **E** **S**
 / 1S 2C 3H
 / 3H //

Board 20 in match 5 was a close decision, as both hands had good and bad features, but we managed to stop in a makeable spot.

Tony had both majors and a couple of Tens, so it looked like an 11-15 1S opening, but when I bid a forcing 2H, all he could do was raise and leave any game bid up to me.

I had well placed club honours, but no spade support and a poor diamond suit, so could do no more than pass and hope I was not too high already.

West led the C4, and I could see potential problems, but East won the CA and EW played 3 rounds of diamonds, so there was only just a potential trump loser as the only danger to the contract. This is where the HT and H9 came into play as the HA assures that trumps could be picked up for no loser and we scored +140.

At the other table NS did get too high, and lost 500 in 4HSX, for 12 Imps to us.

M 6 AKQJ876
Bd 11 JT
Dlr S AK
Vul Nil QT
 943 -
 986 AKQ543
 Q53 JT9872
 AK32 7
 T52
 72
 64
 J98654
W **N** **E** **S**
 / 1C 4H /
 / 4S //

On board 11 in match 6 East made a very peculiar play that her partner was not able to decipher, and Tony accepted gratefully.

It is not often that opponents jump to game after we open with a strong club, so Tony may have appeared to be under some pressure with his 4S bid, I know I was pleasantly surprised that his trumps were solid.

East led the HA and then for some unknown reason switched to the C7! Who can blame West for playing the top clubs and trying for a trump promotion, by leading a 3rd round. After all, East's switch had suggested that North had the HK.

That was 10 tricks for +420, but the real result was won by Betty at the other table. North opened 1S and rebid 4S over Betty's 4H, but Betty was not given 12 red cards for nothing, so she next tried 5D.

The final contract was 5HX, which is cold so we added another +650 and 14 Imps in all.

M 8 K86
Bd 4 QJT85
Dlr W K64
Vul All A5
 AT J74
 AK43 -
 7 AQJ852
 QJ9874 K632

Q9532
 9762
 T93
 T

W	N	E	S
2C	2H	3D	3H
3NT	//		

On board 4 in match 8 I had high hopes for the hand after Tony opened a natural 2C and NS showed a lot of hearts, but Tony's heart values indicated by 3NT dampened my enthusiasm, and I opted to follow Bob Hamman's advice, ill-advisedly as it turned out.

I wanted to bid a forcing 4C instead of passing 3NT, but could not be sure that it would be treated as forcing if Tony had bad diamond support, so took the easy way out. I am not sure if Tony would have been excited by a jump to 5C since he did have poor diamonds, but we will never know.

North led the HQ and 3NT was never in jeopardy, and it may have been that during the play North came to the conclusion that Tony was void in diamonds, as he bared his King on the run of the clubs, allowing Tony to make 11 tricks for 1 Imp to us.

The board average was only 680 to EW, so only 1 or 2 pairs must have reached slam.

M 9 QJ86
Bd 23 62
Dlr S 762
Vul All AKT2
 A5 732
 A97 J83
 KJT5 A98
 9864 J753

KT94
 KQT54
 Q43
 Q

W	N	E	S
/	1S	/	1H
/	3D	/	2S
//			3NT

On board 23 in match 9 I thought that we were told that North's 3D bid was natural, and was surprised when 762 hit the table, but looking at South's hand, 3D must have been looking for a diamond stop, which is what Tony took it for.

It still seems strange for South to do as she was told and bid 3NT with such a tenuous diamond stop and a singleton in an unbid suit and 4-card spade support, and she paid the penalty.

Tony made an aggressive lead of the DJ, and was rewarded when we took the first 4 tricks and he still had 2 Aces to come, so we scored up +200.

At the other table John and Fred looked for game but stopped in the precarious contract of 3S by North, but were let off the hook when East led the C5 and a diamond loser went on the 2nd round of clubs. If the CQ was allowed to hold, and West was generous enough to duck the spade towards dummy, 10 tricks could be made, but if he was not, the diamond switch would have been obvious and 8 tricks the limit.

M 10 KQJT9542
Bd 1 -
Dlr N A93
Vul Nil 82
 3 A7
 KJ96 8543
 T74 KQJ52
 KT753 96

86
 AQT72
 86
 AQJ4

W	N	E	S
/	2C	2D	3H
/	3S	/	4C
/	4S	/	5S
/	6S	//	

I do not know what South was expecting in North's hand on board 1 in match 10, but I do know I was surprised when I visualized it as the hand was played.

I know that the hand has potential for game in spades opposite very little, but against a complete misfit, it could yield only 8 tricks, and if the opponents get into the action, it will only yield 1 trick in defense!

I prefer by far an opening bid of 4S on this hand, over which South may invite with 5S.

Having already 'overbid' his values by opening 2C, I do not know what was behind the decision to bid slam after the 5S invitation. Maybe he thought he was being asked for a diamond trick, but the void in his partner's suit cannot be an asset. South's 3H jump is also a mystery.

In the hopeless slam North took his best shot at success by finessing the CQ at trick 2, so he went 2 off for +100 to us.

At the other table Betty and Mike played sensibly in 4S for +450 and 11 Imps.

M 10 K9
Bd 5 A8532
Dir N 863
Vul NS J92
 876 J2
 4 QJT976
 AQ954 K
 A853 KQ64
 AQT543
 K
 JT72
 T7

W	N	E	S
	/	1H	2S
X	/	3H	//

On board 5 in match 10 North had a very easy time when I failed to diagnose the singleton HK in South's hand, he just had to sit back and collect 2 more trump tricks to go with the 3 tricks already gained, and score up 1 down. Or so he thought!

Tony had a very suitable hand for his negative double, and 3C would have been easier, but I had an almost solid 6-card heart suit, so opted for 3H rather than 3C.

South led the SA and North won the 2nd round and exited with the C2, which I won in hand to lead the HQ. South won, perforce, and led the ST, which I ruffed and then I led the HJ getting the bad news as North ducked.

Preparing for a trump coup I unblocked the DK and led to the CA in dummy and led the top diamonds, discarding firstly the C6 and then the CK, to leave me in dummy poised over North's trump holding, 9 tricks for +140. Flat board.

M 11 T7
Bd 17 QT3
Dir N AJ6532
Vul Nil A5
 AK95 Q842
 A76 KJ2
 T84 KQ97
 KT3 QJ
 J63
 9854
 -
 987642

W	N	E	S
	2D!	/	2H
X	3D	X	/
3S	/	4S!!	//

Match 11 was against Japan, and we lost out on board 17 due to double mis-information and poor judgement.

North's 2D opening appeared to me from the complicated WBF system card to be weak, natural, but upon enquiry his partner said that it was weak and showed 4 spades and at least 4 hearts.

When North bid 3D, this confirmed to me that the system card was right, and I doubled for penalties. However, now South said that he was showing diamonds and hearts, but this statement was not supported by her pass instead of converting to hearts, and John Brockwell did not know what was going on and pulled it, as South seemed to have diamonds too, so how could my double be penalty!

Now was when the poor judgement came in as I had a very easy bid of 3NT over 3S, but chose to support partner instead, and North led the DA, and gave his partner 2 ruffs via the club entry to take it 1 off.

At the other table East was declarer so only 1 ruff was available and 10 Imps out.

I am sure that the TD would have had something to say about the explanations and South's action after saying 3D showed H & D, but the language barrier may have been the problem, so John did not want to protest.

M 11 52
Bd 24 98653
Dir W 65
Vul Nil T943
 QT73 4
 J7 AT42
 QJ9732 84
 6 AQJ752
 AKJ986
 KQ
 AKT
 K8

W	N	E	S
/	/	1C	4S
X	//		

On board 24 in match 11 John had 2 trump tricks and trusted me to have 2 tricks so doubled the jump to game in spades for penalty.

Since my 1C bid had shown at least 4 cards in the suit, he led the C6, not necessarily looking for a ruff, but as a potentially safe lead. I won the CA and returned the C7 for him to ruff and he returned a heart, but discarded the HJ on the next club as declarer ruffed.

Declarer's next task was to ruff the losing diamond in dummy and lead a trump, but if that is the plan, it matters not which card you ruff with in dummy.

When declarer chose to ruff with the S2, I was able to over-ruff with the S4 and we claimed 2 off for +300.

At the other table Betty was also in 4S, but undoubled, and she showed good technique by ruffing with the cost-free S5 in dummy and was surprised when East showed out. Everyone laughed when East followed to the spade lead from the table with the S4.

M 11	JT974			
Bd 26	9532			
Dir E	86			
Vul All	83			
Q2		AK865		
T8		AKQ6		
AK9743		J2		
T62		AJ		
	3			
	J74			
	QT5			
	KQ9754			
W	N	E	S	
		1S	/	
2D	/	2H	/	
2S	/	3C	X	
3D	/	4NT	/	
5H	/	6D	//	

That bridge can be a cruel game was clearly demonstrated on board 26 in match 11, when we reached the fine contract of 6D.

Jim and Ziggy, playing in the Open, reached 7D, which requires South to have precisely their actual holding, or North to have the singleton DT, and chalked up an effortless +2190.

John's 2S may have been false preference with a minimum hand, so I forced with 3C, giving South the opportunity to direct the lead, which was probably going to be a club anyway, but the 3D rebid confirmed a 6-card suit and only 2 spades. However I expected something like Qx for John to prefer 2S to 3D which was also minimum and non-forcing.

In 6D John did not need the diamond finesse, as he could afford a trump loser. After drawing 2 rounds of trumps he could pitch 1 club on the HQ, and another on the SK, not caring whether it was ruffed or not.

However, as is evident from the actual layout, the spades broke 5-1, and the hand with short spades had the trump, so he finished up 1 down and we lost 12 Imps against -620 at the other table for 4S making.

M 12	972			
Bd 3	AT953			
Dir S	KJ4			
Vul EW	AK			
KJ4		AT83		
-		KJ764		
QT972		8		
QT853		642		
	Q65			
	Q82			
	A653			
	J97			
W	N	E	S	
/	1NT	2C	/	
2S	3H	/	4H	
/		X	//	

On board 3 in match 12 my 2C showed both majors, and John's 2S showed longer spades, but this may have been 2 versus 1!

I was surprised when North bid 3H over 2S, but even more so when South raised to game, and I expressed my surprise with a penalty double.

I may have been better off leading spades, but I thought that I may get trump-bound, so led the D8 as a prelude to shortening my trumps.

However, even though North won the opening lead in hand and finessed the H8, he had no apparent way to get rid of his 5 losers, and we chalked up +300,

At the other table the contract was also 4H, but this time not doubled, and although not warned by the double it went 3 off, -150 was still 4 Imps to us.

M 13	82			
Bd 21	K97432			
Dir N	T9			
Vul NS	Q52			
KQT965		A73		
T		J65		
7643		5		
A4		KT8763		
	J4			
	AQ8			
	AKQJ82			
	J9			
W	N	E	S	
	/	/	1D	
2S	3H	4S	X	
//				

On board 21 in match 13 the number of tricks West made in spades generally depended on the contract.

At our table North made the obvious lead of the DT, and now even though South switched to a trump, John was able to insert the ST and when that held he could ruff 2 diamonds in dummy using the CA as an entry and ruff a club to hand to draw trumps for 10 tricks and a virtually certain +590.

At the other table Betty and Mike pushed on to the 5-level, but so did EW, and the final contract was 5SWX, and the DT was also led.

Now it is not good enough to ruff 2 diamonds after the trump switch, and West had to set up the clubs for any chance for 11 tricks.

Since the trumps were 2-2 and the clubs 3-2, this was not a problem and 11 tricks were recorded for -650 and 2 Imps away.

M 13 8642
Bd 23 J75
Dlr S 92
Vul All A642
 A73 5
 K82 AT6
 763 AKQ54
 K753 QJT9

KQJT9
 Q943
 JT8
 8

W	N	E	S
/	/	1D	/
1NT	2S	3C	1S
3D	/	3NT	//

Partnership cooperation and rapport is built up over a long time of playing together, and John and I play together only once or twice a year, so we are not always on the same wavelength.

On board 23 in match 13 I wanted to show a good hand but no help in the spade suit, which is what I thought that I was implying when I bid 3C over 2S and then 3NT over John's 3D preference.

Playing teams, if that is the inference from my hand, you definitely do not want to be in 3NT, although the HQ or CA in my hand instead of the other club honours would have been enough, along with the 3-2 diamond break.

In the hopeless 3NT, John gave South a chance to discard a spades by running his diamonds, but he would not cooperate and 1 off was a flat board.

When dummy hit the table, John wanted to be in 6C, but this is scuttled by the 4-1 break, which also scuttles 5D, as South can get a club ruff.

M 14 J7
Bd 8 4
Dlr W KQT98532
Vul Nil J3
 AKQ 65432
 JT96 K52
 7 AJ6
 AK652 94

T98
 AQ8
 4
 QT87

W	N	E	S
1C!	3D	3S!	//

Bidding boxes are a clutter on the table, especially if a left and right hander are both trying to use the same corner.

Board 8 was our first in match 14 and after Tony opened 1C I noticed that North was also trying to use my corner of the table for her bidding box, so I moved my bidding box to the side table.

Unfortunately the distraction caused me to come up with my intended 1S response in my hand, before North had a chance to bid herself.

The rules are quite clear in that Tony is barred for 1 round if I repeat my spades naturally, but may come back in on the next round, if there is one.

I have the bare minimum for a positive response, and a poor suit, so decided to be conservative with just 3S, instead of aggressive with 3NT or guessing with 4S. Of course 10 tricks were easy, but since Mike and Betty had lost on -300 in 4DX, the loss was only 4 Imps.

M 15 9632
Bd 15 J6
Dlr S T63
Vul NS AJ32
 AJ74 KQT5
 98754 -
 J85 A972
 8 KT964

8
 AKQT32
 KQ4
 Q75

W	N	E	S
/	1D	/	1C
/	2NT	/	2H
//			3H

Discarding is very difficult when you have no idea of partner's or declarer's hand, and East was not up to it on board 15 in match 15.

West had no bidding to guide her, but made the curious choice of the C8 instead of attacking with a spade to make use of her 5-card surprise for declarer.

It looked like I had 9 tricks by way of 6 hearts, 2 clubs and a diamond, so I was not even tempted to duck, but upon winning with the CA and cashing the HJ, East's discard was an unpleasant surprise, and 9 tricks were not so certain.

Firstly I had to draw 5 rounds of trumps, and the required 5 discards caused East a great deal of pain, and to my surprise he discarded 3 clubs, a spade and a diamond!

Thus he had to take the CQ at trick 7, and when I ruffed the 2nd spade and entered dummy with the CJ he threw another spade, followed by a diamond on the 4th club, so I got a diamond trick after all for +170. At the other table John and Fred played in 3S for -50 and 3 Imps.

M 15 Q7
Bd 18 -
Dir E AKQJ8764
Vul NS T64
 J52 T8643
 KT9852 A74
 T 952
 Q75 K9
 AK9
 QJ63
 3
 AJ832
W N E S
 / 5D / 2C
 //

Board 18 in match 15 proved too difficult for most pairs as the spade honours in the South hand were perfect for slam. The board average was only +640, so only 1 or 2 pairs must have bid slam.

At our table the bidding was very straight-forward, and I had no clue as to whether Tony's suit was even solid, yet alone whether my AK, A were exactly what he wanted.

The peculiar bidding occurred at the other table, where NS were also playing Precision, and opened 2C. Somehow, the solid 8-card suit was lost during the bidding and North set the final contract as 5C!

Unfortunately for the defense North had identified a shortage, so a trump was led, and thereafter declarer was in complete control and also finished up with 12 tricks for a flat board.

On a heart lead, declarer in 5C might have had a heart attack when he saw the solid diamond suit in dummy, so at least he was spared that fate.

M 15 975
Bd 25 T93
Dir N Q4
Vul EW J9753
 QJ2 KT3
 8652 AK74
 K9852 AJT73
 8 K
 A864
 QJ
 6
 AQT642
W N E S
 2D / 1D 2C
 4D 3C 3H 3S
 //

On board 25 in match 15 John and Fred finished in 5D going 1 off, and were lamenting the failure to bid hearts on the way, as 4H was cold.

At our table, both East and I did show our second suits, but West preferred diamonds, and even stopped below game!

It is hard to understand West's failure to bid 4H unless she thought that East was showing a stop and looking for a diamond stop for 3NT.

East did well to pass West's 4D bid, as 5D must have looked to be a chance even with the CK wasted.

I led the CA and our prospects did not look good, and we took out 3 tricks in the fullness of time for -130 and 6 Imps away.

M 16 AQJ
Bd 5 K93
Dir N AJT8
Vul NS 742
 T6 K8432
 JT6 Q52
 753 K62
 AQT83 95
 975
 A874
 Q94
 KJ6
W N E S
 / 1NT / 2C!
 // 2H / 3NT

Doubling for the lead is not without risk, but it is often worth the risk to defeat the contract, and would have paid a handsome dividend on board 5 in match 16.

Some years ago in the Toowoomba Teams Congress, Ralph and Peter had a similar start to the auction, but West doubled for a club lead and was quickly redoubled based on power and some fit. 2CXX made 10 tricks for a huge gain.

This time West failed to act and East led the S3, won by Tony with the SQ over the ST.

Tony went to dummy with a heart and passed the D9 to East, who hoped that his partner had the SJ and led another spade. With 8 tricks in the bag Tony was able to play hearts for the 9th trick when they broke 3-3, and led a club himself at the end looking for 10!

At the other table, a spade was also led initially, but subsequent club leads through dummy led to a 2 trick defeat for 13 Imps.

M 19 7652
Bd 22 T642
Dir E KT
Vul EW K53
 T4 A83
 975 KQJ8
 A832 Q4
 AJ72 Q984

 KQJ9
 A3
 J9765
 T6

W N E S
 // 1NT //

On board 22 in match 19 I did not consider leading my ragged 5-card suit when I had such a good 4-card suit, and declarer ducked the spade until the 3rd trick discarding a diamond from the table. However, then declarer then found a novel way to tackle the club suit. She led to the Ace and then small off the board and inserted the C8, allowing me to win with my singleton CT and cash my spade! On the spade declarer discarded the D4, and I now led my 5-card suit, declarer playing low from dummy and allowing Fred to with the DK and return the DT which I overtook and continued the suit to set up my other 2 diamond tricks for 3 down. However, when declarer led a heart to her hand and I cashed my diamond tricks, she discarded hearts from dummy and finally from her hand as well to leave my H3 as the only heart left for 4 off and +400. At the other table the lead was the D6, and Betty emerged with 8 tricks for +120 and 11 Imps.

M 19 J9542
Bd 28 AJ5
Dir W K
Vul NS KT86
 876 QT3
 864 K972
 T9752 A3
 A4 Q932

 AK
 QT3
 QJ864
 J75

W N E S
 / 1NT! / 3NT
 //

On board 28 in match 19, the last of the week, Fred appeared to include one of his small spades in with the DK as he opened with a weak 1NT, raised to game by me. Fred won the opening heart lead on the table, cashed the top spades and led to the DK, ducked routinely by East to deny the diamond suit. Now a spade set up the suit and East was on lead yet again, and chose to exit with a club, won by West who switched back to hearts. Fred rose with the HA and cashed his 2 spades, causing East some discard problems, and not knowing that Fred had no more diamonds, he had to discard a club and a heart, so Fred exited with a heart and came to 10 tricks for +630. At the other table they played unhappily in 4S and went 2 off for 13 Imps to us.