

## 2010 Qld Graded Butler Pairs by Richard Wallis

The graded butler pairs do not attract enough entries to hold separate events for Womens, Mens, Mixed and Restricted, so all pairs play in the one Swiss field and the State Titles are awarded to the highest finishing pair in each group.

This is not completely satisfactory, as in the latter stages especially, a Restricted pair doing well, may be pushed out of a place by one of the top pairs, but it is the best we can do with such few entries. Even with all pairs in together, there were only 21 tables in play this year.

Another problem faced each year is how many rounds to run over the course of the 2 days. For 42 pairs, a minimum of 8 rounds is recommended for a Swiss event, but that is too few in my opinion to select a winner, but the 16 rounds chosen for 2009 was over-swissed by far. For 2010 we tried 12 rounds, each of 10 boards, which made for 60 boards to be played each day, and since play finished around 5pm on each day, this did not appear to be a problem. Additionally, I looked at the match-ups for the 12<sup>th</sup> and final round on Sunday afternoon and they all seemed to be competitive, at least in the first 7 tables. Another alternative considered was 10 rounds each of 12 boards.

The lead changed continually at the top over the 2 days, but with 1 match to go, barring accidents it appeared to be between Tony Jackman playing with me, or David and Paula McLeish. David and Paula started the last match with a handy 7 VP lead, and this proved too much for us to overcome as they wound up winners by 2 VPs. They were still playing the last board with virtually everyone else finished when the Director noticed that they had got to game, and if it made, they won, if it went off we won. It could have gone off but it made.

Since they were a Mixed Pair, the Men's Pairs Title was still left for Tony and me. Rosa Lachman, Pele Rankin won the Women's Pairs Title and Elizabeth Zeller and Evelyne Mander won the Restricted Pairs Title.

<b>M 1</b>	T3			When North opened with a multi-2D on board 1 in the first match, I am
<b>Bd 1</b>	987652			sure that South expected her suit to be spades, but she changed her
<b>Dlr N</b>	-			mind when I overcalled 2S.
<b>Vul Nil</b>	J8654			Not to be outdone, after Tony bid 4S over South's 4H bid, North had
K87		QJ962		such a shapely hand that she bid again, not being the least put off by
T		3		her lack of points, or maybe that is why she did sacrifice!
KQT654		A73		The 5H bid by North in front of South is not recommended, as South
T72		AK93		could be waiting to pounce on 4S. Just because North is trickless,
	A54			does not mean that 4S is cold (and North is not trickless).
	AKQJ4			However, South was not done yet, and possibly spurred on by North's
	J982			5H bid, went again. From her point of view, she knows that she has at
	Q			most 2 tricks, and maybe only 1, if the hearts are 2-0, so 6H will be
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	cheap, but are we cold for slam?
	2D	2S	4H	I thought that both sides had only 2 losers, but of course with North's
4S	5H	5S	6H	diamond void, even 4S can go off, so we picked up a surprizing 6
/	/	X	//	imps to start off the competition.

<b>M 1</b>	T62			
<b>Bd 3</b>	T43			
<b>Dir S</b>	Q42			
<b>Vul EW</b>	K942			
AQ85			KJ43	
J5			KQ876	
AJT3			975	
T76			J	
	97			
	A92			
	K86			
	AQ853			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	/	X	1C	
2S	/	3S	/	
4S	//			

On board 3 in the first match Tony had not much useful to say over 1C so passed with quite a good hand, but came to life after my re-opening double.

I did not really have the opening hand shown by the double, but preferred to give both majors a chance rather than just bidding hearts in the balancing seat.

When Tony jumped in spades I was glad I had left that suit in play by doubling, but my first thought was that he was a 'passed hand'.

However, he is a hand that was not suitable for an overcall, not a passed hand, so with my singleton club and good side suit I made a game try that he happily accepted.

North led the C2, which would normally show an honour, so as a passed hand, North is not likely to have both diamonds honours, thus 4S looked to be cold, and so it was.

This was a pleasant 8 Imps gain for us, maybe a heart overcall buried the spade suit?

<b>M 2</b>	K3			
<b>Bd 12</b>	985			
<b>Dir W</b>	A87542			
<b>Vul NS</b>	A5			
7642			8	
QJ			T632	
KT3			QJ96	
T972			Q643	
	AQJT95			
	AK74			
	-			
	KJ8			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	1D	/	1S!	
/	2D	/	4S	
//				

On board 12 on the second match Tony made a noticeable pause before coming out with the 1S response, so I knew he had other alternatives he was considering, and the first thing I thought of before he settled on 1S was that he may have been about to make a jump shift response, so I had already sorted out my systemic rebid.

When he jumped to 4S following my 2D rebid, I knew I was right, but the unauthorized information I had gleaned/guessed from his hesitation prevented me from jumping to the slam that I thought was probably cold.

If he had bid 2S, my response of 4S would have told him I had one of the top 3 trump honours, and 2 undefined outside Aces. He would not need much more.

On the lead of the QJ he was able win in hand, play 2 rounds of clubs, and then trump a club with the SK, discard a heart on the DA, then draw trumps and claim. Since the CQ was on side 6NT was also cold. We lost 5 Imps as a few pairs bid the slam.

<b>M 2</b>	AQT4			
<b>Bd 13</b>	K9			
<b>Dir N</b>	KT96			
<b>Vul All</b>	K53			
-			K97	
T83			J542	
QJ7542			A83	
T986			Q76	
	J86532			
	AQ76			
	-			
	AJ4			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	1NT	/	2C	
/	2S	/	5S	
/	6S	//		

On board 13 in the second match Tony had a hand with great potential when I opened with a 13-15 1NT, but his longest suit was very weak.

If I had denied a major after his 2C enquiry, his ambition would have been a lot lower, and he probably would have signed off in 4S, but if I had shown a heart suit, he would have had a real dilemma, as he could not easily gauge the number of spade losers.

However, when I show a spade suit, and by inference, less than 4 hearts, he had great interest in slam, as long as my spades were pretty good, hence his jump to 5S to invite slam with good trumps.

I could not be much better, so had no problem accepting the invitation, which must have interested East, holding an outside Ace and Kxx in trumps, but a double was not forthcoming, and just as well, as I was able to ruff the opening lead of the DA in dummy and quickly claim 12 tricks when the obvious trump loser came to light at trick 2.

This was worth a welcome 8 Imps against the average.

**M 3** KQ53  
**Bd 24** Q75  
**Dlr W** T3  
**Vul Nil** AT93  
976  
T84  
QJ754  
84

J42  
KJ3  
AK62  
J76

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	1C	/	1D
/	1S	/	3NT
//			

On board 24 in the third match I could not think of a good bid over North's opening 1C, so I kept out of the auction, and very quickly it was Tony's turn to ponder a lead.

After South's 3NT bid I gave momentary thought to doubling for a club lead, but by the time it was my turn to bid I had dismissed the idea as even though I had 2 Aces as entries, my club suit was not good enough.

I had a very pleasant surprise, therefore, when Tony produced the C8 as his opening lead!

On a non club opening lead, declarer can eventually set up the 9<sup>th</sup> trick by end-playing me in clubs, but on an initial club lead and heart switch, there are only 8 tricks for declarer before the defense has 5 of their own.

1 off was worth only 5 Imps, but -400 would have been 11 Imps away, and the 16 Imps difference would have lost us the match.

**M 3** QJT7  
**Bd 30** 2  
**Dlr E** KJ6  
**Vul Nil** KT932  
962  
J94  
AQ943  
A6

AK5  
AK853  
T  
J874

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	2C	/	1NT!
/	3NT	//	2H

Board 30 in the third match was a 50% game, that luckily for us declarer got wrong.

Tony led the D4 to the normal contract of 3NT, won in hand by declarer with the DT. Declarer next led the CJ, and passed it to my CQ, and with nothing better to do, I returned a diamond.

The odd bidding was then explained when declarer discarded a heart on the diamond return, while Tony ducked. After leading the CJ, declarer's small diamond had suddenly turned into a heart!

Tony won the next club and cashed out his diamonds for 1 off and 6 Imps to us. However, if declarer had guessed to rise with the CK at trick 2, there would have been 10 tricks for NS and we would have lost 11 Imps.

The best contract for NS is 4S, which makes 10 tricks even if the clubs are not guessed correctly. 5C and 3NT both require a correct club guess.

**M 4** K75  
**Bd 1** Q6  
**Dlr N** KQ84  
**Vul Nil** AJT5  
JT  
KT32  
J65  
K982

AQ632  
A94  
AT3  
Q3

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	1NT	/	3S
/	4S	//	

Board 1 in the fourth match was a potential gain for us that I got wrong. In the past I have cue-bid and then after the bidding went off the rails, been reminded that it was an 'asking' bid, not a cue-bid. With that in mind, I did not bid 4C on the way to 4S, as I had no wish to take charge.

However, in this instance, because there is no logic in having the opening 1NT bidder take over, 4C would have been a cue-bid and the good slam, bid by many, was missed. 9 Imps away.

Since we do not do the 'normal' transfer, we would have an advantage over other pairs by making South declarer, but only a minor one, since the club finesse worked.

If North is the declarer, a spade contract is a 5 or 7 hand on a heart lead, making 11 or 13 tricks depending on whether the club finesse works.

<b>M 4</b>	T4			
<b>Bd 2</b>	T32			
<b>Dir E</b>	972			
<b>Vul NS</b>	AJ985			
KJ98763		A2		
J7		AQ9864		
4		6		
Q76		T432		
	Q5			
	K5			
	AKQJT853			
	K			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
		2D!	3D	
3H	/	/	3NT	
4H	/	/	4NT	
//				

Board 2 in the fourth match was the most unusual of the day. Tony had 8 tricks in his own hand, and could make 3NT if the HK took a trick early enough, but he has no place in notrumps if East's suit was spades.

After a cautious 3D, Tony was pleased to see that East's suit was indeed hearts, so expecting a heart lead, he bid a confident 3NT.

West was not finished yet however, and sacrificed in 4H, giving Tony another decision to make. Hoping I could give him a trick somewhere, and possibly a spade stopper, he bid 4NT, the most likely game, and West led the HJ.

When dummy went down Tony was very nervous for a while as East pondered the lead, but she eventually ducked and he was so relieved that he claimed a fast 10 tricks instead of the 11 available for +630 and 9 Imps.

Of course if West had led her suit, or East had won the HA at trick 1 and switched to spades, EW could have taken the first 8 tricks!

<b>M 5</b>	K94			
<b>Bd 13</b>	Q9863			
<b>Dir N</b>	763			
<b>Vul All</b>	A8			
JT83		Q765		
J74		AK5		
8		AT942		
KQJT6		4		
	A2			
	T2			
	KQJ5			
	97532			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
	/	1D!	/	
1S	/	4C	/	
4S	//			

On board 13 in the fifth match I thought that my good controls and club shortage warranted game when Tony showed his spade suit, so I showed the basis for my unusual jump to game (maximum points would normally be 15) with a splinter.

Of course this made Tony's hand worse, and he must have had trepidations about being so high, until he saw dummy.

According to Deep Finesse, 4S can be held to 9 tricks, but how this is done is not so obvious when spades are 3-2.

Tony was not really tested, as North gave away the impetus of the opening lead by leading a trump, and in spite of South getting the force going by winning the SA and switching to the DK, it was too late.

A club off the table went to North, but now Tony could ruff the diamond return and lead a top club to discard the heart loser. When he led another round of clubs and North showed out he was in a position to negate the effect of North's third trump. 10 tricks and 5 Imps.

<b>M 5</b>	AQT54			
<b>Bd 18</b>	AQ962			
<b>Dir E</b>	K			
<b>Vul NS</b>	73			
J		9832		
T		J7543		
Q86		JT7		
AKQT9862		4		
	K76			
	K8			
	A95432			
	J5			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
		/	/	
5C	X	/	5D	
/	5H	//		

It is often difficult when you have a strong 2-suiter and are forced to start the bidding at the 5-level, but that was the dilemma facing North on board 18 in the fifth match.

The first double seems pretty standard, and obviously, considering the final result, South would have been better off passing, but the 5D bid could not be criticized.

Double-dummy defense would get 5C off 3 for 500, but the normal result would be 2 off for 300.

The real problem for South came when North took out 5D to 5H. – Should South now bid 5S?

It seem unlikely that North doubled 5C just for penalties, and if they only had hearts, they could have bid 5H instead of doubling, so they should be placed with a 2-suiter. If the second suit is not diamonds, it must be spades, and South should correct.

According to DF, 5S should make and 5H goes off, but 5S would take careful play. At our table 5H went off 2 for 11 Imps when most pairs appeared to take the penalty in 5CX.

**M 6** J752  
**Bd 27** J985  
**Dlr S** T632  
**Vul Nil** 9  
T4 A863  
QT42 A  
K8 AJ975  
65432 A87

KQ9  
K763  
Q4  
KQJT

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	/	X	1C
/	/	2D	1H
/	2H	/	/
3D	//		

On board 27 in the sixth match I felt I could not let the bidding die in 2H with such a promising hand, but I made the mistake of bidding my other suit instead of getting Tony into the act by doubling. Tony had nowhere to go except 3D and I was precariously high.

He would have had an easy pass of a double, and that would likely have led to at least 2 off for +300.

In 3D I won the lead of the CK and immediately led Ace and another spade, preparing to ruff with my small trumps, but South foiled part of my plan by leading the D4, and the D8 on the table held the trick.

If I had been clever enough to have cashed the HA before leading the second spade, this would have given me the contract, but I had to come to hand with the HA and ruff a spade with the DK, all following.

At this point I was able to get a pretty clear indication of North's hand as 4441, with less than 6 HCPs, so it was 4-2 that North had the DQ and did not waste it at trick 3. I ruffed a heart to hand and exited with a club, and after ruffing another heart, I had 7 tricks, and needed 2 more, holding just the S8 and DA & DJ. Since North had 4 diamonds to South's 2, I ignored my gut feeling and exited with a spade, but my gut feeling was correct and South won the DQ for 1 off.

**M 6** J3  
**Bd 30** 976  
**Dlr E** AKJ943  
**Vul Nil** 75  
Q964 AKT875  
53 JT82  
T7 865  
JT964 -

2  
AKQ4  
Q2  
AKQ832

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
2NT	3D	2S 3H	X 5C
//			

On board 30 in the sixth match South had big plans for her hand when I opened 2S and North made a free bid of 2D, but contented herself with a sedate 5C, passed out.

Tony led the S4 and when dummy went down declarer commented that a potential slam had been missed, but after ruffing the second spade and leading the CA, the bad break made her feel a whole lot better, as now even 5C was off.

The modest +50 we got from this hand was worth a surprising 8 Imps, because quite a few pairs played in 5D, which is cold, and some even got to 6D making.

6D by North would have been a challenging contract for the defence, as to defeat it East has to lead the S5, and when West won the SQ it would have been pretty obvious that a club switch was required.

Of the few in 6D I did not hear of anyone finding this defence.

**M 7** Q9  
**Bd 9** AT7652  
**Dlr N** T53  
**Vul EW** 62  
J643 T52  
KQ983 -  
A76 842  
4 KJT8753

AK87  
J4  
KQJ9  
AQ9

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	2H	/	2NT
//	3C	/	3NT

On board 9 in the seventh match against the current leaders Tony used good judgment to elect to play in 3NT rather than our 6-2 heart fit when I indicated a weak hand and weak suit.

West led the S3, which Tony won in hand to lead the HJ, ducking when West covered. East played a cunning D2, and Tony, whose eyesight is not as good as in his youth, did not notice the 5-0 break.

He won the next spade on the table and led a diamond, and West made it very easy for him by winning the DA and switching to a club, giving him his 9<sup>th</sup> trick.

Now when Tony led a heart to the table, and did not take the 'marked' finesse, I knew he had been fooled by the red suit discard at trick 2, and feared the contract was down, but he was just ruing the bad break (4-1) that cost him taking the rest of the tricks.

This was only a modest 3 Imps, since most pairs seemed to be making game, some even in hearts.

**M 7** AK87532  
**Bd 10** A95  
**Dlr E** AKQ  
**Vul All** -  
 QT6 J9  
 T4 872  
 JT(6 852  
 KJT4 Q6532

4  
 KQJ63  
 743  
 A987

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	1C!	/	/
/	2H!	/	1H
/	3S!	/	3C!
/	7H	//	4D!

Board 10 in the seventh match was just made for our system. Once Tony showed a positive response to my forcing opening, I was able to find out the key parts of his hand.

The 3C response showed a 5-card suit with 2 of the top 3 honours, so I knew our hearts were good on an even break, so I next asked about the suit I was most interested in, spades.

His 4C response to my spade asking bid showed second round control (in this case a singleton), which was not what I wanted to hear. If he had shown 3 or more, I would have bid 7S, and if he had shown third round control in spades I would have asked again and bid 7S if he showed the SQ.

If I could get support for spades that was a better grand slam than hearts, since the chance of the trumps breaking were much higher, but opposite the singleton I had to stick with hearts.

I was concerned when West led the DJ and not a trump, but the hearts broke anyway, so it was not a problem, and since Tony also had the HJ, he could overcome a 4-1 break. A handy 12 Imps.

**M 8** AK54  
**Bd 12** QT875  
**Dlr W** J92  
**Vul NS** 9  
 JT9 876  
 43 A962  
 843 6  
 AQJ74 T8532

A32  
 KJ  
 AKQT75  
 K6

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	2D!	/	2NT
/	3H	/	4NT
/	5D	//	

On board 12 in the eighth match against the eventual winners my 2D opening showed a limited opening hand with 4 spades and at least 4 hearts, and Tony's 2NT asked for more clarification.

When I bid 3H it showed my actual distribution, which must have given Tony cause for optimism, because he next asked for Aces, and I showed just one.

It is not clear whether 4NT was RKCB, or straight Aces, as since my hand is known, it is easy to argue that one of the majors has been agreed, but which one (spades?), so I just answered Aces.

I was very surprised to discover that in spite of my major suits, we were playing in diamonds.

East led the CT, and after ruffing the next club and drawing trumps, 11 tricks were a formality for +600.

Nothing special in the score as it was just another boring flat board, although it is often the case that a game bid picks up an Imp or two.

**M 8** JT832  
**Bd 14** 4  
**Dlr E** AQJ8  
**Vul Nil** J82  
 9754 -  
 A9762 KQ853  
 9 T7653  
 AK7 QT4

AKQ6  
 JT  
 K42  
 9653

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
2C!	3S	4D	1NT
/	/	5D	4S
/	X	//	/

On board 14 in the eighth match EW got their wires mixed up rather badly, and we were lucky enough to pick up the pieces.

2C was a two-way bid, either diamonds, or both majors, and East bid 4D intending it to be correctible, but Tony's 4S bid took away any chance that West had to correct!

After we bid spades so strongly East suspected that West just had diamonds, so had another go with 5D, and this time Tony passed, giving me the opportunity to double, which I unwisely accepted.

Now East thought that West's pass of 5D confirmed his belief, and West was convinced that East really did have lots of diamonds, so 5DX became the final contract.

After a spade lead, East ruffed all of dummies spades, and made 4 other tricks, so only went 3 off for +500 to us, but since 6H was cold for EW, this was a disaster for them. Nobody appeared to get to slam, as the average was only +290, so we gained 13 Imps. I am glad I did not awake the sleeping giant.

**M 9** AQ976  
**Bd 24** J4  
**Dlr W** AT94  
**Vul Nil** 98  
 8 JT  
 Q965 AT873  
 KQ32 8  
 QJ75 AKT63  
 K5432  
 K2  
 J765  
 42  
**W N E S**  
 / 1S 2S 4S  
 5H //

On board 24 in the ninth match I opened with a limited hand, but Tony followed our usual methods with 5-card support, when he raised my opening 1S to game after East made a Michael's 2S cue-bid.

When West bid a fairly prompt 5H, it was not clear whose hand it was, but I followed the old adage of leaving the 5-level to the opponents, as Tony could be anywhere from very strong (with no slam ambitions) to very weak.

If he was strong, I expected him to double or bid 5S, but on his actual weak hand, he had no alternative except pass.

I led the SA and continued with the SQ after Tony encouraged, and when West ruffed, I was reasonably certain that we were outgunned.

In due course we took our 3 tricks for +50 along with most of the other NS pairs, as the average was only -30, so an easy 1 Imp, but since 4S had 4 losers, EW could have picked up 2 Imps by passing 4S.

**M 9** J  
**Bd 25** 9653  
**Dlr N** AQJ5  
**Vul EW** KT42  
 83 QT96542  
 AKQ2 -  
 K973 64  
 Q73 J985  
 AK7  
 JT874  
 T82  
 A6  
**W N E S**  
 / 1D! / 1H  
 X 2H / 4H  
 //

On board 25 in the ninth match I was very minimum for my opening of 1D, even playing Precision, but Bridge is a bidder's game, and I like to get in the first shot when I am dealer.

I got lucky when Tony bid 1H, but there was some trepidation there when I was putting my hand on the table as dummy after West had doubled the final contract, and came out with 4 rounds of trumps.

Tony won in hand and took the diamond finesse in dummy, led the SJ, covered, and then led the DT, also covered. When the diamonds did not break he still had a loser.

Not to worry, as the hand looks like it will meet the requirements for a double squeeze, so he came to hand with the CA and cashed the last heart, which does set up the double squeeze, as West is forced to discard a spade. Alas he got 1 trick ahead of himself and discarded the D5 on the heart, so West was not squeezed when he cashed the SK, being now able to discard the D9.

**M 10** 98652  
**Bd 7** T  
**Dlr S** 9754  
**Vul All** 965  
 KQJ T  
 72 KQJ98543  
 Q63 J2  
 AQT73 82  
 A743  
 A6  
 AKT8  
 KJ4  
**W N E S**  
 2C 3D! 4H 1D  
 //

On board 7 in the tenth match South did not appear to notice that I had jumped to 4H over 3D, and tried to bid 3NT, which was not accepted by Tony.

Since North's 3D was weak and pre-emptive, South was not inclined to up the ante anymore and elected to pass, which also forced North to pass, but I do not think he had any intention of bidding anyway.

South cashed the DK, on which I dropped the DJ, and exited with the C4, and since I had nothing to lose, I put in the CQ, which held, and led the H2 to South.

South won the HA instead of ducking, and took away my communication by leading the CK! However, I was able to win in dummy and ruff a club high, and enter dummy again with the H7 to discard my spade and diamond losers and make 11 tricks for +650 and 13 Imps.

**M 10** J4  
**Bd 10** 7432  
**Dir E** T76  
**Vul All** Q653  
 KQ873 T92  
 K6 AQJ8  
 9 AK85  
 AJ987 K4  
  
 A65  
 T95  
 QJ432  
 T2  
  
**W N E S**  
 1S / 1C /  
 4C / 3S /  
 4NT / 4S! /  
 6S // 5H /

On board 10 in the tenth match if South had show a little patience he could have made it much harder for Tony, and in fact some went off in 6S.

After Tony showed a positive response I felt I had a good hand, but no extra source of tricks, so contented myself with showing extras and leaving any slam decision up to Tony.

4C was an asking bid, and my 4S response showed the CK or a singleton, and I also showed 2 Key Cards in response to the next enquiry of 4NT.

I might have had 4-card support of the SJ, making slam a good proposition, but even on the actual hand slam is a little better than 50%, since there is always the finesse for the SJ, or it could drop as a singleton, or the SA could be onside doubleton.

Tony won the heart lead with the HA and led a low spade, South ducking, the he went back to the table with the C7 and led another spade.

If South ducks again, Tony has only one way to succeed, but when he rose with the Ace, Tony had no way to go down. +11 Imps.

**M 11** -  
**Bd 19** AQ53  
**Dir S** AJT53  
**Vul EW** Q752  
 AKT87 J4  
 K8 JT97  
 Q98 K42  
 J43 A986  
  
 Q96532  
 642  
 76  
 KT  
  
**W N E S**  
 1S X / 1NT /  
 / 2D X //

On board 19 in the eleventh match I doubled for take-out as East with a 0454 shape and Tony made the worst possible reply for me of 1NT! The last thing I wanted, or expected from a passed hand was a desire to play in notrumps, so since I could not double partner, and did not want to play at the 3-level by bidding 2S and asking Tony to pick a suit, I closed my eyes and bid 2D.

The penalty double from South was ominous, and when Tony's hand hit the table, prospects did not look good, so I endeavoured to make as many trumps as I could.

South started me off well by leading the SJ, and as it was obvious that I could not ruff many spades before being over-ruffed, I needed ruffs in dummy as well, so I led a club towards dummy at trick 2, South making it easy for me by rising with the CA.

I ruffed the next spade from South, entered dummy with the CK and took the heart finesse, took a ruff in dummy, then cashed the HA for my 6<sup>th</sup> trick and exited with a heart and discarded losers until I only had AJT in trumps left whereupon I ruffed a spade from North and had to make the last 2 tricks for +180, and a measly 5 Imps.

**M 11** AQ83  
**Bd 20** Q3  
**Dir W** 94  
**Vul All** K6542  
 2 K975  
 84 J65  
 AQJT87 K62  
 Q973 AT8  
  
 JT64  
 AKT972  
 53  
 J  
  
**W N E S**  
 3D / / 3H /  
 / 4H! //

On board 20 in the eleventh match I could not resist the temptation to raise Tony to game after he made a simple overcall of West's 3D opening bid, and was lucky to only lose 2 Imps.

As expected after the pre-empt, most of my meager point-count was not of any value, so it should have been an easy pass for me.

West led the S2, which was easily diagnosed as a singleton, so Tony rose with the SA, and knew at once that he was 1 down, and so it proved.

The lead of the S2 bears out a piece of advice I saw in a bridge magazine some time ago, to the effect that if a pre-emptor leads a side suit, it is nearly always a singleton.

The corollary to this is that if the pre-emptor leads the suit that they bid, it probably means that they do not have a singleton, except in the trump suit.



**M 12** 6  
**Bd 21** A642  
**Dir N** J982  
**Vul NS** KQT5  
 KJ75432  
 JT5  
 6  
 94

AT98  
 K3  
 53  
 A8732

Q  
 Q987  
 AKQT74  
 J6

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
	/	/	2C
2D	2S	3D	3S
X	/	3NT	/
4D	//		

On board 21 in the twelfth match we never did find out what the EW bidding was all about, but it took us in completely, and we missed our cold game.

To make matters worse, we did not take our spade trick so South made an overtrick! Luckily the damage was relatively light, since the average was only -50 and we lost 5 Imps.

Tony's 2S bid is a bit light points-wise, as it normally shows about 8-10, but is more than justified by the 7-card suit, and at the vulnerability Even 4S could not be heavily criticized, but he may have been held back by his lack of points.

For my part, I had some concern that EW could make 5D, so since they were not in game I went quietly.

Tony led the C9, which I thought had to be a singleton, so I made the obvious play of returning the C8 for his ruff asking for a spade back, but declarer was now able to draw trumps and discard the spade loser for 11 tricks.

**M 12** AK8  
**Bd 30** AKJ  
**Dir E** T8763  
**Vul Nil** K9  
 962  
 Q973  
 AQ2  
 653

43  
 T6  
 KJ4  
 AQT872

QJT75  
 8542  
 95  
 J4

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	2NT	//	/

On board 30 in the twelfth match, the last board of the tournament, I made the luckiest lead of the weekend.

At least 1 pair was doubled in 3NT, and others were undoubled, but the inevitable opening club lead from East gave declarer their 9<sup>th</sup> trick! Note that without a club lead, North can only make 8 tricks.

Our declarer was not in game, so I did not want to give them a free trick, and chose a diamond lead, as this was the suit I needed least help from partner, and I got more help than I could have imagined.

Tony carefully played the DQ at trick 1 in case I needed him to lead clubs twice, although with the CJ on the table this was not going to help. When he led back a club and declarer played the C9, I could guess the distribution and we could cash out for 9 tricks and 4 off!

In spite of the few making 3NT, many must have gone off as the average was only +20, so a meager 6 Imps.