

## 2012 Queensland Mixed Pairs by Richard Wallis

As usual the Mixed Pairs were held at Toowong BC, and what a good job they did. The great nibbles kept flowing all weekend and never seemed to run out. This year we had a very pleasing 24 tables, an improvement on previous years, and that number required a two-round qualifying on Saturday followed by a series of Finals on Sunday. The number of entries was actually very good for the movement (as would have been 27 tables), as 8 table sections could be set up for both the qualifying and the finals, with the EW pairs on Saturday afternoon swapping rows for the second qualifying round.

As is also usual, I played with Therese Tully, and after a slow first qualifying, followed by a solid second qualifying, we made the Final and hit our straps on Sunday, leading the field from the third round to the finish. Liz Zeller and Tim Runting (President of the new Kenmore BC) were top NS qualifiers on Saturday and held the form to finish a good second, with Janine Solomon and Paul Hooykaas close up in third place. Quite a few aspirants found themselves in the Plate, which was won by Eva and Tony Berger, from Sue O'Brien and Paul Collins, and a dogged battle in the Consolation finished with Margaret Dyer and Laurie Skeate on top and Annette Maluish and Neville Francis in second place.

I am not complaining as I like a lot of boards, but with 64 boards on Saturday and 60 on Sunday, it was the most boards played in a State event since the maximum possible a few years ago in the Open Pairs where we played 129 boards over the two days. The Director, Alan Gibson, had his hands full on Sunday also running the Toowong Novice Mixed Pairs as a parallel event, and this was won by Veronica Cantor and Stuart Smith from Jennifer Dickers and Dick Steinberg.

<b>Q1</b>	742			On board 4 in Q1 Therese was very wary of the 3NT bid, thus decided to have a look at dummy with the SA rather than leading blind, and when I discouraged, she shifted to the DQ, which held the trick.
<b>Bd 4</b>	Q43			
<b>Dir W</b>	J654			
<b>Vul All</b>	A74			The DT came next, and declarer won in hand and led the CK, which I was able to win and lead a spade, won by Therese who then exited with the H9, ducked to the HA.
93		QJ85		
KJT752		A		Declarer had no chance from the start with these ill-fitting hands, but could have done better by end-playing Therese to give up a trick in a black suit rather than lead hearts again to set up the suit while the DK remains as an entry.
K832		A97		
6		KQT32		He in fact seemed to give up and took just 6 tricks and 3 off for +300 to us. It is very tempting for East to move to game, but if so, it must be to 4H, which has chances, but only fails by 1 trick. How much easier if East had Ax in hearts instead of the singleton Ace.
	AKT6			
	986			
	QT			
	J985			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
2H	/	3NT	//	

**Q1** A82  
**Bd 5** 983  
**Dlr N** 754  
**Vul NS** JT92  
 J763 QT954  
 A652 4  
 KT 962  
 A65 Q874

K  
 KQJT7  
 AQJ83  
 K3

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

On board 5 in Q1 I let my flat distribution and only 3-card support for Therese's opening bid influence my bidding, or lack thereof, instead of assessing the fact that I had an Ace, and my club suit contained a sure stopper.

Passing on the first round is against the odds on such a hand, and I was given a second chance when Therese showed a good hand by her jump to 3D, but having assessed my hand initially as poor, I stuck to that and an easy game was missed.

Looking at the NS hands in isolation 4H is not a thing of beauty, but West's double pinpointed most of the high cards, and the chances of West being end-played a few times increased the odds markedly.

West led a spade and continued spades when she won the HA so Therese could pitch the C3, and just lose a trick in hearts, diamonds and clubs, but even if West exited in hearts instead of leading another spade, she will be end-played on the second round of diamonds.

Surprisingly, +170 was still worth 57%.

**Q1** 9  
**Bd 12** AT973  
**Dlr W** AQ982  
**Vul NS** Q7  
 AQT 75  
 QJ62 K854  
 T75 KJ3  
 982 A543

KJ86432  
 -  
 64  
 KJT6

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

On board 12 in Q1 luck was with us, although I believe that we made the right decisions in the bidding.

Therese has 3 choices for her rebid, spades at the 3 different levels, and I am sure all 3 were chosen by at least some of the South players in the qualifying.

A bid of just 2S (non-invitational) is obviously too tentative on an eight-card suit, and 4S a little over the top with such poor support for my 2 suits, although could have been justified if I had rebid 2C. This just left her actual bid of 3S, which is highly encouraging but not forcing.

However, with my poor support and minimum hand, in spite of 2 Aces, I chose to pass.

When dummy went down it must have looked to Therese that we should have been in game, but with the missing spades honours over the top of her, 9 tricks was the limit, and a modest 61% was our reward.

**Q1** AQJT  
**Bd 24** J  
**Dlr W** 942  
**Vul Nil** AQ642  
 987643 K52  
 K53 AT876  
 KJ83 T75  
 - 95

-  
 Q942  
 AQ6  
 KJT873

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	1C	/	1H
X!	1S	/	2D!
/	3D!	/	6C
//			

On board 24 in Q1 I was not up to the task in slam, putting too much faith in West's double of 1H on the first round.

I had nowhere to go after the 4<sup>th</sup> suit bid if 2D from Therese, as I did not want to rebid my modest club suit, so I raised diamonds, as although that might show 4 cards in diamonds, it definitely shows short hearts.

East led the HA to the slam followed by a club, and it looked to me that after the double and the opening lead all of the remaining points would be with West, so slam was likely to be one off.

Ruffing the hearts was one possibility, but even if the HK did fall in 3 (as it will). I have 2 diamonds to discard so that was no solution. I wished for a spade in dummy so I could finesse spades!

I could still make the slam if West is missing one of the key Kings, but which one?

In desperation I chose to take the diamond finesse, and when that failed I was 1 off and had a bottom. Sadly, later I found out that the successful declarers had taken the spade finesse and made 12 tricks.

**Q1** J943  
**Bd 32** JT4  
**Dir W** AKQT  
**Vul EW** 63  
 KQ872 T65  
 A73 982  
 8 96432  
 KQ72 T9

A  
 KQ65  
 J75  
 AJ854

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

On board 32 I made an underbid of 1NT when Therese balanced in 4<sup>th</sup> seat, but my likely stopper on just 1 point should have forced me to be aggressive and invite game with 2NT.

Therese was still there however, and I quickly accepted her invitation. Thanks to the minor honours in the red suits, game is certain, but that should be the limit on the hand unless West gets too aggressive.

Luckily West did get aggressive after taking the HA on the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, when he cashed his top spades and I was able to claim 10 tricks for a good score of 87%.

Maybe West was just hopeful that I had bid 1NT as a speculative bid without a real stopper, but he could have put me to the test by leading small spade after winning the HA and do I play the SJ or the S9?

East led the S5, probably showing an honour, but there are only 14 points out against me so I hope I would have got it right by playing the SJ.

**Q2** 92  
**Bd 2** 95  
**Dir E** K2  
**Vul NS** AQJ9874  
 QT76 KJ9  
 J84 AT76  
 T763 J84  
 32 KT5

A843  
 KQ32  
 AQ95  
 6

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

On board 2 in Q2 EW were playing Precision, so the 1D opening was nebulous, but Therese cannot overcall 1NT with a singleton club, so chose to pass on the first round.

When West passed and I balanced with 2C, she could show her hand by a jump to 3NT which was passed out, and West led the S6, the best lead for the defence.

Therese wisely ducked the first 2 spades, and upon winning the 3<sup>rd</sup> spade played a club to dummy's Queen, knowing that after the opening bid and West's SQ, East must have the CK.

East also knows that his partner cannot have much, but she could have the HQ, and if South can be persuaded to take the finesse of the HJ, 3NT will go down, so he led back the H6, putting Therese to the test.

But there is no test! If Therese did not have the HQ she would not care where it is because she knows that East has the HA. Thus we got 10 tricks instead of 9, which is everything at Pairs.

**Q2** K83  
**Bd 7** T65  
**Dir S** J5  
**Vul All** A9532  
 T6 A9752  
 AJ93 Q874  
 K43 AQT2  
 KT87 -

QJ4  
 K2  
 9876  
 QJ64

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

On board 7 in Q2 I was put off the best lead of a club by West's response of 2C, and instead chose the unbid suit hearts, in spite of West indicating a stopper by bidding 2NT.

When dummy hit the table I knew a heart lead was no good and wished I had led a club or even a spade, but it was too late.

Therese reluctantly played the HK, and reasonably quickly West wrapped up 4 hearts, 4 diamonds and a spade, for 9 tricks and -150.

A club lead would have given him -180, and when West also turned up during the play with 4 hearts, I could see at least 11 tricks were available to EW in a heart contract, so I was happy with just -150.

I did not like to ask if it was a systemic limitation that forced East to rebid 2D rather than 2H, or just a preference, but I would always respond 2H with these types of hands.

Maybe East was regretting opening in the pass-out seat after partner responded in her void, but again I would always open 1S with the East hand.

**Q2** 76543  
**Bd 16** KJT952  
**Dir W** Q7  
**Vul EW** -  
 AJT2 8  
 6 A74  
 64 T9853  
 AQJT43 7652  
 KQ9  
 Q83  
 AKJ2  
 K98  
**W** **N** **E** **S**  
 1C 2C! / 4S  
 //

On board 16 in Q2 we were let down by our system as much as the bad break in spades.

Whereas many pairs play 2C in this situation for the majors, we play it as spades and a red suit, so Therese did not know about the heart fit.

When I put down the hand as dummy, I commented that it was a pity we did not play Michaels' Cue-bids, as then we might have been able to play in hearts.

Those playing Michaels' could bid 4C over 2C and ask their partner to bid their longest major, getting to the cold 4H. Some in hearts even made 11 tricks, but it is hard to see how, as even if East does not get a spade ruff, NS have 2 spade losers.

West led the H6 and Therese dropped her HQ to no avail, as East still led back a heart for the ruff, but it was irrelevant anyway, as West always had 3 tricks in spades to go along with the HA.

**Q2** 975  
**Bd 20** Q8  
**Dir W** J92  
**Vul All** KJ643  
 64 QJ32  
 AJT52 3  
 Q654 AT7  
 A7 QT982  
 AKT8  
 K9764  
 K83  
 5  
**W** **N** **E** **S**  
 1H / 1NT! //

In spite of having the best hand at the table, Therese could not sensibly bid on board 20 in Q2, and then found herself on lead to 1NT.

Possibly because the lead of the S8 might not look encouraging, or a little wary of our tricky opponent in the East seat, Therese led the SA and switched to the D3 when I discouraged. Declarer got it wrong when he played low on the diamond, and my DJ forced his DA.

Next he played 2 rounds of clubs, and after winning the CK I led back a spade, covered by the SQ and won by Therese who returned another spade, setting up the S8, while declarer discarded the D5.

Declarer is in trouble now having no entry to hand for the 5<sup>th</sup> club, but he persevered with 2 rounds of clubs, throwing 2 hearts, and when I won the CJ I played back the H8 into dummy. After some thought Therese trusted me enough to put up the HK, and dummy exited with the HJ. Now when I led a diamond declarer played the DT hoping to get to hand, but Therese won the DK and cashed her spades squeezing dummy. Declarer guessed wrong and discarded the HT, going 2 off for a top to us.

**Q2** KQ43  
**Bd 21** T7  
**Dir N** KQ94  
**Vul NS** T53  
 7 86  
 KQ63 J9854  
 8762 3  
 KJ72 Q9864  
 AJT952  
 A2  
 AJT5  
 A  
**W** **N** **E** **S**  
 / / 1S  
 / 3S / 4NT  
 / 5D / 5H  
 / 6D! / 6S  
 //

Good bidding to those pairs that managed to diagnose the good diamond fit on board 21 in Q2 and get to the cold grand slam in diamonds.

I could have bid 2D, but as a passed hand I did not want to risk a pass from Therese with a minimum opening bid, and it was important to get my primary support over to her as soon as possible, so I made a limit raise in spades.

When I showed 1 Key card with my 5D response to her RKCB, Therese used 5H to ask about the SQ, and having that card I showed my lowest King with 6D.

The 5H bid confirms all 5 Key cards in the 2 hands, and having the SQ, if I had a good source of tricks, like an extra diamond, I could have bid the grand slam in spades.

Knowing I had the DK, Therese thought about the grand slam herself, but luckily decided that 6S was enough. While 7D makes by ruffing a club in the South hand, 7S has no chance.

**Q2**  
**Bd 23**  
**Dir S**  
**Vul All**  
 54  
 J  
 KT974  
 AQT65

AQJ93  
 AK4  
 Q62  
 74

T862  
 QT62  
 853  
 K3

K7  
 98753  
 AJ  
 J982

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

Often it is only a matter of luck as to whether you get a good or bad result, and board 23 in Q2 is a case in point.

Firstly, we did not find about our 5-3 heart fit, and that contract has at least 4 losers. Secondly, when we bid to 3NT with West on lead, West has 2 suits that would make a good lead to 3NT.

Possibly thinking that the CA would be the entry to cash the diamonds if they could be set up, West led the DT.

When the spades were friendly, Therese could now run a fast 9 tricks for +600, noting along the way that our 5-3 heart suit would have floundered on a 4-1 break.

Of course if perforce West had selected the C6 as their opening lead, EW would have taken the first 5 tricks and this hand would not have seen the light of day.

As I have said before, while skill helps, a couple of ounces of luck never goes astray in winning a bridge tournament.

**F1**  
**Bd 5**  
**Dir N**  
**Vul NS**  
 872  
 KT952  
 6542  
 4

AK54  
 6  
 Q73  
 AQ975

T9  
 Q  
 AKJT9  
 KJT63

QJ63  
 AJ8743  
 8  
 82

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

On board 5 in F1, after a below average start the previous round, we were back on track when NS both got a little carried away in the bidding.

In spite of the 6-card suit, South is a little light to make a free-bid of 2H, unless playing negative free-bids, especially when a negative double would have also shown the spades.

When it was North's turn to bid, while 3S would have been automatic over a negative double by South, it was a bit of a stretch on the actual bidding, with the singleton in partner's long suit and the likely useless DQ.

Therese led the ST to 4SN, won on the table by declarer to take the losing club finesse, and Therese returned another spade, again won on the table to lead another club.

I made the mistake of ruffing this (I can over ruff dummy on the next round of clubs), and led a diamond, but declarer still lost control and went two off for +200 and an 80% score.

**F1**  
**Bd 8**  
**Dir W**  
**Vul Nil**  
 82  
 QT42  
 J5  
 AQ432

T4  
 AJ87  
 A96  
 T985

J9653  
 K3  
 KT87  
 K7

AKQ7  
 965  
 Q432  
 J6

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

On board 8 in F1 I bid 2C for the lead and to get in the way, and I was surprised when Therese led the CK and it turned out that North's club stop was merely T985!

I won the top clubs and exited with the C3, suggesting a diamond honour, mainly because I was certain North had a good heart holding and did not want to help him in any way.

Therese dutifully led the D7, and declarer miss-guessed by playing low in dummy and my DJ forced the DA. Thereupon declarer entered dummy with a spades and finessed the H7, losing to the HK.

Declarer's first clue now showed itself but declarer did not notice it. Therese did not lead to my DK so I could cash the C4 for 1 down, instead leading a spade to dummy. Declarer cashed the spades in dummy forcing me (not really as I could have I discarded a diamond) to discard the C4!

Convinced I was squeezed, he led the H9 and won with the HJ over my HT, then played 2 rounds of diamonds to end-play me into leading another heart, but Therese won the DK and cashed the spades for 1 off. Only a thinking player could go off on this hand.

**F1** J73  
**Bd 13** 9832  
**Dir N** T762  
**Vul All** 76  
 K AT9654  
 Q 754  
 AKJ8 53  
 KJT9852 AQ  
  
 Q82  
 AKJT6  
 Q94  
 43  
  

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
	/	1S	/
2C	/	2S	/
3D!	/	3S	/
4C	/	6C	//

On board 13 in F1 I was interested in slam as soon as Therese opened, even though her opening bid suit was one of my singletons. Firstly I had to check for some sort of club support, and that we were not missing 2 Aces.

My 2C was natural, and Therese's 2S rebid was not forcing, nor did it show a 6-card suit, but the 6-card suit was confirmed by 3S after I applied Bourke's Relay (3D). BR is forcing to game, so I could take it easy from hereon.

What I was wanting to do was ask for key cards in clubs, and this is what I thought my 4C rebid did, but there was some doubt about its meaning, or at least Therese had some doubt about what I intended it to mean, so she bid a practical, and accurate, 6C.

North at least saved a trick by leading a hearts, rather than a trump to cut down on dummy's ruffs, so we scored up +1370, which was worth over 80%.

**D1** QJ86  
**Bd 18** 83  
**Dir E** K94  
**Vul NS** QT72  
 K A  
 A974 JT5  
 AJ76532 Q8  
 K AJ98643  
  
 T975432  
 KQ62  
 T  
 5  
  

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
		1C	/
1D	/	2C	2S
3H	3S	4C	/
4D	/	4H	/
5C	//		

On board 18 in F1 it was a battle of suits between East and West, and it was East who gave up first, but it should have been in West's first suit, not her second. The clue is that West did not want to play in 4H, so her diamonds must be at least 6 cards and her hearts probably only 4!

Initially I wondered why Therese passed on the first round when a 1S overall would have been relatively safe, but then came in on the second round in a more dangerous position, but the answer was quickly obvious, her spades suit was long but weak!

She could not bid 2S first time around as we play that as Intermediate when vulnerable. The long and weak suit was confirmed on the opening lead when the Ace and King fell on the same trick.

I did not double as I thought that the best chance to defeat 5C was to keep quiet, although I would have been happy for them to play in 5D as well. 2 off and +100 was worth over 80%.

East was lucky to get the CK in dummy, but should have supported West's diamonds holding a doubleton honour, and 5D can make.

**F1** T873  
**Bd 21** J7532  
**Dir N** KT9  
**Vul NS** 9  
 AJ2 K54  
 96 Q4  
 AQJ742 8653  
 J2 AKQ8  
  
 Q96  
 AKT8  
 -  
 T76543  
  

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

On board 21 in F1 I relied on my good diamond suit and outside Ace to get us home in 3NT and after a few nerve-racking moments we were writing down +400 for a top, but it was a defensive error, not necessarily our good play that gave us 9 tricks.

With nothing to guide him South led the C5, and Therese won the CK in hand and led a diamond to dummy getting the bad news when South showed out, but he discarded the H8! The discard should have been a club, as North's failure to play a club honour placed all of the club honours in Therese's hand.

North won the DK at trick 2 and obviously could not lead a spade, and did not have a club, so led the H3, ducked by Therese and won cheaply by South with the HT.

But now the heart suit is blocked and Therese could not be denied 9 tricks. South maybe should have foreseen the blockage, but it would not matter if he had discarded a club at trick 2.

**F1** 75  
**Bd 30** AT832  
**Dlr E** 7632  
**Vul Nil** 98  
 Q AK983  
 QJ764 95  
 T8 KQ94  
 QJ762 A3

JT642  
 K  
 AJ5  
 KT54

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

On board 30 in F1 my second bid of 2H could/should have been a 6-card suit, so Therese was interested in bidding game, and 2NT is forward-going and shows a club stop, but I was not interested with my miss-fit, so I passed.

North led the C9, which was good for me but may have pin-pointed my length, so prospects in 2NT did not look good. Playing Ace and another club may have been too confident, so I played low in dummy, hoping South would play the CK, and at the same time giving him an easy exit card with the singleton CA on the table.

South took the bait, so now I could develop 9 tricks after winning the CA, by coming to my hand with the SQ and cashing my clubs before leading a diamond to dummy.

South won the DA and cashed the HK, but even if he had another heart I could win the 3<sup>rd</sup> round. 9 tricks was a top, but according to DF, I should have been able to make 8 tricks anyway.

**D1** T9  
**Bd 32** 9862  
**Dlr W** K875  
**Vul EW** 874  
 Q6 AKJ54  
 KQJ543 A7  
 A3 Q6  
 QJ9 AK63

8732  
 T  
 JT942  
 T52

W	N	E	S
1H	/	1S	/
3H	/	4NT	/
5S	/	5NT	/
6C	/	7NT	//

On board 32 in F1 we bid to what looked like a routine grand slam, and got over 80%. Playing in 7NT is not only the best scoring GS in a Pairs event, it is also probably the safest when you have two suits and a surfeit of high cards. A 5-0 heart break or a 5-1 spade break will doom each of those GSs, but 7NT has 13 tricks on top if even both majors break badly,

I upgraded my hand to a jump rebid, based on my good suit and SQ, and Therese took over.

My 5S response to RKCB showed 2 key cards and the HQ, but denied an outside King, so I was a little puzzled by Therese's 5NT bid and decided to show my CQ.

Of course, mainly Therese was saying that we had all of the controls, and if my hearts were solid I could bid the grand slam.

Since there were 13 tricks if either major suit broke, and I had jumped, she took further decisions out of my hand by jumping to 7NT, and claimed at trick 1 after the opening lead of the DJ.

**F2** KJ872  
**Bd 5** J5  
**Dlr N** JT4  
**Vul NS** A84  
 A43 Q96  
 Q7 KT42  
 Q82 AK76  
 KQT76 53

T5  
 A9863  
 953  
 J92

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

On board 5 in F2 we found an interesting way to get an average! I did not psyche, I genuinely believed that I had 12 points when I opened 1S, and even when I was about to place my hand on the table. As I was putting my hand down the extra 2 points disappeared, and all I could do was apologize.

East led a tricky CQ (overleading, but suspicious in view of Therese's own club holding), so Therese won in dummy, expecting her CJ to be a trick, and led the HJ, passed around the West, who led the S3.

Therese gave this a little thought and played low, and East gave it even more thought before eventually playing the SQ, and then returning a club.

The run of West's clubs squeezed everyone else, and Therese emerged with a second heart trick at the end to go 4 off, for -400, but since EW could make 9 or 10 tricks in 3NT and most did, that was an average score.

**F2** AJT42  
**Bd 8** 82  
**Dlr W** 7543  
**Vul Nil** J7  
K95 7  
K63 AT954  
J9 AT8  
KQT42 9863

Q863  
QJ7  
KQ62  
A5

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

On board 8 in F2 I failed to take advantage of a piece of good luck because of a preconceived idea that I was going 1 off and wanted to make sure it was only 1 off, to protect against -140 in a heart contract by EW.

After my light overcall, 3C by Therese shows at least a limit raise in spades, and I was trying to show no interest whatsoever by passing the double.

However, Therese's hand is too good, but not good enough, and she bid the inevitable 4S, doubled by West.

East led the HA and followed this up with a low heart, probably hoping West could ruff, but handing me the contract.

All I had to do was win the club switch in dummy, pitch my club loser on the heart, and take the spade finesse for 10 tricks.

I was afraid that West could ruff the HQ, so I hoped that the S9 would come down giving me an entry to dummy to pitch my losing club after drawing trumps, but was 1 down for a bottom.

**F2** AKQ7  
**Bd 14** AJT  
**Dlr E** T6  
**Vul Nil** AQ85  
JT985 62  
8432 Q975  
KQ9 8752  
JT7

43  
K6  
AJ43  
K9642

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

On board 14 in F2 I missed a vital inference and stayed out of a cold slam, even a grand slam on a squeeze and two-way finesse.

My 2NT rebid showed 20-22 points, and Therese's 3S was minor-suit Stayman, my 3NT rebid denying a 5-card minor. Since I was minimum, I did not give a thought to slam when she invited slam with 4NT.

Over 3NT Therese could have bid 4C to ask if I had a 4-card minor, and we would very likely have reached the club slam, but when she bid 4NT instead, I passed without thinking the hand through to the end.

My 2NT rebid could have contained a 5-card major, and with 3 cards in one major and 2 or more in the other it is normal to check on a 5-card major first, so the most probable major suit holding for Therese's hand is 2-2, leaving a 5-4 minor suit holding, or at least 4-4.

Since the 3S bid has slam aspirations, confirmed by the 4NT quantitative raise, I should have jumped to the known club fit over 4NT. Even though I miss-guessed the HQ, West was squeezed in diamonds and spades, so I made 12 tricks for slightly above average.

**F2** 2  
**Bd 23** A84  
**Dlr S** AKQ  
**Vul All** KQJ753  
AJ83 KQ75  
QT97 J653  
JT6 8532  
84 T

T964  
K2  
974  
A962

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	1C	/	/
/	2NT!	/	1S
/	3D	/	3C
//	4D	/	4C
			6C

On board 23 in F2 my 2NT rebid was either a balanced 18-19 points, or an unbalanced hand too good for a 3C rebid, and 3C asked for clarification.

The 3D rebid confirmed the hand type, and 4C was Minorwood for clubs, my 4D showing 3 or 0.

Since my 2NT rebid precluded my having zero Key cards, Therese assumed I had 3 and jumped to 6C, expecting the clubs to be solid due to her holding.

East thought about his opening lead for a long time before coming forth with the SK, and was no doubt pleased when his partner encouraged, but disappointed when I ruffed the second spade.

It was fortunate that I had the spade singleton, but I knew after Therese's 4C that slam was a reasonable chance, and was always going to bid slam myself anyway.

The really fortunate thing about the hand was Therese's poor spade holding opposite my singleton, which made all of her honour cards full value. Two other pairs bid the slam, so we got about 80%.

<b>F2</b>	T9543		
<b>Bd 26</b>	852		
<b>Dir E</b>	7		
<b>Vul All</b>	J842		
Q7		AK86	
QT63		AK74	
KT32		Q65	
T97		K3	
	J2		
	J9		
	AJ984		
	AQ65		
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
1H	/	1D	/
4H	//	3H	/

On board 26 in F2, EW had a routine auction to 4H and it was my turn to lead. I did not like leading dummy's first-bid suit, but playing standard it may have only been 3 cards in length, and I had nothing else of value in my hand except the singleton diamond, so I led the D7.

Therese thought for some time before playing the DA and returning a diamond, trying to guess whether I was more likely to have a singleton or a doubleton, and probably decided that since I had virtually nothing in high cards, it was now or never.

Therese led back the D4 as a suit preference for clubs, and after ruffing I dutifully returned a club and declarer gave it his best shot by rising with the CK.

Therese did not make a possible mistake by trying to cash the CQ now, she did what she knew was certain by returning the D8 for me to ruff again. Now I returned a club (as suggested by the D8) and we took it 2 off.

I had expected about average, but we got about 80%, surprizingly good, but I did hear of one luckless NS pair whose opponents had a bidding mix-up and stopped in 3NT, the only making game.