

2014 South-West Pacific Teams – Canberra by Richard Wallis

The South West Pacific Teams always attracts a quality field, and thus it is hard to get to the top 8 and a quarter-final berth. This year Therese Tully and I agreed to play with Tony Hutton and Malcolm Carter, and we later added Annette and Stephen Henry from NZ. While the top 8 was always just out of our grasp, a top 15 finish was possible until the opponents bid a vulnerable 7NT in the last match, missing an Ace, and the wrong hand was on lead, so we lost 15 Imps instead of gaining 17! In spite of the unlucky finish, it was a great competition, and if schedules permit, I look forward to trying again with the same team again next year.

Hard luck stories abounded, but it was a good competition for some Queenslanders, with Andy Hung in the NOT winning team, and Paul Hookyaas and Pele Rankin winning the Mixed Teams Final with a pair from WA. The NOT follows the SWPT, and includes the top eight of the SWPT as the only participants.

Playing in a 6-person team means we did not play all of the 12 matches, so I can only include a few hands from those matches in which we did play. Three 20-board matches a day is not too onerous for the 4-person teams, but since we generally only played 2 matches a day, it was very easy for us. We were EW throughout, and while I was East in the main room upstairs, I switched over to the West seat for matches in the smaller room downstairs.

M 1	A8			On board 2 in the first match the vulnerability and good suit suggested a possible sacrifice if NS reached game, and in addition, my length in hearts and South's support, indicated a likely heart shortage in Therese's hand in addition to some club support. However, when it looked like NS were going to play in 4S, over which I may have bid 5C, North decided that 5H was a better spot, and with 3 potential tricks in a 5-level contract, the sacrifice at the 6-level was not on! I led the CK to get the count, and when dummy tracked and my second club trick evaporated, I led the DJ, hoping that Therese had either the DA or the HK and I could get a diamond ruff. The diamond ruff was immediately forthcoming, and declarer was 1 down before he had even won his first trick. At the other table EW must have been silent, or declined to sacrifice, as Stephen was allowed to play in 4H, making 11 tricks and +650, for a 13 Imp gain.
Bd 2	KQT986			
Dlr E	QT72			
Vul NS	Q			
Q63		T97		
2		543		
A984		J		
T9754		AKJ632		
	KJ542			
	AJ7			
	K653			
	8			
W	N	E	S	
/	2H	/	1S	
/	3S	/	3H	
/	5H	//	4S	

M 1	T842			On board 4 in the first match South got too optimistic when North showed heart support, and paid a heavy penalty due to a filthy split! After all, South has a poor suit, and the doubleton spade honours may not be pulling their full weight, so some form of invitation would have been wiser, and North almost certainly would have declined. We do not have 2-suited opening bids in our system, so I had to pass on the first round, but was happy to double for take-out when North raised to 2H. This double generally indicates heart shortage, so should have been a warning to South to go slowly. Therese led the SJ and I encouraged, but ducked as it is almost certainly from shortage, and a doubleton is more likely than a singleton. Declarer went to dummy via the DK and found out the bad news when she led the H7, Therese making 4 heart tricks to go with the SA for 2 off and +500. 3NT at the other table went 3 off for -300, so 5 Imps.
Bd 4	987			
Dlr W	K98			
Vul All	K63			
J5		A9863		
AQT62		-		
J42		QT763		
T94		Q87		
	KQ			
	KJ543			
	A5			
	AJ52			
W	N	E	S	
/	/	/	1H	
/	2H	X	4H	
X	//			

M 2	KJT53			Board 1 in the second match was lucky for us in that our system enabled me to open 1NT, and Stayman unearthed the 4-4 heart fit, so we played 4H from right side, to protect the CK from attack.
Bd 1	Q6			
Dir N	65			
Vul Nil	JT32			South led the S8, which saved me the trouble of finessing, so with diamonds as a source of tricks I played the top trumps and was delighted to see the HQ fall on the second round, enabling me to draw the last trump and force out the DA.
72		AQ94		Since it was South who won the DA, they could do no better than cash the CA and I claimed 11 tricks for +450. If they had held off cashing the CA, it cannot go away, so still only 11 tricks.
J983		AK74		I do not have the bidding or play record at the other table, but West played in 3NT and went 1 off for +50, and 11 Imps to us.
KQJ74		T32		An initial lead of the CJ would lead to an easy 2 off, so I can only conclude that Stephen led the SJ, and declarer miss-guessed the hearts after Annette held up the DA until the third round of the suit.
96		K5		
	86			
	T52			
	A98			
	AQ874			
W	N	E	S	
	/	1NT	/	
2C	/	2H	/	
3H	/	4H	//	

M 2	72			On board 6 in the second match South had a reasonably respectable hand for a take-out double, he just picked the wrong time to do it.
Bd 6	95			
Dir E	JT874			Therese's redouble showed 10+ and no doubt she expected to be able to show her major suits later, but when North volunteered 1NT, a penalty doubled offered more promise than the major suit game, since South figures to have both majors as well.
Vul EW	9872			Against 1NTX I led a middling H4 and North won in dummy to lead the CQ, which I won to lead another heart after Therese encouraged on the opening lead.
AQJ64		85		Double dummy a spade lead is better, as Therese can win the SJ, unblock the diamonds and lead the HQ herself, which North wins to lead the CQ, but I can lead another spade. Altogether we can get 3 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds and 2 clubs for 4 off and +800, but after the heart lead we had to settle for 3 off and +500.
QJT8		742		
KQ		A953		
53		AK64		
	KT93			
	AK63			
	62			
	QJT			
W	N	E	S	
	1NT	1D	X	
XX	//	/	/	
X				At the other table West played in 2H for -110, and 9 Imps to us.

M 2	QJ93			South took too rosy a view on board 10 in the second match, as he forced his partner to bid with the take-out double, and then jumped to game opposite a minimum response with not much more than he promised by the take-out double.
Bd 10	J8			
Dir E	93			I do not normally open a weak 2 with a 7-card suit, but I thought that the extra card made up for the paucity of points!
Vul All	QT875			I led DA and switched to the C6, ducked by declarer and I ruffed the return of the C9 and now led a heart, setting up our fifth trick for 2 down and +200.
A54		T2		After the opening bid of 2D, I could make a case for North to respond 3C, as after all South is not guaranteed to have two 4-card majors, but he got lucky in a way, especially if South had passed. If North responded 3C, South would have to be very optimistic to bid 3NT rather than pass.
K9654		T72		
QJ		AT87642		
K93		6		
	K876			
	AQ3			
	K5			
	AJ42			
W	N	E	S	
/	2S	2D!	X	
//		/	4S	
				At the other table West played in 2H for 1 off and 7 Imps to us.

M 5	KT93			On board 16 in the fifth match I was forced to pass by our system, and when Therese opened 1S in third seat, I bid a non-forcing 1NT, as I could not bid 2C, which is Drury.
Bd 16	J64			I was quickly elevated to 3NT and North led the H4, low in dummy, and South won the HA and returned a heart.
Dir W	T72			Since I had limited entries to my hand, and the heart lead had given me 3 tricks, I played the HK, crashing the HQ in dummy, intending to lead back the HT to set up 2 more heart tricks.
Vul EW	K62			However, North thought my play of the HK was from a doubleton, so, placing South with a 6-card suit, he jettisoned the HJ to avoid blocking the suit.
A			QJ762	
KT982			Q7	
4			AKQ6	
T98753			AJ	
	854			
	A53			
	J9853			
	Q4			
W	N	E	S	9 tricks were no longer a problem, and when I ran my hearts, discarding a diamond, club and spade, I unblocked the SA, entered dummy with a diamond to lead the SQ setting up the 10 th trick, and since a spade was discarded by North, +660 was worth 2 Imps.
/	/	1S	/	
1NT	/	3NT	//	

M 5	T764			On board 18 in the fifth match we got to use some of the gadgets in our system to good effect.
Bd 18	98			The 2C response was inverted, and the 2H rebid showed 14-16, so I was interested in slam. I could now have bid 3D, to show shortage in the middle suit (hearts), but was more interested in Therese's holding. So instead asked for her shortage with 2S.
Dir E	K5432			The 2NT rebid showed no shortage, which, since we play a 15-17 1NT opening, also pin-pointed the 14 points in her hand, and now my 3C asks for club length.
Vul NS	54			The 3NT rebid was a bit of a dampener as it showed a doubleton club, but undaunted, I soldiered on with 4C (Minorwood), and over the 1 keycard response, I signed off in 6C.
A93			KJ52	
J			AK75	
A98			JT7	
AKT972			Q3	
	Q8			
	QT6432			
	Q6			
	J86			
W	N	E	S	South led the H5, and when the HJ won trick 1 and the clubs were friendly, Therese took the losing spades finesse at trick 5 for the overtrick, and the diamond losers could be discarded on the hearts.
2C!	/	1C	/	Since the diamonds were well placed, there were many lines for 12 tricks and we gained 10 Imps against 3NT for -490 at the other table.
2S	/	2H!	/	
3C	/	2NT	/	
4C	/	3NT	/	
6C	//	4H	/	

M 6	T952			On board 13 in the sixth match I was caught in a common dilemma, in that I had 2 obvious choices, but no certain way to know which was the right one! As it is, both options worked.
Bd 13	J982			After my GF bid of 2D, Therese could not rebid 3C as that would show extra values, so she waited with 2H, which could have been just a 5-card suit.
Dir E	932			When 2S was bid on my right, I could bid 3S and play in 3NT if Therese had a stopper, or I could hope for a sixth heart, or a suit bolstered by my K6 and support hearts. I chose the safer option.
Vul All	53			Since North could not get on lead early enough, and the Diamond finesse was working, Therese had an easy 10 tricks in spite of the 4-1 break, and we scored up +620.
8			KJ	
K6			AQ743	
AQJ865			T4	
K986			QJT4	
	AQ7643			
	T5			
	K7			
	A72			
W	N	E	S	At the other table Annette got a little too frisky with her good suit, and bid to 4S, which went 3 off, luckily not doubled, so only -300 and 8 Imps to us.
2D	/	1H	1S	
3H	/	2H	2S	
		4H	//	

M 6 Bd 14 Dlr S Vul Nil	J753 Q7652 3 AKQ			On board 14 in the sixth match South opened with a 3D pre-empt, and since I did not have even one 4-card major, and no source of tricks, I elected to keep out of it, in spite of my 17 points!
AQT AKJ K82 8762		K86 T83 765 J943		If Therese had some prospects she would double, but with the weakest hand and nowhere to go, 3D became the final contract, to which I led the HA to look at dummy.
	942 94 AQJT94 T5			Dummy's clubs were ominous, thus it looked like a good time to cash out, so when Therese did not encourage hearts, I switched to the SA and we cashed our spade tricks and the HK and I waited for the DK to get +100.
W //	N	E	S 3D	At the other table EW were not going to be pushed around by a pre-empt, so West did double, and East, with nowhere to go bid their best major suit, and 3S became the final contract. This inglorious contract finished 3 off for +150 and 6 Imps to us.

M 6 Bd 19 Dlr S Vul EW	QJ87 AQT8764 9 3			On board 19 in the sixth match North presented us with a serious problem with his jump to 3H over my 1NT opening bid (15-17).
AK9 K9 JT42 AT62		T54 J52 K76 KQ85		Therese's double showed values, and without a spade suit, I had an easy 3NT, and all passed.
	632 3 AQ853 J974			North had a surprize for me, a second suit, and led the S7, but the surprize was on him, as I won the first trick with the S9, and led a diamond up, losing to South who returned the H3.
W 1NT 3NT	N 3H //	E X	S / /	I now lost 2 heart tricks, but the HJ was a trick, as was the DJ and the top clubs in dummy revealed the club position, so 4 clubs, 3 spades, 1 heart and 1 diamond made up 9 tricks in all for +600.
				At the other table North led the SQ, and now there is no easy way for West to garner 9 tricks and the same contract drifted 1 down for +100 and 12 Imps to us.
				Even if I had gone 1 off as at the other table, that is better than passing 3HX, as that contract makes via a number of lines.

M 7 Bd 1 Dlr N Vul Nil	852 KQJT K87 932			Sometimes in this funny game fortune favour's the bold, and what you don't know may not hurt you, and both of these axioms were pertinent on board 1 in the seventh match. We pushed to game on minimal values and neither of us had a heart stop!
KQ64 97 Q2 AKQ84		AT3 854 AT943 75		Therese's 1S rebid confirmed at least 4 clubs, and when she invited with 2NT, I had no hesitation in accepting with my 2 Aces and reasonable 5-card suit, but the diamond suit was not important to the final tally of tricks.
	J97 A632 J65 JT6			South led the H2, and NS quickly wrapped up the first 4 tricks, forcing me to find a discard in my hand and two in dummy, but with now only 1 real play for the contract, the clubs providing 5 tricks, I discarded both diamonds for the time being, but of course after cashing their hearts, NS switched to diamonds, so the 4 th spade had to go.
W 1C 1S! 2NT	N / / / /	E / 1D 1NT 3NT	S / / / //	Everything was good for us with spades, hearts and clubs split evenly, so I grabbed a grateful 9 tricks for +400. At the other table, with no heart stop, EW played in their Moysian spades fit for -170 and 6 Imps.

M 7 Bd 13 Dlr N Vul All	T7 9432 Q73 A742		Board 13 in the seventh match was unlucky for us in that after a good play by South to the first trick and a wrong guess by Therese, we went down in a 3NT contract that could have made double-dummy.
K963 A8 A64 QJ53		A85 KJT7 K952 T8	North elected to lead the C2, and South made the good play of the C9 at trick 1, won by Therese with the CQ.
	QJ42 Q65 JT8 K96		Therese played the HA and then a losing heart finesse, and now South was able to lead the CK and then the C6 through Therese's hand, enabling North to win 2 more clubs.
W	N	E	S
1S	/	1D	/
2NT	/	2S	/
3NT	//	3H	/
			At the other table North led a heart, and declarer was not hard-pressed to make 9 tricks now, so we lost 13 Imps.
			To make 9 tricks after the C9 at tricks 1, declarer has to play hearts the right way, but first plays a spade to dummy and covers North's card, setting up a finesse of South's holding later after cashing the SA.

M 7 Bd 14 Dlr E Vul Nil	52 J942 T8 T9654		On board 14 in the seventh match we stayed out of an iffy slam when it looked like our club honours were not well placed, and gained an unexpected windfall.
AKT7 65 654 KQ87		Q943 AK73 AQJ92 -	My 4C rebid was a good hand with 4-card spade support and a club splinter, and with what could be wasted club values, Therese signed off in 4S, which I reluctantly accepted.
	J86 QT8 K73 AJ32		North led the DT, which was a good sign for us as slam was still a good prospect if the diamond finesse was working, and when it proved to be wrong, Therese had no trouble wrapping up 11 tricks for +450.
W	N	E	S
1S	/	1D	/
4S	//	4C!	/
			At the other table EW had a serious bidding hiccup or error of judgement, and drove all the way to 7S by East!
			Declarer had a show of making after the lead of the CA, but when the diamond finesse failed, had to succumb, and another +50 added up to 11 Imps to us.

M 10 Bd 17 Dlr N Vul Nil	Q9862 J653 K 982		On board 17 in the tenth match we had a fairly straight-forward 2/1 auction to 5D after Therese showed her 5-card suit and I raised.
J74 98 Q94 AKQ53		T AKQ AJT732 J76	After diamonds were bid 3 times, 4D is Minorwood, and when I only showed 1 of the 3 missing key cards, Therese wisely subsided in just game.
	AK53 T742 865 T4		Of course South led the SA, and after Therese ruffed the SK at trick 2, she went across to dummy with a club for the diamond finesse. When the DK popped, 12 tricks were a formality, and we scored up +420.
W	N	E	S
2C	/	1D	/
3D	/	2D	/
4S!	/	4D	/
		5D	//
			Since Therese had good controls in the outside suits, slam was always a possibility on the bidding to 3D, but after the 4S response we could have been off 2 Aces instead of 1 Ace and the DK, so slam was taken off the table immediately.
			At the other table a wheel must have fallen of during the EW bidding as they did not get to game, still making 12 tricks for -170, so we gained 6 Imps on what looked like a flat board, or even a potential loss if EW at the other table had got frisky and then lucky.

M 12	AK8			<p>On board 2 in the twelfth match, South must have had her Weeties in the morning as she opened with a strong 2C on the South cards, and I overcalled 2S to suggest a possible sacrifice, or lead.</p> <p>North, the redoubtable Michael Courtney, was very excited by the 2C opening bid and immediately asked for Aces with 4NT, to which South replied 5S, apparently showing 3 Aces, judging by Michael's jump to the Grand Slam!</p> <p>My interest was immediately aroused, but I was not on lead! I did not want a spade lead, so doubled to ask Therese to lead another suit, hoping she would pick hearts, but no luck, and 7NTX made for -2490.</p> <p>When dummy went down with only 1 Ace I did not know how to explain the 5S response, except that Maybe South was so enamoured with her diamond suit that she responded as if diamonds were trumps!</p> <p>At the other table the contract was a sensible 6D, so we lost 15 Imps, whereas a heart lead would have gained us 17 Imps. 32 Imps swung on the opening lead, and we still won the match.</p>
Bd 2	KT987		J73	
Dlr E	A		QJ32	
Vul NS	9765		T92	
Q96542			J32	
A54				
83	T			
T4	6			
	KQJ7654			
	AKQ8			
W	N	E	S	
2S	4NT	/	2C!	
/	7NT	/	5S	
X	//	/	/	

M 12	AQ75			<p>On board 14 in the twelfth match the lack of fit propelled us to 3NT, which has a few problems, but none that cannot be overcome with a good guess.</p> <p>North led the S5, so we were on the wood before we started, as there was a certain diamond loser, and at least 3 spades.</p> <p>Therese ran the DQ, which South took, instead of ducking to force declarer to use up another entry, and when the spades broke 4-4 and the DT was well placed, she had 9 tricks for +400.</p> <p>If South ducks the DQ, Therese has 2 entries to dummy to lead the DA, and then if the DT drops on the second or third round there are 9 tricks,</p> <p>At the other table EW climbed up to 5D, and when the diamond finesse lost and declarer miss-guessed the hearts, they were 2 off for +100 and 11 Imps to us.</p>
Bd 14	Q743		62	
Dlr E	T73		KJ9	
Vul Nil	96		AJ9654	
KT3			A2	
AT62				
Q	J984			
KT754	85			
	K82			
	QJ83			
W	N	E	S	
1H	/	1D	/	
3NT	//	2D	/	