

## 2015 Coffs Harbour Congress by Richard Wallis

As usual, the Swiss Teams, played Friday, Saturday and Sunday, closed off before the event and there was a waiting list. The Swiss Pairs, played Wednesday and Thursday, was well attended, but was not closed off. Both events attracted good fields and were played over 8/14-board matches, which was a good test of stamina.

Therese Tully and I were in the action in the Pairs, which was won by Caroline Miller and Paul Lavings, but we finished just out of the money, We started anew on Friday afternoon, with Marlene Watts and David Beachamp as the rest of our team, hopeful that the solid practice would see us in good stead.

After 7 matches, comprising 5 good wins, a 5 Imp loss to the Gumby, the eventual winners, and an 8 Imp loss to a Sydney team, we started the last match against Michael Courtney and Paul Wyr in 2<sup>nd</sup> position, although still 7 VPs behind the leaders. A good win would have secured us 2<sup>nd</sup> place, but after an exact draw, with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> having big wins, we were lucky in the end to hold on the 3<sup>rd</sup> place by a bare 0.3 VPs.

This is a great event, now about the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> largest in Australia, and a great venue, supplying us with a buffet lunch on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, and copious sandwiches on Sunday. In addition to this there was very generous prizemoney for those lucky enough to win any, so roll on 2016.

<b>M 1</b>	T54			On board 8 in the first match I had high expectations when Therese opened 1D, but the bidding quickly identified the miss-fitting hands, so I signed off in 3NT. When dummy went down I had momentary regret at not persevering with spades, as 6S looked to be a good contract with a 4-3 break, and friendly hearts, but 6NT had no chance, even on a non-diamond lead, due to the lack of entries to my hand. However, after reflection, 6S required the heart finesse or the HJ dropping as well as the 4-3 break, so it was not a good contract. Even 3NT is limited to 9 tricks on a bad spade and heart break, as there is only 1 entry to my hand, but with spades friendly, I quickly scored up 11 tricks for +460. At the other table EW did not stop until they reached 6NT, and this contract had no chance even if South was friendly enough to lead a spade. That was 11 Imps to us.
<b>Bd 8</b>	72			
<b>Dlr W</b>	K865			
<b>Vul Nil</b>	QJ95			
-			AKQJ72	However, after reflection, 6S required the heart finesse or the HJ dropping as well as the 4-3 break, so it was not a good contract. Even 3NT is limited to 9 tricks on a bad spade and heart break, as there is only 1 entry to my hand, but with spades friendly, I quickly scored up 11 tricks for +460. At the other table EW did not stop until they reached 6NT, and this contract had no chance even if South was friendly enough to lead a spade. That was 11 Imps to us.
KQT			A954	
QJT32			4	
AKT74			83	
	9863			At the other table EW did not stop until they reached 6NT, and this contract had no chance even if South was friendly enough to lead a spade. That was 11 Imps to us.
	J863			
	A97			
	62			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
1D	/	1S	/	
2C	/	2H!	/	
3C	/	3NT	//	

<b>M 1</b>	AKJT52			On board 10 in the first match North doubled initially, probably intending to show a good hand when she later bid spades. However, after I bid 1S over the double, she apparently did not have an agreement with her partner as to what a 2S bid would now mean, so she passed. Therese and I do have an agreement in this type of auction, and a 2S rebid by the North hand would have been to play. How much simpler it would have been for North to bid 1S (or 2S if showing a strong hand) on the first round. South led the C6 and North cashed the clubs and exited with the D9, but with everything friendly I had no trouble setting up the hearts and making 10 tricks for +130. At the other table David played in 2S, and even though East found the heart ruff, that was still 8 tricks and another +110 for 6 Imps.
<b>Bd 10</b>	875			
<b>Dlr E</b>	Q9			
<b>Vul All</b>	AQ			
Q			8743	Therese and I do have an agreement in this type of auction, and a 2S rebid by the North hand would have been to play. How much simpler it would have been for North to bid 1S (or 2S if showing a strong hand) on the first round. South led the C6 and North cashed the clubs and exited with the D9, but with everything friendly I had no trouble setting up the hearts and making 10 tricks for +130. At the other table David played in 2S, and even though East found the heart ruff, that was still 8 tricks and another +110 for 6 Imps.
KT942			A3	
7643			AKJT8	
T54			J8	
	96			At the other table David played in 2S, and even though East found the heart ruff, that was still 8 tricks and another +110 for 6 Imps.
	QJ6			
	52			
	K97632			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
1H	X	1D	/	
2D	//	1S	/	

<b>M 2</b>	KT64		On board 16 in the second match the bidding was very revealing, and I was able to take full advantage.	
<b>Bd 16</b>	J93		North's rebid showed a balanced 11-14, and I am not sure if South's 2S rebid was game forcing or even a 1-round force, but North took no chances by bidding game anyway.	
<b>Dir W</b>	K9		The contract would have been quickly put to bed if Therese had led the H7, but of course she has a very good club sequence, and the lead of the CK was standout.	
<b>Vul EW</b>	A852		South won the CA on the table, discarding the D5, and played the S4 from the table. Following the explanation of South's bidding, as soon as I saw dummy I knew Therese could ruff my H2, so I played the SA at trick 2 and gave her a heart ruff, for 1 off and +50.	
32		A98		
75		AK2		
QT63		742		
KQJT7		9643		
	QJ75			
	QT865			
	AJ85			
	-			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	1C	/	1H	
/	1NT	/	2S!	At the other table David opened 1NT, Marlene transferred to hearts, and the final contract was 4HN. East was not psychic enough to lead the SA and engineer a spade ruff for West, so +420 was 10 Imps.
/	4S	//		

<b>M 2</b>	T96		On board 20 in the second match we had a very simple auction to 3NT, played by Therese, and North led the D3.	
<b>Bd 20</b>	KJ		My 2D bid after the 1NT rebid was artificial, and forcing, primarily looking for 3-card spade support, and when that was not forthcoming, I bid the obvious 3NT.	
<b>Dir W</b>	K8543		Looking at all 4 hands, Therese could have put the issue beyond doubt at trick 1 by playing the DQ, but she played low, and upon winning the DJ. South returned the C5, C9 by Therese, CQ by North, and Therese ducked in dummy.	
<b>Vul All</b>	KQ4		Another diamond from North, the finesse winning, and then the contract hinged on the spade finesse, or a 3-3 break. South won the SQ and returned a club, won in dummy. Therese had nowhere to go except the spades, and when they were friendly, a heart to hand and the marked diamond finesse gave 9 tricks for +600.	
A7		KJ432		
AQ953		8		
762		AQT9		
J93		A62		
	Q85			
	T7642			
	J			
	T875			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
1H	/	1S	/	
1NT	/	2D!	/	
2H	/	3NT	//	At the other table 2SE made 9 tricks for -140 and 10 Imps.

<b>M 3</b>	Q953		On board 2 in the third match South doubled my 1H opening for takeout, and Therese raised to game, which generally showed nothing more than 5-card support, which made me think our defensive prospects were poor.	
<b>Bd 2</b>	J		When 4H came around to South, he doubled again, and I was quite prepared to bid 5H over 4S or 5C by North, but unsure of what to do if North had bid 5D.	
<b>Dir E</b>	JT9865		North could not bring herself to bid 4S or 5D on such a weak hand, and instead chose to pass and hope for the best.	
<b>Vul NS</b>	T5		South led the CA and then the CK, and I was hoping for a continuation to discard my SK, but he unerringly cashed the SA, so that was 1 off for -100.	
J742		K		
T8763		KQ9542		
-		AQ43		
QJ62		93		
	AT86			
	A			
	K72			
	AK874			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
		1H	X	
4H	/	/	X	At the other table NS did get to game, and EW sacrificed in 5HX, also for 9 tricks, but this time +300, so we gained 5 Imps. Note that even 5D is cold for NS.
//				

<b>M 3</b> <b>Bd 13</b> <b>Dlr N</b> <b>Vul All</b>	4 A92 J763 T9872			On board 13 in the third match we stayed out of a potential slam after identifying that neither of us had a heart control. My 1C opening was at least 2 clubs, and the 4C rebid showed 4-card spade support and 18 or 19 HCPs.
QJT8 83 K9 AJ654		AK76 QJ65 AT4 KQ		The 4D rebid from Therese was 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> round control in diamonds, and my return to 4S denied any control in hearts, so Therese knew we had 2 losers in hearts, hence the pass.
	9532 KT74 Q852 3			North was looking at the bidding as well, and promptly NS took the first 2 tricks in hearts, after which Therese could ruff the next heart high and claim the rest, even though the spades were 4-1.
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	At the other table, more adventurous bidding propelled EW to 6S, and in this contract a non-heart lead looked to give them a chance, but the 5-1 club break and 4-1 spade break, doomed this contract.
1S	/	1C	/	Now the non-heart lead came back against declarer, as without the heart trick, declarer had only 10 tricks for 2 off and 13 Imps to us.
4D	/	4C	//	
	/	4S!	//	

<b>M 4</b> <b>Bd 25</b> <b>Dlr N</b> <b>Vul EW</b>	K75 QT83 Q5 7632			On board 25 in the fourth match against Warren Lazer and Pauline Gumby. I was momentarily unsure of our systemic responses over the game-forcing 2C response by Therese and did not rebid 2S, in case it showed a stronger hand.
J964 - AKJ2 AKQJ5		AQT8 AJ752 9874 -		Things appeared to take a turn for the worse when Therese raised my ratty suit to the 3-level, and I tried to bail out in 3NT.
	32 K964 T63 T984			Therese's 4C rebid was a cue, agreeing diamonds, and I could have cued the heart control, but instead marked time with a 4D rebid, which also allowed Therese to show her heart control, and then my spade control, which was all Therese needed to jump to slam!
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	South led the S3, and the sight of dummy made me feel a whole lot better, especially when North covered the SJ, so I cashed the top trumps hoping for a 3-2 spilt so I could claim, and when the DQ fell on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> round, I could claim all 13 tricks for +1390.
2C!	/	1H	/	If I had rebid 2S over 2C, which does not show any extra values, we would have got to the higher scoring 6S, also making 13 tricks, which is what happened at the other table, so we lost 2 Imps.
3D	/	2D	/	
4C	/	3NT	/	
4H	/	4D	/	
6D	//	4S	/	

<b>M 5</b> <b>Bd 1</b> <b>Dlr N</b> <b>Vul Nil</b>	T9 AKJ4 JT8 AQJ8			On board 1 in the fifth match NS were not on the same wavelength during the bidding and go to an inferior game, albeit a 75% chance, requiring just one of two finesses.
J762 96 K9 87654		KQ543 T73 652 K2		North intended her double to show a willingness to compete, and a heart suit, but North missed the inference and rebid her diamonds, raised to game by North.
	A8 Q852 AQ743 T3			Therese led our suit, and with both minor suit finesses wrong for NS, 5D was 1 off for +50 to us. This shows the advantage with a weak hand in overcalling in a suit that you want led, as we need the spade lead before South can get a pitch on the club suit.
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	At the other table David and Marlene did find their heart fit, and while this had the same 3 losers, the heart game was cold, for +420 and a useful 10 Imps.
3S	1C	1S	2D	
/	X	/	4D	
	5D	//		

<b>M 5</b>	874			On board 9 in the fifth match we had a very convoluted auction to a good slam.
<b>Bd 9</b>	72			My 1S rebid showed 4 spades and at least 4 clubs, and 2D was 4 <sup>th</sup> suit, game-forcing. I thought my 2H rebid was showing 3-card heart support, but we have now agreed that 2H in this auction denies a diamond stop and only shows 2 hearts, with my hand I have to bid 3H to show 3-card support.
<b>Dir N</b>	T9762			No problem with this hand as 2S shows 4-card spade support and I tried to show a minimum hand by jumping to game. In fact, while I only have 11 HCPs, I do have 3 controls for spades, so it is not dead minimum.
<b>Vul EW</b>	T76			Therese now checked up on Key Cards with 4NT and my 5D response show 1, followed by 5H to ask about the SQ, and 6C showed the SQ and the lowest King, (CK), so Therese knew 6S was a good contract but we were missing an Ace, obviously the DA considering South's double!
AK96			QJ53	Strangely South doubled for the lead, but he was on lead, and then he led the ST! Thus there were 13 tricks for +1460, and 13 Imps when EW did not get to slam at the other table.
AKQJ8			T64	
K			J5	
Q92			AKJ5	
	T2			
	853			
	AQ843			
	843			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
	/	1C	/	
1H	/	1S	/	
2D!	/	2H	/	
2S	/	4S	/	
4NT	/	5D	X	
5H!	/	6C	/	
6S	//			

<b>M 6</b>	A32			On board 15 in the sixth match 4S was a good contract, but easily defeated if North was prepared to risk giving an overtrick.
<b>Bd 15</b>	9			I showed a 5-9 raise over the 2C overcall, and South's double showed the red suits, so Therese was encourage to go on to game with her club shortage and outside controls.
<b>Dir S</b>	T82			North led the H9 and prospects did not look good as it was obviously a singleton, and South had control.
<b>Vul NS</b>	AQT742			However, the H8 is an important card in declarer's hand, so the HJ should be played at trick 1, followed by the top diamonds after winning the HK, to ruff a diamond in dummy before leading the S9.
KQJ65			987	The plan is to ruff the 2 <sup>nd</sup> club, draw trumps and then lead to the HA in dummy where another heart will set up the H8 for the 10 <sup>th</sup> trick.
K865			AJ32	North can thwart this plan by winning the SA and underleading his CK to get a heart ruff after all, and there is still a heart to lose for 1 down.
AK3			J7	
5			J963	
	T4			
	QT74			
	Q9654			
	K8			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
1S	2C	2S	X	
4S	//			

<b>M 6</b>	AK843			On board 28 in the sixth match if North leads a spade after his overcall, there would be at least 12 easy tricks if both minor suit Kings were well placed.
<b>Bd 28</b>	85			However, on the actual hand it would be essential for declarer to enter dummy with the HA and attack clubs first. This would lead to 10 tricks when the club finesse works and they split 3-3.
<b>Dir W</b>	742			At the other table declarer won the SQ at trick 1 and quite reasonably took the diamond finesse at trick 2, and when that failed he was 1 off for +50.
<b>Vul NS</b>	962			Luckily for us we had a more imaginative North at our table, and he got cute by leading the H8!
QT5			976	
KQJ7			A9	
JT5			AQ83	
AT8			QJ74	
	J2			
	T6432			
	K96			
	K53			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
1C	1S	2S	/	
2NT	/	3NT	//	

<b>M 7</b>	J65			On board 2 in the seventh match South had an easy take-out double over my 1H opening, but the bidding had climbed too high for him at his next turn to call, so he passed.
<b>Bd 2</b>	64			
<b>Dlr E</b>	KQ965			
<b>Vul NS</b>	Q75			North could have helped South out by bidding 3D over 2H, but was probably daunted by the Vulnerability, and 5D is too high anyway.
K72		984		The lead to 4H was critical to the defense, and South had 9 safe cards to lead, but luckily for me he quite reasonably chose the C3!
KT7		AQJ9832		
874		3		
J986		A2		When the C9 forced the CQ from North I led a club right back to set up the CJ for a discard later.
	AQT3			After South's double I was banking on the SA being onside, and so it proved, and I was able to discard my 3 <sup>rd</sup> spade on the CJ for 10 tricks and +420.
	5			
	AJT2			
	KT53			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
2H	/	1H 4H	X //	At the other table I do not have the bidding, but David finished in 5DX, which was 1 off for -200 and 6 Imps to us.

<b>M 7</b>	QJ5			On board 11 in the seventh match South opened with a strong 1NT and after he denied a 5-card major, North signed off in 3NT, to which Therese led the S3.
<b>Bd 11</b>	T4			
<b>Dlr S</b>	AQJ973			
<b>Vul Nil</b>	92			I was wishing I had been able to double 3C for the lead, but I was in the wrong position.
AT83		42		South won the S9 and took the diamond finesse, and when that won, he returned to hand with a heart to take the finesse again.
J853		962		
64		KT5		This time I won the DK and advanced the CQ, followed by the CJ, and when South ducked again I cashed out the clubs, much to South's amusement when he realized he had been conned.
764		AQJT3		That was 7 tricks when I exited with a spade for 3 off and +150. Even if South guesses the club position, Therese still has a club when she wins the SA so it is always 2 off.
	K976			
	AKQ7			At the other table the same contract was reached, but Marlene somehow managed to make 8 tricks for just 1 off and 3 Imps.
	82			
	K85			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	3C	/	1NT 3D	
/	3NT	//		

<b>M 8</b>	JT3			On board 18 in the eighth and final match, 2NT by North was game-forcing and denied a major suit.
<b>Bd 18</b>	J43			This had the disadvantage on this particular hand of putting the wrong hand on lead!
<b>Dlr E</b>	AK3			
<b>Vul NS</b>	AJ65			I had nothing more promising to lead other than my 5-card suit, and we cashed the first 5 tricks, for 1 off and +100. If I had been a little more observant of Therese's discards, we may have even taken it 2 off, but I was glad to take the first 5 tricks.
984		7652		At the other table Marlene was declarer and the details of the play are not clear, but West had no reason to lead a heart, and Marlene emerged with 9 tricks for +600 and 12 Imps.
Q6		AK952		
QT72		8		
Q943		T72		I think it is likely that Marlene opened 1NT and was raised to 3NT by David. Now West, with nothing to go on, led the D2, which Marlene ran around to her DJ. The club finesse produced 9 tricks.
	AKQ			
	T87			
	J9654			
	K8			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	2NT	/	1D 3NT	
//		/		

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>			
<b>Bd</b>			
<b>Dir</b>			
<b>Vul</b>			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>

<b>M</b>				
<b>Bd</b>				
<b>Dir</b>				
<b>Vul</b>				
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	