

## 2015 National Seniors Teams by Richard Wallis

Therese and I had the weekend off, so we started the SWP Teams on Monday reasonably fresh, except for my sore back from a severe stumble on the tennis court, which made sitting for the 20 boards a little uncomfortable, and since we were a four-person team, I could not get treatment.

This year we teamed up with a local pair, Karen Creet and Sheila Bird, and thanks to their fine results we were in the mix for the quarter finals until the end. We started off with a big win, to jump to 1<sup>st</sup> place, and then had 2 small losses followed by a modest win to get us back to 20<sup>th</sup> place.

We continued to fluctuate, and started the last match in 6<sup>th</sup> place, but a small loss dropped us to 11<sup>th</sup>, just out of the top 8. This was enough to qualify us for the Mixed Team Playoff, and thanks to Richard Brightling, who substituted for me on Friday morning while I was getting treatment for my back, we came away with a win.

It was good to play with Karen and Sheila, who finished third on the datums, so obviously were a big part of our moderate success.

After quarters on Friday and semis on Saturday, the final was on Sunday between Lazer (W. Lazer, P. Gumbly, I. Robinson, A. Braithwaite, M. M<sup>c</sup>Manus and M. Ware) and Neill (B. Neill, A. De Livera, G. Smolanko, K. Bagchi, Z. Nagy and D. Lilley), and Lazer triumphed by 55 Imps.

<b>M 1</b>	AKJ2			On board 4 in the first match I got complacent because Therese was a passed hand, and I only rebid 2H after the negative double, whereas even 4H would not have been wild with my 4-loser hand. Her jump to game should have at least sparked some interest, but I was tuned out. When the heart finesse worked and everything else was friendly, 13 tricks were easy and we scored up +710. Not many pairs bid the slam, as the datum was only +830, and they missed the slam at the other table, so it was a flat board. If I had jumped to 4H over the double, Therese could have shown her interest with a 4S cue-bid, and then with all of the other suits under control I could have trotted out Keycard, settling for 6H when I found that the HQ was missing.
<b>Bd 4</b>	JT93			
<b>Dlr W</b>	742			
<b>Vul All</b>	62			
Q63		T9864		
75		Q42		
KQ983		J65		
Q53		97		
	7			
	AK86			
	AT			
	AKJT84			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	/	/	1C	
2D	X	/	2H!	
	4H	//		

<b>M 1</b>	A32			On board 12 in the first match my 2C response was game forcing and could have had as few as 2 clubs, then my 3S rebid showed exactly 3-card heart support. Therese bid 3S as a non-serious slam try, and with my good controls I was interested in slam, in spite of my poor trumps, so I cue-bid 4C, showing first or second round control. Therese's 4D was also first or second round control, obviously a singleton, so I trotted out RKCB, with 4NT. After the non-serious slam try, her 5C response had to be 3 Key Cards, not zero, so I asked for the HQ with 5D, and she showed the HQ and the CK with 6C, so I bid the slam. East led the D5, and I am sure that Therese thought the grand slam depended on a club guess, until she led the top 2 hearts and found the heart loser. Therese gave up a heart, and West was subjected to too many discards and Therese formed the opinion he had the CQ and duly finessed the right way and made 12 tricks for +1430. At the other table NS played in 3NT for 10 tricks, so we gained 13 Imps.
<b>Bd 12</b>	AKQ93			
<b>Dlr W</b>	J			
<b>Vul NS</b>	KT73			
J864		QT5		
4		JT76		
Q7632		T85		
Q54		862		
	K97			
	852			
	AK94			
	AJ9			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	1H	/	2C!	
/	3C	/	3S	
/	3S	/	4C	
/	4D	/	4NT	
/	5C	/	5D	
/	6C	/	6H	
//				

<b>M 2</b> <b>Bd 6</b> <b>Dlr E</b> <b>Vul EW</b>	J9842 A64 AQJ5 K		On board 6 in the second match we got lucky when the bad trump break was well positioned. My 4D rebid was a splinter with 4-card spade support, and my 5C response to RKCB showed 3 Key Cards, followed by 5H denying the SQ.
QT53 985 732 JT5		- QJT32 K9864 972	Therese settled for the small slam, and East led the HQ, which Therese won in hand, cashed the CK, and led a trump to dummy getting the unpleasant, but not fatal news.
	AK76 K7 T AQ8643		Since the clubs very conveniently split 3-3, Therese could run the clubs, forcing West to ruff, and the defence was restricted to just the SQ, for 12 tricks and +980 to us.
<b>W</b> / / / /	<b>N</b> 1S 4NT 5D 6S	<b>E</b> / / / //	<b>S</b> 1C 4D! 5C 5H
			If the spades had been in the East hand, slam could still have been made due to our good 'pips', but it would have been more difficult. At the other table NS stopped in game, and made only 11 tricks for 11 Imps to us. Only a few pairs bid the slam, since the datum was 640.

<b>M 2</b> <b>Bd 17</b> <b>Dlr N</b> <b>Vul Nil</b>	9876 AKJ5 Q AJ83		On board 17 in the second match I got a little lazy and we missed firstly a slam and second a good penalty! I could have doubled 2D, and if Therese bid 2S, then bid 3NT, or I could have passed and waited for the almost certain take-out double and played in 2DX, for at least +800.
J42 74 94 Q97642		QT3 932 KJ7653 5	However I took the easy way out, and bid a practical 3NT, expecting to have a double diamond stop.
	AK5 QT86 AT82 KT		West dutifully led the D9, and I won the DA and led back the DT, setting up the D8 as my 10 <sup>th</sup> trick. When East led back the S3, it was safe for me to take the club finesse through West, and I emerged with 12 tricks for +490.
<b>W</b> //	<b>N</b> 1C	<b>E</b> 2D	<b>S</b> 3NT
			It is not clear if we would have reached 6H if I had doubled instead of blasting 3NT, but they did at the other table, and went off, so we gained 11 Imps!

<b>M 3</b> <b>Bd 2</b> <b>Dlr E</b> <b>Vul NS</b>	96 A2 AK9754 Q32		On board 2 in the third match I had momentary misgivings about my weak opening bid when Therese made a forcing 2D bid over West's 1S overcall, but could do no better than bid 2NT, since I did not have diamond support!
KJT82 J876 63 A7		A5 T954 QJT2 J65	Some say that a suit worth bidding is worth leading, but others prefer leading a 4-card suit to a 5-card suit, especially if declarer is expecting the lead of the known 5-card suit.
	Q743 KQ3 8 KT984		West led the H6 to 3NT, and I won on the table to finesse the CT, and when that forced the CA, I was home, thanks to the S9 on the table. West switched to the S2, but it was too late!
<b>W</b> 1S /	<b>N</b> 2D 3NT	<b>E</b> / / //	<b>S</b> 1C 2NT
			4 clubs, 3 hearts and 2 diamonds added up to 9 without any spade trick, so that was +600. At the other table Sheila and Karen found their heart fit, but 2H was 1 too high, so -50, but 11 Imps.

<b>M 4</b> <b>Bd 14</b> <b>Dir E</b> <b>Vul Nil</b>	KJ654 972 K J974		On board 14 in the fourth match a strong 1NT opening by East put paid to our aspirations, especially as Therese probably suspected that my minor suit was diamonds.  We had missed our best fit and our best game, but at least we had a comfortable part-score in 2H, and the opening lead of the C3 put paid to any chance of 10 tricks when West ruffed the second club.  I do not know how we could get to 5C, when the 5-3 heart fit is identified, but 5C is cold!
T983 J5 J98542 3		AQ72 QT6 AT83 A5	Somehow EW at the other table did find their club fit, but they got too high, finishing in 6C, which was doubled and easily 1 off, for +100, so we gained 6 Imps.
	- AK843 Q7 KQT862		Very few, if any, pairs got to 5C, as the datum was only +150.
<b>W</b> //	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b> 1NT	<b>S</b> 2H!

<b>M 4</b> <b>Bd 20</b> <b>Dir W</b> <b>Vul All</b>	KJ82 86 AQJT4 AT		On board 20 in the fourth match Therese could have bid 3S after my 1S response, but chose the conservative single raise, and I had no aspirations above game.  If she did bid 3S, I would have cue-bid 4C, or bid a non-serious 3NT, and either way I believe we would have quickly identified the lack of a heart control and stopped out of slam.  In 4S, West did not lead a heart, and I discarded one on the third club to make 12 tricks for +680. In fact, via the ruffing finesse in diamonds, I could have discarded all of my hearts for 13 tricks.  At the other table NS did get to slam, and Karen and Sheila made no mistake, cashing the top hearts for 1 off and +100, to collect 13 Imps.
T6 AQT 9762 8543		7 KJ542 K85 J962	At least a some pairs must have bid and made slam, as the datum was +760, and allowing for a few pairs to go off, a few more than that must have made.
	AQ9543 973 3 KQ7		
<b>W</b> / / //	<b>N</b> 1D 2S	<b>E</b> / /	<b>S</b> 1S 4S

<b>M 5</b> <b>Bd 20</b> <b>Dir W</b> <b>Vul All</b>	JT97632 4 Q92 K9		On board 20 in the fifth match Therese opened with a weak 2S, and I was obviously going to bid game, but in what denomination?  Since I had tenaces to protect in both red suits, I chose to try 3NT, expecting to have at least 6 spades and something in the other suits to justify the vulnerable 2S.  West led the D5, and when dummy tracked, I had 10 tricks in the bag unless the spades were 3-0, even then if it was West with Q54!  I cashed the top spades to confirm they were breaking, and ran the spades discarding 2 diamonds and 2 clubs, before cashing the clubs finishing in hand and exiting with a diamond towards dummy.  All West could do was cash his 2 Aces and I had 11 tricks for +660.
Q5 AT92 AJ754 J2		4 QJ765 T8 QT754	At the other table for some reason NS did not get to game, making 10 tricks in 3S for -170 and 10 Imps to us.
	AK8 K83 K63 A863		
<b>W</b> / //	<b>N</b> 2S	<b>E</b> /	<b>S</b> 3NT

<b>M 6</b> <b>Bd 8</b> <b>Dlr W</b> <b>Vul Nil</b>	KJ 52 AJT AJT942		On board 8 in the sixth match I was very reluctant to bid 2NT with such a flimsy stopper, but it was teams after all! When dummy tracked the extra stopper and extra spade made it a great contract, but still defeatable with every card wrong.
T75 AQ986 8763 8		A8643 43 K954 K7	I did not expect West to hold the hand he did and not support spades! Maybe he was put off by my negative double, showing 4 hearts? He still has 3 trumps, an Ace and a singleton!
	Q92 KJT7 Q2 Q653		West led the S5 and East had his first chance to defeat the contract! He had to rise with the SA and push back the H4, and West wins this to switch to a diamond, then the CK defeats the contract.
<b>W</b> / / /	<b>N</b> 1C 2C 3NT	<b>E</b> 1S / //	<b>S</b> X 2NT
I won the return on the table and led the CA and CJ, expecting East to hold the CK, and now East led a heart, my HJ losing to the HQ. When West returned a spade instead of a diamond, I had time to set up my HT for the 9 <sup>th</sup> trick. The same contract went 1 off at the other table for 10 Imps			

<b>M 6</b> <b>Bd 12</b> <b>Dlr W</b> <b>Vul NS</b>	QT A2 AQ94 KT765		On board 12 in the sixth match I thought that all my Christmases had come at once when East bid 2C showing both majors, and I doubled showing a desire (in my mind) for penalties.
87 7 T8653 QJ843		95432 QT854 2 92	West was between a rock and a hard place and bid his doubleton spade, but Therese was not on the same wavelength and rebid 3D instead of letting me double. After a spade lead and continuation, 2SX could likely be held to just 1 trick, okay versus a Grand Slam!
	AKJ6 KJ963 KJ7 A		I could not credit East with such a poor hand, so bid a simple 6NT over the 3D rebid, but realized that we had missed a clod grand slam when dummy tracked, and that East did in fact have a death wish!
<b>W</b> / 2S //	<b>N</b> 1C 3D	<b>E</b> 2C! /	<b>S</b> X 6NT
13 tricks was easy with the marked finesse in hearts, and we scored up +1470, a possible loss. Looking at dummy, without the opposition bidding, 7NT relies on the heart finesse or the singleton HQ, but North at the other table tried another line and went 1 off, so we gained 17 Imps.			

<b>M 7</b> <b>Bd 15</b> <b>Dlr S</b> <b>Vul NS</b>	QJ632 KT8 AJ6 T4		On board 15 in the seventh match if West had been psychic, he would have led a heart, defeating the 4S contract.
85 7543 95 Q7652		AT AQJ T8732 J98	As it was, he led the D9, and now 4S was makeable!
	K974 962 KQ4 AK3		I won the DK in hand and led a trump, winning the next diamond in dummy with the DA to draw the last trump.
<b>W</b> / /	<b>N</b> 2H 4S	<b>E</b> / //	<b>S</b> 1NT 3S!
Now I ruffed a club and led a diamond to my hand, for the final act of the end-play. A heart to the HT in dummy and East had no escape, either conceding a ruff and discard, or giving me the HK on the table for my 10 <sup>th</sup> trick. This is fairly routine, and is likely to have been duplicated at the other table as the board was flat in our match. It was not flat around the room however, as the datum was +400, which gave us 6 Imps against the averages.			

<b>M 7</b> <b>Bd 18</b> <b>Dir E</b> <b>Vul NS</b>	K87 Q4 AQ763 854			Board 18 in the seventh match was similar to a hand in an earlier match, in that the responder had enough for game and at least an 8-card major fit, but 3NT is the safest contract, to protect the tenaces in the strong hand.
AQ92 96 KJ94 KQ9		T5 AK8532 T52 JT		At our table the bidding was short and sweet, East opened with a weak 2H, and West raised to game. The play was equally quick in that I led my singleton D8, and we cashed the first 4 tricks for 1 off. The only problem is that we should have also taken a spade trick, for 2 off!
	J643 JT7 8 A7632			Under the new system of scoring, this hasty cash cost and Imp, and a fraction of a VP.
<b>W</b> 4H	<b>N</b> //	<b>E</b> 2H	<b>S</b> /	At the other table, Sheila bid 3NT instead of 4H, and while this can be defeated, Sheila made 9 tricks after a diamond lead from North for +400 and 10 Imps.

<b>M 8</b> <b>Bd 20</b> <b>Dir W</b> <b>Vul All</b>	QJ76 T92 4 AQ743			On board 20 in the eighth match I opened 1C after 3 passes, and then West made a simple 1D overcall, over which Therese bid 1S, since she did not have both majors as required for a negative double. My 4C rebid was a 4-card raise, with 18-19 HCPs, although opposite a passed hand slam is not so likely, so I could have just bid 4S.
93 J843 AKJT6 J9		842 Q75 9752 T85		Therese took a dim view of her hand, since I might have only 2 small clubs and wasted diamond values, and did not take the opportunity to cue-bid 4D, either first or second round control, but signed off in the spade game.
	AKT5 AK6 Q83 K62			Even if Therese did bid 4D, while I have an easy cue of 4H, it is not clear that I would have got to slam opposite a passed hand, but I have good controls among my 19 HCPs, and this would have given me an interest in slam.
<b>W</b> / 1D /	<b>N</b> / 1S 4S	<b>E</b> / / //	<b>S</b> 1C! 4C!	The board was flat, also played in game at the other table, but while I do not have the datum for the board, I am sure some were in slam.

<b>M 9</b> <b>Bd 2</b> <b>Dir E</b> <b>Vul NS</b>	J982 A2 852 A632			On board 2 in the ninth match we were cut out of the bidding by a pair who appeared not to play negative doubles, and made very light opening bids. East opened in first seat with a very minimum hand, and rebid 1NT when her partner showed a spade suit, and it was my lead!
A754 97 JT3 QT94		Q J865 KQ974 K75		Double dummy I can lead a small heart to Therese, who then leads a spade, setting up 3 spade tricks for us. When I win the DA, I can cash our spades, and Therese can lead a heart, to cash 4 more heart tricks, followed by the CA for 10 tricks!
	KT63 KQT43 A6 J8			Suffice to say that allowing East to make 7 tricks in 1NT for -90 did not earn us any Imps, but 2D can make as EW for the same score.
<b>W</b> 1S!	<b>N</b> /	<b>E</b> 1D 1NT	<b>S</b> 1H //	To make matters worse, NS at the other table found their spade fit and made 9 tricks in spite of the 4-1 break for -140, which totaled up to 6 Imps away.

<b>CF</b>	8			On board 18 in the Mixed Team playoff, West bid to game even though his partner was a passed hand, and how right he was when I made it too difficult for Therese to get the defence right.
<b>Bd 18</b>	QJ92			Therese led the DA and I showed an odd number, so she switched to the HQ, which I thought I encouraged when declarer won the HA in hand.
<b>Dlr E</b>	AK64			
<b>Vul NS</b>	QT97			Declarer now led a club up to dummy and when the CK was wrong, he should have gone 1 down, but I led back diamond, not a heart, and declarer won the third diamond on the table to pull the trumps.
AQT763		K94		On the next few trumps I pitched a heart and held on to my CJ, but on the last spade Therese thought she was squeezed in clubs and hearts and pitched another heart, setting up the H7 in dummy as the 10 <sup>th</sup> trick for -420.
A54		K76		
J72	J52	Q83		At the other table Karen and Sheila wisely stopped in 3S and made just 9 tricks, but that was 7 Imps away to reduce our winning margin in the final to just 2 Imps.
4	T83	K852		
	T95			
	AJ63			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
1S	X	/	/	
4S	//	3S	/	