

2016 BBC Teams of Three by Richard Wallis

The December Teams of Three were scheduled to be hosted by KBC again, but venue problems caused it to be transferred to BBC, which turned out to be advantageous, as the number of teams increased to 34.

These were subdivided into A grade (12 teams all above 105 MPs), B grade (12 teams all between 23 and 105 MPs), and C grade (10 teams, all below 23 MPs). The format was Swiss style of 6 matches each of 8 boards using a live draw, which generally allowed time for discussion between matches of the boards of interest.

In A grade there was a ding dong battle between teams 1, 2 & 3, with each of us winning against one and losing against the other, to all finish 5 0 1, but team 3 (Neville Francis, Anne Barry, Jenny Hay and Camille Henry) did the best in the other matches to win from team 2 (Andy Hung, Tilley Thillainathan, Colleen Sobey and Ross Curran) with my team (Lesleigh Egan, Lynne Henley and Sheila Wills) in third place.

In B grade team 2 (Byron Longford, David Edwards, Rita Fatseas and Hugh Robinson) came down from Toowoomba and swept all before them to win all 6 matches from team 11 (Richard Ward, Jennifer Finigan, Mary Simon and Bill Larcombe) with team 6 (Jim Evans Gary Gibbards, Debbie Gibbards and Peter Finney) in third place.

In C grade team 1 (Therese Tully, Susan Sharp, Andrew Sharp and Peter Allingham) were runaway winners, over a match in front of team 7 (Carolyn Woolley, Fenna Cooper, Sandra Aring and Ian Sobing), with team 2 (Normand Maclaurin, Heather Todd, John Todd and Clare Gleeson) in third place.

This is meant to be a fun day and also a learning experience, and generally I think this was the order of the day, with very few calls for the Director other than routine leads out of turn etc. As is the norm for any congress nowadays, BBC provided us with plenty to eat and drink throughout the day, culminating in a BBQ high tea during prize giving.

M 1	A84			On board 4 in the first match Lesleigh had a number of options after I bid 1 S in response to her 1H opening bid, with her doubleton club, a raise to 2S would be in order, but she wisely chose to rebid 2D and see what I bid next.
Bd 4	A8752			
Dir W	AKJ			
Vul All	T4			
J6		KQT5		My 2NT rebid showed a club stop, was invitational and denied 5 spades, so she passed, and West led the unbid suit, but made the unusual lead of the C9! If she was to accept, 3S on the way to 3NT offers 4S.
KJ3		Q94		
Q87		T9654		
Q9876		2		
	9732			This looked promising to me until the CT won the first trick, so my club suit was not destined for even 4 tricks! Next I turned my attention to hearts, and led the H2 from the table at trick 2.
	T6			
	32			
	AKJ53			West won the HJ and switched to the D7, which I won with the DA on the table to clear the hearts, taking a total of 3 hearts, 3 clubs, 2 diamonds and 1 spade for 9 tricks and +150.
W	N	E	S	
/	1H	/	1S	
/	2D	/	2NT	
//				At the other table North did raise spades, but NS got too high, and 3S had no play, finishing 1 off for 6 Imps to us.

M 2 J86
Bd 12 AT762
Dir W 84
Vul NS KQ5
 T53 AQ9742
 J53 984
 JT953 AQ7
 JT 8

 K
 KQ
 K62
 A976432

W **N** **E** **S**
 / / 1S 2C
 / 2H 2S 3C
 / 3S / 4C
 //

On board 12 in the second match I had no easy rebid, hence the pass on the first round, but when Lesleigh overcalled 2C, I was certainly interested in game, and thus showed my 5-card heart suit.

When 3C denied 3 hearts, I next tried for 3NT with a 3S cuebid, but the singleton SK, while adequate on the actual hand, was too hard to assess as a stopper, so Lesleigh retreated to 4C.

Even discounting the wasted SK, maybe with the extra club she had enough to go to 5C, but my hand alone should have a play for 11 tricks in clubs, so I should have raised to game.

West dutifully led the ST, which may have given East the wrong count in spades, but East rose with the SA and returned the C8, won on the table.

There are 11 easy tricks and we duly chalked up +150, losing just to the DA and SA.

At the other table the contract was also 4C but somehow a trick disappeared, so -130 was worth 1 Imp.

M 3 976
Bd 18 KJ72
Dir E A92
Vul NS 954
 AJ53 KT82
 A4 T983
 KJT7 853
 AJ7 86

 Q4
 Q65
 Q64
 KQT32

W **N** **E** **S**
 1NT // / /

On board 18 in the third match EW were apparently playing a 16-18 1NT, and East had no reason to bid over that, so it was my lead.

I led the H2, on which declarer played the H8 and Lynne played the HQ, but declarer did not take into account dummy's heart holding and ducked!

Worse was to come as declarer miss-guessed the spade suit by playing to the ST next and Lynne won and returned a heart for me to cash out the suit, on which declarer discarded a club and a diamond.

On my 4th heart Lynne played an encouraging C2, so declarer's club discard was crucial as when declarer cashed out the spades and finessed the DJ, we were able to cash out for 2 off and +100.

At the other table, playing a 15-17 1NT opening, the opening bid was 1D and the final contract was 3SW, making 10 tricks for another +170 and 7 Imps.

M 3 5
Bd 24 AJ4
Dir W KQ963
Vul Nil QT63
 K73 T9862
 QT72 K95
 JT 542
 K754 J3

 AQJ4
 863
 A87
 A98

W **N** **E** **S**
 / 1D / 1S
 X 2C / 3D
 / 3NT //

Board 24 in the third match was critical for our final chances and I took my mind off the job and went off in a cold contract, which ultimately cost us second place.

In response to West's double, or maybe in spite of it, East led the H5, which gave me many possible lines for 9 tricks, especially if I lost a trick to East to protect my HJ.

To make it harder for EW, when I confirmed the diamond break, I cashed out the diamonds, but this squeezed dummy as well as EW, and I let go a club and a spade.

I am still okay if I next take the spade finesse, which I expected to lose, but sets up the 9th trick, but I played the CA and C9, won by East who returned the HT, but even though I ducked, East won the spade switch and cashed a heart for 1 off. I had tricks in clubs, but no way to get to them.

At the other table declarer made no mistake and we lost 10 Imps

M 4 AJT63
Bd 5 8743
Dir N K853
Vul NS -
 K7 98
 A65 KJT9
 A9 64
 KJ9863 AT542
 Q542
 Q2
 QJT72
 Q7
W N E S
 / / / /
 1C 1S 2C 2S
 3C 3S //

On board 5 in the fourth match I had great distribution, although a few points short of an opening bid, but when West opened 1C in 4th seat, I had two options, double, or show my good 5-card spade suit.

I lucked in when Lynne had 4-card support and raised, but swap her major suits around, and double may have worked out better.

EW found their club fit, but subsided when I rebid 3S, possibly worried that there may be 10 tricks available in spades, since the 2C raise is normally a 5-card suit, so West knew they had a 6-5 fit.

East led the CA and with diamonds 2-2 and the spade finesse working, I had no trouble making 10 tricks for +170.

At the other table, it was NS that gave up and allowed Lesleigh and Sheila to play in 3C, making 11 tricks on a heart guess, so another +150 and 8 Imps.

5C is 50%, but the best line is to cash the HA and finesse through North, as it can be repeated, but this will lead to only 10 tricks.

M 4 3
Bd 8 KT9654
Dir W KJ
Vul Nil T652
 Q85 K762
 QJ72 A8
 92 A8764
 K874 AQ
 AJT94
 3
 QT53
 J93
W N E S
 / 2H X //

On board 8 in the fourth match I opened with a weak 2H, and East doubled, which I assumed was for take-out, but when West passed, I asked about the double and West explained that the double was for penalty!

East led the S2, and when dummy tracked it was obvious that I had to make as many tricks as possible with my small trumps, as well as set up some diamond tricks.

EW lost their way so much that East ruffed the third round of clubs and later on I was able to ruff a club in dummy with the H3, eventually finishing up with 7 tricks for 1 down and -100.

Since I had not seen all the hands, this looked okay, but unfortunately EW cannot make anything above the 2-level, and -50 from the other table meant 4 Imps out.

M 5 92
Bd 16 875
Dir W AJ54
Vul EW QJT4
 J86 KT743
 T9642 AJ
 K3 Q962
 985 32
 AQ5
 KQ3
 T87
 AK76
W N E S
 / / / 1C
 / 1D / 2NT
 / 3NT //

On board 16 in the fifth match I had the strength for a 1NT response, but with all of my values in the minors, I responded 1D, hoping Sheila could rebid Notrumps to protect her major suit holdings, and she exceeded my hopes by jumping to 2NT, showing a balanced 18-19.

Since the strong hand was concealed, I had no hesitation in raising to 3NT with my 8-count, and West led the H4.

Sheila won the HK at trick 2 and carefully negotiated the diamond suit for 3 tricks, took the spade finesse successfully, and finished with 11 tricks in all for +460.

At the other table NS must have been playing a 16-18 1NT opening bid, as this bid was passed out. Opposite a maximum of 18 HCPs in South's hand North is marginal for an invitation, with not even a 5-card suit to offer declarer, but this time an invitation would have been accepted and the game would have made.

That was -150 and 7 Imps.

M 6 9
Bd 17 AJT763
Dir N AQJ96
Vul Nil 9
 AJT7643 KQ85
 K 95
 - 542
 T7643 AKQ2
 2
 Q842
 KT873
 j85
W N E S
 1H / 2H
 2S 4H 4S /
 S 5D / 5H
 6H //

On board 17 in the sixth match I was not to be denied with my shapely hand and poor defence. Once Sheila showed a simple raise I decided that EW were likely to have a game on and that I would do my best to play the hand.

This could have been wrong on a number of fronts. My hearts and diamonds may be sitting over West, so that game does not make, or worse still, they may be worthless, with a slam on for EW.

To my surprize nobody doubled and when dummy tracked, I could see at least that I was right about 5S making, so I could not go wrong in 6H. East did not shift to a diamond at trick 2, so I was just 1 down when I cashed the HA and the HK appeared, for -50.

At the other table the bidding was similar up to 5S, but then NS kept quiet, maybe even suspecting from the bidding that 6S was on for EW.

The 7-5 distribution with West, matching perfectly with East's black suit holdings, made 6S easy, but too difficult to bid and +480 was worth 10 Imps.

M 6 KT7
Bd 23 KJ3
Dir S QT763
Vul All T6
 Q964 J
 AT9852 Q76
 82 J9
 9 AKQJ852
 A8532
 4
 AK54
 743
W N E S
 / 1D 2C /
 / / 3C 2S
 // // 3D

On board 23 in the sixth match I opened light in 3rd seat when Sheiia passed, although looking at the hand later, I would have opened 1S with her hand.

When Sheila showed her spade suit over the 2C overcall, I was glad of my support, but had no reason to raise, and then when she showed me her diamonds over the 3C rebid by East, I passed, preferring to play in the safer 5-4 fit.

East cashed the top clubs and switched to the H6, and West won the HA and got too aggressive, by switching to the S9, which I covered, and after drawing trumps a spade finesse gave me 10 tricks for +130.

At the other table NS played in 3S, but the North hand was forced to ruff the 3rd club and now there were 2 spade losers for 1 off.

Maybe South did open 1S at the other table, and repeated club bids by East pushed North to 3S.

The aggregate score was thus +230, for 6 Imps to us.