

2017 Arana SwissTeams by Richard Wallis

Ian Halford and I have been playing in the Arana Teams on the first Sunday in June with Ralph Parker and John Mills for many years now without success, until this year! We hit the front early on and finished without a loss, to win comfortably. The most unusual hand was board 31 in the last match where I had a solid 9-card club suit (A to 9) and both red-suit doubletons, ready to get into the action, but there was no action and I was left out on a limb by 3 passes to me!

Second place went to Sue O'Brien, Paul Collins, Carmel Martin and Toni Bardon, with Paul Roberts, Bruce Carroll, Elizabeth and Neil Gibson in third place, comfortably ahead of fourth place.

John and Ralph also finished on top in the Pairs Datums, with Nik Moore and Abby Wanigaratne a close second.

This event continues to be popular, with 30 teams on Sunday at around the capacity of the room, and as the Arana BC treat us all to the copious amounts of fruit, biscuits and cakes throughout the day, who needs to also bring lunch?

M 1	98				On board 4 in the first match North made a simple overcall of 1H instead of a jump to 2H, probably influenced by the Vulnerability, and our auction was able to proceed naturally to a logical conclusion.
Bd 4	KT7643				
Dir W	A976				
Vul All	9				North led the H6 and Ian won the trick in dummy with the HQ, and attacked diamonds, our best fit. North ducked the DQ possibly looking for a signal, and was eventually forced to win the DA and switched to the C9, probably as a result of South's signal.
T5		AKJ3			
AJ5		Q8			
Q5		KJT843			
AQJ853		4			South has something in clubs, but surely a signal for a spade switch makes more sense considering the bidding
	Q7642				3NT is never going to be defeated, even with a passive spade lead at trick 1, but the club switch increased the trick tally to 11, and when South in-advisably played the CK, there were 12 tricks for +690.
	92				
	2				
	KT762				
W	N	E	S		
1C	1H	2D	/		I did not get the bidding at the other table, but it stopped inexplicably in just 3D, which made just 10 tricks for -130 and 11 Imps.
2NT	/	3S	/		
3NT	//				
M 2	K9873				On board 10 in the second match North made a Stayman inquiry when South opened 1NT, and his 3H rebid showed 5 spades and 4 hearts, so he assumed that South had only 2 spades after the 3NT rebid.
Bd 10	KQ98				
Dir E	A2				
Vul All	KJ				North had not given up on slam however, and made a final try with a quantitative raise to 4NT, which South declined.
T2		A54			
J5		T732			South is exactly in the middle of his 1NT range, and elected not to accept the slam invitation because of his 3343 shape, which is also the reason he declined to play in 4S with his 3-card support for North's spades.
8753		J94			North has 16 HCPs, and opposite 15 in the South hand he wants to stay out of slam, but with 17, 6NT is a better chance.
QT762		853			However, if North knew about the spade fit, he would have used RKCB to check on the Key cards, and the 5S response would have led to 6S, which was the result at the other table,
	QJ6				That was 12 Imps to our side when 6S was cold.
	A64				
	KQT6				
	A94				
W	N	E	S		
/	2C	/	1NT		
/	3H!	/	2D		
/	4NT	//	3NT		

M 3 K3
Bd 17 T6
Dir N A8643
Vul Nil KQJ7
 85 AQ6
 AK8 Q9532
 J75 KQ92
 AT654 2
 JT9742
 J74
 T
 983
W N E S
 1D 1H /
 2D 3C 4H //

On board 17 in the third match I made a simple overcall of the 1D opening, although my strongest suit was diamonds. Ian cuebid 2D, to show a good raise in hearts, and I gladly jumped to game.

South led the DT and I tried to avoid the impending ruff by dropping the DK under the DA, but North was not to be fooled and South ruffed the diamond return. However via the marked spade finesse and the now 2-2 heart break, I had the rest of the tricks for 11 tricks and +450.

At the other table East was strangely reticent, and passed over the 1D opening, but came to life with 2NT when South passed the 1D opening, West balanced with 2C, and North doubled (?).

This was the final contract, as West was no doubt influenced by the failure of East to act initially, but since South had no reason to lead the C9, and even then there are 9 tricks, declarer also made 11 tricks, but only -210, so we gained 6 Imps.

M 3 AJT2
Bd 18 54
Dir E JT54
Vul NS K65
 9654 K83
 Q6 AKJ9872
 72 -
 AQT92 843
 Q7
 T3
 AKQ9863
 J7
W N E S
 4H //

On board 18 in the third match the vulnerability was in my favour and I took full advantage by opening 4H and leaving the final decision to NS.

NS have nowhere to go, as 5DX goes for +500, and South wisely passed, as did North, and South led the DA.

I have an easy time on the actual layout, but I did not know everything was so friendly. I need 1 club honour on side, but cashed the CA, so I would not lose to a stiff honour offside and drew trumps to lead a club towards dummy, hoping to see the CK pop up, but the CJ was almost as good, so I covered and North won the CK and did not put me to the test with a small spade, instead leading a diamond.

I was able to get to dummy with a club and discard 2 spades for 11 tricks and +450.

At the other table East opened only 1H, and left South in 4D, which went 1 off for -100 and 8 Imps.

M 4 T8
Bd 6 KJ9762
Dir E 943
Vul EW J4
 A432 KQ96
 8 QT53
 K76 A5
 AKQT3 987
 J75
 A4
 QJT82
 652
W N E S
 1S / 1C /
 4NT / 2S /
 6S // 5S /

On board 6 in the fourth match I opened as East with a very minimum hand, but I thought it was strengthened by holding both majors and with a simple 1C opening available. However I was very pleased to see Ian respond in one of the majors!

I would not have been keen to open the East hand with 4 diamonds and 1 club on such minimum values, as a 2C response from Ian would be difficult to deal with, although a 2NT rebid after 2C is often just equivalent to a weak 1NT opening..

A simple raise to 2S prompted a RKCB 4NT rebid by Ian, and when I showed 2 Key Cards and the SQ, Ian bid the slam.

North led the H2, which seems an odd choice from a 6-card suit, but the slam was never in doubt when clubs and spades were both friendly, so we scored up +1430.

At the other table EW did not get to slam and -680 there was worth 13 Imps.

M 5	Q86			On board 14 in the fifth match I made a normal 1D opening bid and South aggressively bid 4H, which was passed back to me.
Bd 14	952			
Dir E	72			I doubled to show values, without any great conviction, and Ian bid 4S which was passed back to South, who went against normal advice to a pre-empter when she bid again!
Vul Nil	AJ542			
9543		AKJ		
64		3		4S has no chance if South forces dummy to ruff, as then a trump must be lost as well as 2 clubs.
KJ3		AQ8654		
T983		Q76		
	T72			Ian did not double, and when it came back to me I expected 5H to go off, but could not guarantee it, so I was content to have got them up to the 5-level!
	AKQJT87			
	T9			
	K			Ian led the D3 and I won the DA, cashed the SK, and returned a diamond, allowing Ian to lead a spade though dummy for 5 tricks and 3 off undoubled!
W	N	E	S	
/	/	1D	4H	
4S	/	X	/	This was a lost opportunity, as +500 was available, or even +300 if Ian passes 4HX, but NS had a complete mix-up at the other table and allowed John to make 4H, so we gained 11 Imps after all.
//	/	/	5H	

M 6	KQ65			On board 18 in the sixth match I was all set to transfer to 2H after Ian opened 1NT, when North intervened with 2D, to show both majors!
Bd 18	Q972			
Dir E	AJ			To my surprize, South bid 2H, which was passed out, and mindful of South's likely spade shortage, Ian led the H5, won perforce by South.
Vul NS	K63			
AJT4		932		South has a lot of work to do to make 8 tricks, although Deep Finesse suggests it is possible, but South started off badly by finessing the DJ at trick 2, instead of leading the DQ, forcing Ian to duck, which allows declarer to next lead a spade to dummy, and another spade after winning the next heart.
J5		T8643		
K652		43		
AQ7		T92		
	87			A club will always be won eventually, thus 2 spades, 3 hearts, 2 diamonds and 1 club comes to 8 tricks.
	AK			
	QT987			At the other table, East did get to bid hearts, and 2HE became the final contract. Since NS can make 8 tricks in hearts, it is no surprize that East failed in her contract, making only 6 tricks. Thus +100 at both table amounted to 5 Imps.
	J854			
W	N	E	S	
1NT	2D!	/	/	
//	/	/	2H	

M 7	AKT85			On board 31 in the seventh match I had a very unusual hand, a solid 9-card suit.
Bd 31	T874			
Dir S	6542			Expecting fireworks in the bidding culminating in my bidding 5C, I was very surprized when there were three passes to me!
Vul NS	-			
Q432		-		Obviously I could have passed as well, and commonsense suggested this, but how many times are you dealt a solid 9-card suit?
KQ96		J5		
QT983		J7		Opening 3C with 9 tricks is unthinkable and 4C a bit wimpy, and I could not bring myself to pass, so I opened 5C and everyone passed.
		AKQJT9643		
	J976			At the other table the contract was 5CEX, which also went 1 off, so we gained 2 Imps. If I had passed, we would have gained 3 Imps, so an inexpensive whim.
	A32			
	AK			Game in spades can be made, but only one NS declared and that was in hearts, going off, and others were all in clubs, mostly 5C, 2 making.
	8732			
W	N	E	S	
/	/	5C	/	
	/		//	