

2016 South West Pacific Teams by Richard Wallis

After our happy times and moderate success in 2015, Therese Tully and I teamed up with Karen Creet and Sheila Bird again for the SWP teams in Canberra, consisting of 12/20-board matches played over Monday to Thursday. Alas we did not emulate our 2015 result of the Mixed teams title, finishing in a disappointing 45th place.

We started out well, winning our first 3 matches, including match 3 against Lorenz (team 4), but Buchen brought us back to earth in match 4 with a maximum loss. Small wins and small losses followed until a big win in match 11 had us poised for a good finish, but the luck of the draw went against us when we drew Hans (team 3) for the final match following their heavy loss to Lavassa (team 1) in match 11. Lavassa was the eventual overall winner.

We were not beaten by the maximum, but it was a shame to finish on a bad loss after some good results. The win by Hans was not enough to put them back into the top 8, and even a maximum win against us would not have changed their position in the field. Our final tally, of 7 wins, 1 draw and 4 losses was respectable, but we were just under 19 VPs out of a qualifying spot.

M 1	A8			On board 15 in the first match Therese opened a natural 1D in third seat and East over-called a natural 1NT.
Bd 15	T63			
Dir S	Q9764			However, to my mind, the hand has a little too much potential for a 1NT over-call. 18 HCPs and a good 5-card suit make this a little better than a normal 1NT over-call.
Vul NS	A83			My 2C was Stayman showing both majors, and Therese denied a 4-card major, so I bid 2H, expecting Therese to convert 2S holding 3 spades and 2 hearts.
Q76		K53		
954		A2		
832		AK5		
Q976		KJT64		West led the C6, and I won in dummy and immediately played SA and S8, to set up a ruff.
	JT942			Since spades and hearts were both friendly, I had no trouble making 9 tricks for +140. Even on an initial trump lead 9 tricks can be made with careful play..
	KQJ87			At the other table Sheila and Karen bought the hand in 3C, which also made 9 tricks for +110, so we gained 6 Imps.
	JT			
	2			
W	N	E	S	
/	1D	1NT	/	
/	2D	/	2C	
//			2H	

M 1	A72			On board 19 in the first match Therese has 2 possibilities when I opened with a 20-22 2NT, a minor suit fit, or a 5-3 spade fit, both with slam potential.
Bd 19	3			
Dir S	K9732			She elected to check on the 5-card spade suit with 3C, and when I showed only 1 (or maybe 2) 4-card major, she hoped we had enough in hearts and signed off in 3NT.
Vul EW	QT76			West led the C8 and the fall of both minor suit Jacks on the first round made 12 tricks a formality and we quickly wrote down +490 for a flat board.
95		QT864		
J9		QT8542		
A64		J		
985432		J		While 6NT would have been a lucky make her other option would have been to investigate a minor suit slam by bidding 3S over 2NT, and this would have hit the jackpot.
	KJ3			
	AK76			
	QT85			
	AK			
W	N	E	S	
/	3C!	/	2NT	Slam in diamonds only needs the 2-2 break or a favourable diamond position, and in any case, 5D will be safer if my hand does not have such good heart stops,
/	3NT	//	3D	

M 2 K9642
Bd 5 AJ8
Dir N 63
Vul NS A82
 QJT875
 -
 A87
 9754

 3
 K6542
 KQ92
 JT6

W N E S
 1S 2H //

The bidding on board 5 in the second match was over very quickly, when East put all of his eggs in one basket by over-calling 2H rather than doubling for take-out.

After my automatic pass, I was thinking about whether I was going to pass Therese's expected take-out double, probably not since my pips were bad, and I was surprized when 2H was passed out.

It all became clear when dummy tracked, as Therese was marked with 2 or 3 hearts. East had no chance in 2H, eventually finishing 3 down for +150, while a frustrated West looked on!

At the other table our East did double for take-out, which West was happy to pass, and this went 2 off for +500 and 12 Imps. It looks like EW should make more than 8 tricks in a spade contract, but East is end-played at trick 1 and even Deep Finesse cannot do any better.

M 2 652
Bd 19 KJ6
Dir S J3
Vul EW AK542
 T873
 A6
 T94
 JT86

 AQJ4
 9432
 A86
 Q9

W N E S
 / 2C! / 1C
 / 2H! / 2D!
 / 3NT // 2S!

On board 19 in the second match we had an artificial inverted minor auction to 3NT played by Therese, where I showed 11-13 and no shortage.

EW were silent throughout and luckily for us, East led the D5, which Therese won in hand with the DJ!

Therese took the spade finesse, and tested the clubs finding the 4-2 break, and eventually fell back on a heart to the HK for the ninth trick and +400.

At the other table I do not have the auction, possibly a 12-14 1NT opening by South, but South was declarer on 3NT, and the lead of the DT gave declarer no chance, and he finished 2 off for +100 and 11 Imps.

Interesting, on the layout it does not help East to lead the DK as this blocks the suit, and Deep Finesse has both North and South making 9 tricks in 3NT, but that is double-dummy.

M 3 832
Bd 12 T75
Dir W K8742
Vul NS 65
 AJ96
 83
 J65
 AK84

 Q4
 J42
 AQ3
 QJT93

 KT75
 AKQ96
 T9
 72

W N E S
 1C / 1NT! X
 XX / / 2H
 / / X //

On board 12 in the third match EW were playing relays after 1C, and 1NT denied a major suit and showed clubs, so I doubled for take-out.

I did not find out what the redouble meant, probably confirming clubs as well, or looking for penalties.

I think the double by East of my 2H was based on power,, since my suit is pretty good.

The opening lead was the CA, and then West switched to a trump, making the HT in dummy an entry to dummy when East played the HJ on the first round of trumps.

When I next led the DT towards dummy, West covered and East won the DA and led another trump.

Now the crucial point in the contract had been reached as I next led the D9, which East gave a lot of thought to before winning the DQ and returning a trump! +670 with +400 for 5C making at the other table was 14 Imps.

M 3 7
Bd 19 K954
Dir S AQ53
Vul EW Q532
 J854 AQT963
 QJT732 8
 96 8
 4 T9876

K2
 A6
 KJT742
 AKJ

W	N	E	S
/	1H	3S	1D
4S	5D	//	3NT

We missed a good chance on board 19 in the third match and a good slam went begging.

I thought I had shown the strength of my hand as 18-19 by my 3NT rebid over 3S by East, and that Therese was showing good support for my known 4+ diamond suit.

I am not sure how she saw it, I think she also thought she was showing a good hand. For diamonds.

It is a bit of a guessing game when opponents bid the the 4-level against such announced strength at adverse vulnerability, but 4S only goes 1 off, as the heart suit can be easily set up for discards.

West led the HQ and when East could not ruff, it was a quick claim for 12 tricks and +420, all the while looking like 11 Imps out the window.

Nothing is certain, except death and taxes, and at the other table there was some confusion and NS stopped in 4D, also making 12 tricks so we gained 6 Imps.

M 4 K7
Bd 9 J52
Dir N 84
Vul EW KQJ986
 AJ953 Q4
 - KT83
 JT3 AKQ52
 T7432 A5

T962
 AQ9764
 976

W	N	E	S
3S	3C	X	/
	/	3NT	//

On board 9 in match 4 Therese opened 3C at favourable Vulnerability, and East had a good hand and doubled for take-out in case West had 4 hearts. When West responded 3S East bid 3NT, although Ax in the key suit gave him little room to protect against the club suit.

If I had even 1 club to lead, East would have had no chance, since Therese has a spade entry, but I had to hope for something good in hearts in Therese's hand, and led the H6.

Therese had the HJ and now I only needed her to get in to have a good chance of taking 3NT off, but declarer stopped to think about whether to take the trick and finally ducked!

A heart back gave me the H9 and when Therese won the SQ at trick 3, another heart back gave us all of the hearts and 7 tricks in all for 3 off and +300.

At the other table 5DE failed by a trick so we gained 5 Imps.

M 4 T83
Bd 19 KQJ8
Dir S 9432
Vul EW 76
 75 QJ64
 T64 A9
 KQT75 A
 Q54 KJT932

AK92
 7532
 J86
 A8

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

On board 19 in match 4 the bidding started normally, but went off the rails when East balanced with a double after 2H was passed back to him, and the 3D response from West backed him into a corner.

I did not analyze the situation carefully enough before making my opening lead, and thought I would surprize him with an unexpected spade lead, instead of the heart lead he was expecting!

Since East did not double over 1H, he is only balancing with the second-round double, so is not likely to be strong, and since he pulled 3D to 3NT, he must had 4 spades to double in the first place.

All in all it should have been obvious for me to lead a heart, and that would have led to a 2 trick defeat, instead of declarer making 12 tricks when I did not cash the top spades after the CA.

If I had held 3 clubs I had a chance, but even then the spade lead would have given declarer 1 spade, 1 heart, 5 diamonds and 2 clubs. -690 was 13 Imps away against -140 from a heart contract at the other table.

M 5 K
Bd 20 AT43
Dir W K932
Vul All 7632
754 82
J7 K9852
AQT6 J7654
QJ54 T

 AQJT963
 Q6
 -
 AK98

W **N** **E** **S**
/ / / 2C!
/ 2D! / 4S
/ 4NT / 5S
/ 6S //

On board 20 in the fifth match I did not want to take the chance that 1S would be passed out, especially since Therese was already a passed hand, and I was too strong to open 4S, so I opened with an artificial 2C, intending to next jump to 4S to show my limited ambitions.

The 2D response showed at least 1 King, and with the trumps King as well as an extra Ace, Therese could hardly be expected to stay out of slam, but the DK was of no use to me, even if West had led the DA.

Since I showed good spades, West played safe by leading a trump, and I could see just 1 chance other than miss-defence, and that was split honours in hearts, and West to be squeezed between hearts and the DA or any 4 clubs.

Accordingly, I won the SK and led a diamond from the table, in case West played the DA, drew trumps and ran the HQ to East, who returned a diamond..

I then cashed all of my trumps and top diamonds keeping the hearts, but West was not squeezed, 1 off and a flat board.

M 6 T954
Bd 9 KJT95
Dir N AQ62
Vul EW -
- AKJ7
A8763 Q4
K94 JT83
AKJT5 983

 Q8632
 2
 75
 Q7642

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

On board 9 in the sixth match I got a little frisky because of my good shape, and then when 2C was bid on my left and supported on my right, I knew Therese had a void, so competed again with 3S and Therese raised to game.

East did not double, and West led the CA, ruffed on the table, and my chances did not look good! First was the heart finesse, and if I had the HA I relied on East not covering, so I led the HJ off the table and luckily East did not cover, so West won the HA and led a diamond.

I did not need the diamond finesse any more so rose with the DA and discarded my diamond on the HK and ruffed a diamond. A club and diamond ruff sets up the DQ on the table and another club ruff gets me to dummy, where I led the HT, which East ruffed with the SK, while I discarded a club, but he was endplayed! On his diamond exit I threw my last club, and was able to trump-coup him by leading a heart off the table +420, versus 2SS +50 at the other table for 10 Imps.

M 7 AKJ8732
Bd 4 95
Dir W 9876
Vul All -
QT4 5
QJ876 AKT
A2 QT543
J98 Q654

 96
 432
 KJ
 AKT732

W **N** **E** **S**
1H 3S X /
3NT //

On board 4 in the seventh match Therese tempered her enthusiasm by only overcalling 3S with the North cards, and West made a negative double, since West had only shown a 4-card suit, and West had a shot at 3NT.

Declarer won the lead of the D9 and had no place to look for 9 tricks, eventually making just 5 hearts and 1 diamond for 3 off and +300.

Even if West had shown a 5-card heart suit with the opening bid, 4H has no play either.

I gave some thought to bidding 4S over 3NT, since I have a few tricks and a spade finesse is marked, but for the same reason I decided to take my chances in 3NT.

At the other table North did bid 4S over 1H, but did not have the advantage of a 3NT response, so even though she guessed the diamond position, she did not finesse the SJ, and +100 was 9 Imps.

M 7 -
Bd 8 AK64
Dir W KQ9843
Vul Nil A64
 AKQT 6543
 Q985 72
 - J652
 KJT9 Q75

 J9872
 J3
 AT7
 832

W N E S
 1C 2D / 2D
 X 2H / 3D
 / 4D //

On board 8 in the seventh match we played North and South instead of the other way around, and I was very interested in game when Therese supported my simple diamond overcall.

My 2H rebid was an attempt to show a good hand and shape, but Therese had such poor values that she was not interested. A 3S cuebid after 3D would have been forward-going, but it was not clear whether it showed or asked for a spade stopper.

When dummy tracked it looked like we had missed an easy game, as after the S5 was led, I could ruff a couple of hearts and expected to make 6 diamonds, 2 hearts, 1 club and 2 ruffs for 11 tricks.

How nice it was when the diamond suit broke 4-0 and 11 tricks became just 10!

The other table did get to 5D, so we gained 4 Imps, but 3NT is cold, even if I am declarer, as the diamond finesse is easily discoverable, and there are only 9 total tricks.

M 8 AQJ73
Bd 15 -
Dir S KQ987
Vul NS 872
 K64 982
 KJT53 Q42
 63 T2
 QT5 AKJ93

 T5
 A9876
 AJ54
 64

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

On board 15 in the eighth match I was having a quiet doze and running on autopilot when Therese bid 3D after my negative double, and I failed to even make a game try by bidding 4D, whereas it would not have been far out of place to bid 5D myself.

East led the CK and switched to a heart, and now Therese was able to draw trumps, take the spade finesse and wrap up 12 tricks for +170.

As a passed hand I could have bid 2H over 1S, and Therese would likely now introduce her diamond suit freely, which would definitely get a raise from my hand, but it is not certain Therese would accept, given her heart void may not fit well with my announced 5-card suit.

In the bidding, it is hard to judge a void opposite your partner's long suit, in this hand, opposite only the Ace, it is usefull, but other honours would likely be wasted.

At the other table NS subsided in just 2S, losing 3 tricks for a matching -170 and a flat board.

M 8 742
Bd 20 53
Dir W AK8742
Vul All K2
 QT86 KJ5
 T9876 J2
 6 93
 987 AQT643

 A93
 AKQ4
 QJT5
 J5

W N E S
 / 2D / 3NT
 //

On board 20 in the eighth match Therese opened with a weak 2D, and since I had both majors stopped and good diamond support, I took a shot at 3NT.

West had nothing to guide his opening lead, and luckily for me he selected a very reasonable H9 (underleading).

I cashed my 9 tricks finishing with the hearts in hand and East made it obvious that he had the clubs well held, so a club to dummy was not going to work, so I cashed the SA and exited with a spade and since she had only the stiff SK left, East had to give me a club at the end for 11 tricks and +660.

At the other table North played in 5D, but except on the CA opening lead, this has not chance, and another +100 made it 13 Imps.

Of course, if West had been psychic and led a club, I would have lost the first 6 tricks and -200 would be 3 Imps away.

M 9 7
Bd 1 63
Dir N KQ9864
Vul Nil QT93
 982 QT64
 98 AKQJT7
 AJ3 T
 K8752 A4
 AKJ53
 542
 752
 J6
W N E S
 / / 1H 1S
 1NT! / 4H //

On board 1 in the ninth match EW were playing one of those 'guess-what' systems where a 1NT response does not show a stopper in the suit called by the opposition.

Apparently it was still 'system-on' with the forcing 1NT response to a major suit opening, and East bid a reasonable 4H, although 3NT would have been a better choice, IF West had not bid 1NT.

In 4H, I could cash 2 spades and give Therese a ruff, but dummy's hearts are just too big, and we could not stop declarer from ruffing the last spade. If I lead trumps, EW have the spade pips to force a 10th trick by force in my own suit.

At the other table NS had a bidding malfunction when North opened 3D South bid 3S, but Karen and Sheila could not diagnose the extent of malfunction and they played there undoubled!

This silly contract went 5 off, but that was only +250, so we lost 5 Imps.

M 9 QT962
Bd 5 A6
Dir N J2
Vul NS KQ85
 A73 J8
 KT74 J53
 Q983 AK5
 76 AJT42
 K54
 A982
 T764
 93
W N E S
 1S 2C 2S
 X / 3C /
 3NT //

On board 5 in the ninth match EW did a little too much on their minimum non-fitting hands.

Possibly expecting a stronger and longer club suit for the overcall, West mad a negative double after my 2S raise and then took a shot at 3NT with only a single-stopper.

Therese led the S6, although the ST was also possible on that combination, and declarer played the SJ with more hope than conviction and then he ducked spades until the 3rd round.

Since the clubs were not good enough, there was nowhere to go for 9 tricks and declarer finished with only 7, and +100 to us.

At the other table North got to play in 2S and since Deep Finesse suggests that either East or West can make 7 tricks in a spade contract, it is not surprizing that North went 2 off for another +200 and 7 Imps in total.

M 10 AKJ7
Bd 6 -
Dir E AKQT
Vul EW AQJT4
 T65432 Q98
 53 KT9864
 43 85
 653 72
 -
 AQJ72
 J9762
 K98
W N E S
 / / / 1H
 / 1S / 2D
 / 7D! //

On board 6 in the tenth match we had a very short auction to a grand slam in diamonds, and I thought when dummy tracked that we were sure to lose 2 Imps, as 7NT was cold.

It was a bit of a shock when Therese pulled the 7D card out of the box as her second bid, and a moments reflection would have led to the possibility of converting to 7NT, as Therese had to have a void in hearts and pleant of tricks in the side suits, and thus my CK and HA would be a big help.

West led the S2, and when dummy tracked, I did something I rarely do, tabled my cards and said trumps were easy to draw and there were heaps of tricks, to which EW agreed.

Far from losing 2 Imps, we actually gained 11 Imps as NS at the other table stopped in 6D!

Most pairs were in the grand slam, 3 in NT, but enough were only in a small salm to bring the board average down to only 1240.

M 10 KJ6
Bd 11 AT854
Dlr S 732
Vul Nil J6
 A42 T9875
 762 -
 QJ5 KT986
 A532 KT4
 Q3
 KQJ93
 A4
 Q987
W N E S
 / 4H // 1H

On board 11 in the tenth match we had a very short auction to 4H, without giving any clues as to the best opening lead.

Many times with the West hand I would choose to lead the DQ, but it is obvious that a heart lead will not cost a trick, although possibly a tempo!

West did lead the H2, and when I played the H4 from the table, East showed out and I won the first round of trumps with the H4!

This time tempo was lost by the negative trump lead, and I was able to lead spades immediately and establish a discard for my diamond, loser making 10 tricks in all for +420.

At the other table the opening lead to 4HS was the DQ, and there was now no way for declarer to avoid 4 losers, making for 1 down and 10 Imps to us.

M 10 T8
Bd 20 J96
Dlr W A9753
Vul All J32
 AJ73 52
 T543 AK2
 Q64 K82
 65 AK874
 KQ964
 Q87
 JT
 QT8
W N E S
 / / 1C 1S
 1NT / 3NT //

On board 20 in the tenth match I overcalled 1S to suggest a lead and Therese duly obliged in the 3NT contract by leading the ST.

The good thing about teams scoring, is the relative non-importance of overtricks if there is a chance of defeating the contract.

Accordingly when dummy tracked I gave up on my suit and looked for tricks in Therese's hand, which were likely to be in diamonds.

I won the club at trick 4 and led the DJ, covered by declarer and Therese won the DA and paused for thought, eventually exiting with a diamond, ducked in dummy and I was in again.

Following my plan to endplay dummy and keep declarer from getting back to hand, I cashed the SK and exited with a heart, and it looked as if Therese had a heart entry, so I discarded the HQ on the second round of hearts and Therese took the setting trick.

At the other table a diamond was led, so +630 was worth 12 Imps.

M 11 J92
Bd 1 9
Dlr N J862
Vul Nil KJ873
 7 K65
 KQT873 J654
 AQ3 KT7
 A94 Q62
 AQT843
 A2
 954
 T5
W N E S
 / / / 1S
 2H 2S 3H 3S
 4H / / 4S
 //

On board 1 in the eleventh match I did not think we had 4 tricks in a heart contract, and I also thought 4S could not be too expensive, so I bid 4S over 4H bid by a confident West.

To my surprize nobody doubled, so I did not think I could go too far wrong unless the CQ was with West, when 4H was likely to go off unless East had short clubs!

West led the HK and after ruffing the next heart in dummy I successfully took the spade finesse, which gave me 8 tricks with a right guess in clubs for 9.

However, since I had bid 4S over 4H, I played for the clubs in such a way that would allow 4H to make, that is I played for West to have the CA, because on the actual layout 4H is cold, losing just 1 spade, 1 heart and 1 club!

At the other table NS did not compete over 4H, and this made 10 tricks for +420 and 9 Imps. Not every EW played in 4H, as the board average was only -250.

M 12 AJ942
Bd 14 AK7
Dir E T
Vul Nil AQJ9
 T863
 4
 A95
 T8764

Q7
 QJT832
 Q83
 K3

K7
 965
 KJ7642
 52

W	N	E	S
/	X	2H	/
/	3S	/	3D
//			4S

Board 14 in the twelfth match was a difficult hand to evaluate, and when Therese showed a good hand by doubling and bidding 3S over my 3D response, I elected to go for the major suit fit.

East made it easier for Therese by leading the CK, which was just as well since she guessed the diamonds wrong.

Therese won the CA and led the DT to the DK, losing to West, who returned the H4.

Now a spade to the King in dummy and a club off the table before leading the C9, which East ruffed with the SQ, so Therese discarded a heart from dummy.

East now led a heart, which West correctly declined to ruff, so Therese won and ruffed her small heart on the table, over-ruffed by West, but Therese had the rest of the tricks for +420.

At the other table NS played in 3NT which is makeable double-dummy, but not in practice, and it went 3 off for another +150 and 11 Imps.