

2014 Gold Coast Teams by Richard Wallis

The Gold Coast Congress for 2014 was a great success, both in terms of the enjoyment of those that participated, myself included, and the record number of those participants. As usual players came from all around the world, with the majority of overseas players coming from NZ, including over 40 from Christchurch.

Hugh McGann, an Irish International now residing in England with Australia's Fiona Brown, has been coming to the GCC for a few years now, and has made the final of the Open Teams for the last 3 of those years. Hugh's team was runner-up in 2012 and 2013, but finally cracked it for the win in 2014, overcoming the highly fancied Nangang team from China. The mixed-nationality team included Michael Ware and Geo Tislevoll from NZ (although Geo recently moved there from Scandanavia), Tony Nunn and Matthew Thompson from Australia, with Hugh McGann and Fiona Brown from England (although Hugh is Irish and Fiona is Australian).

I played with Tony Jackman, Therese Tully, Wynne Webber and Meta Goodman in the Seniors Teams, where we were sometimes competitive, but not always, and we just managed to finish in the top half of the field. We had a small win in the first match, then our worst loss was to Bloom (Martin Bloom, Nigel Rosendorf, Steven Bock and Les Grewcock) in the second match, and they continued in good form, winning the final by 23 Imps over 48 boards.

We had some good matches, but 6 losses, albeit only 1 by a large margin, was never going to be enough to threaten for a finals spot, especially when half of our 6 wins were modest as well. Nonetheless, it was still a very enjoyable event.

M 1	7			On board 9 in the first match it was essential to right-side a 3NT contract, but if NS found their way to 4H, this could make with careful play.
Bd 9	AKJ75			NS had a normal auction to 2D, but since South did not have a club stop, he 4 th suited with 3C and North became declarer in 3NT.
Dlr N	J765			
Vul EW	KQ4			Now I could make or break the contract with the opening lead, but what would it be? I did not fancy a red suit, and a club did not appeal, so I opted for my spade sequence, in spite of it being dummy's first bid suit.
AK86		JT9		Since North had shown at least 5/4 in the red suits and a club stop, I thought it was likely Therese had spades, so the SJ was less likely to give anything away, and I got luckier than expected.
864		932		
93		QT84		Declarer ducked spades, but we took the first 5 tricks for 1 off and +50 to go with the +400 from 3NT played by South at the other table for 10 Imps.
AT73		982		
	Q5432			
	QT			
	AK2			
	J65			
W	N	E	S	
/	1H	/	1S	
/	2D	/	3C	
/	3NT	//		

M 2 Bd 17 Dlr N Vul Nil	T54 K73 75 KQT95		On board 17 in match 2 I completely messed up the defence after Tony found the lead of the D6, in spite of my 1D opening being artificial (Precision).
Q87 J64 862 8743		K962 AQT KJT94 2	I played the DK and declarer won trick 1 with the DA, cashed the CA and overtook the CJ in dummy, then advanced the ST, which I covered.
	AJ3 9852 AQ3 AJ6		On the run of the clubs I discarded the HT and all of my spades, and thus declarer was able to cash the DQ and endplay me with the D3 to give him the HK for his 9 th trick.
W /	N / 3NT	E 1D! //	S 1NT
			If Tony had been psychic, he could have discarded the H4, and then he will win the third round of diamonds and stop the end-play on me.

M 3 Bd 7 Dlr S Vul All	JT865 K9 J4 QJT4		Pessimism has no place in a teams match, as I found out on board 7 in the third match, when I thought that the hand was a part score.
AK93 A873 AK5 A6		Q QJ54 987632 87	If Tony had a 5-card spade suit, I would have tried 3NT, as my singleton SQ was pulling its full weight, but when he rebid 3D, showing at least one 4-card major, I pessimistically assumed that it was spades, and since I knew we had at least an 8-card fit in diamonds, I took the easy part score, and passed!
	742 T62 QT K9532		The diamonds were very favourable, but Tony had what I did not expect, both 4-card majors, so we had missed and easy slam!
W 2NT 3D	N / //	E 3C	S / /
			At the other table EW did not find their heart fit either, but got to 3NT, and made 12 tricks on a spades lead for -690. That was 11 Imps away, but luckily we still won the match by almost the maximum, so it was not significant.

M 3 Bd 8 Dlr W Vul Nil	JT5 AQ93 T864 76		It is not normally a good idea to advertise your strength to the opposition, especially when you have opened with a limit bid in NT, but on board 8 in the third match I had no choice.
962 T872 AK92 QJ		KQ73 654 QJ AK32	Tony showed a 4-card heart suit after using Stayman and then bidding 3NT over my 2S rebid, and South had no reason to lead anything but the CT, top of a sequence in a 5-card suit.
	A84 KJ 753 T9854		I had a great potential for 9 tricks by way of 4 tricks in each minor and a spade trick, but I could also lose 4 hearts and a spade for 1 off.
W / 2C 3NT	N / / //	E 1NT 2S	S / /
			The major problem was the minor suits were both blocked, and I had to advertise my strength in these suits before losing the lead, making a heart switch more likely.
			I won the club lead on the table and unblocked the diamonds, then back to the CJ to cash the diamonds, discarding 2 spades. A spade to the King showed up 13 of my points, but a club came back and I scored up +400. The hearts were blocked, and I was safe. We still gained 11 Imps when EW went 2 off at the other table.

M 3	AT3			<p>On board 9 in the third match we used one of our gadgets to bid the cold slam in hearts, although 6NT and 6D were also cold.</p> <p>A 2D response to a 1NT opening forces 2H, and this can lead to strong or weak sequences. Passing or re-bidding 2S by responder are both weak. Here, Tony's 3H rebid showed a strong hand with slam interest opposite support, and my 4D was a cue-bid agreeing hearts.</p> <p>Key Card showed we had an Ace missing, so Tony signed off in the small slam, to which South led the S6.</p> <p>If I had the SA instead of the actual holding, 12 tricks in hearts is still the limit of the hand, but 7D is a good grand slam.</p> <p>There was nothing in the play and I quickly claimed 12 tricks for +1430.</p> <p>From my viewpoint this was likely to be a flat board, but at the other table EW did not bid the slam, and played in 3NT, so we gained a lucky 12 Imps. Maybe it was unlucky, as if EW had played in 4H, it would have been +13 Imps, and with the new VP scale, every Imp counts.</p>
Bd 9	983			
Dlr N	532			
Vul EW	Q876			
42		KQ95		
KQJ72		AT5		
KQ74		AJT6		
AK		93		
	J876			
	64			
	98			
	JT542			
W	N	E	S	
	/	1NT	/	
2D!	/	2H	/	
3H!	/	4D	/	
4NT	/	5H	/	
6H	//			

M 4	AK972			<p>Board 19 in the fourth match produced a lot of contracts around the room, many Wests playing in 6HX, but at our table, North was very suspicious of the bidding and although he gave the matter a bit of thought, there was no double!</p> <p>I had a problem when Therese opened 4H, as we could be wide open in clubs, but I had too much potential to pass 4H since Therese figures to have a good hand at unfavourable vulnerability.</p> <p>North excelled with his opening lead as well, choosing the unsupported CA instead of the SA, which has the SK to back it up!</p> <p>The lead of the CK worried me momentarily, but I was able to relax when Therese won the CK at trick 2, and was quickly claiming 12 tricks for +1430.</p> <p>At the other table EW languished in game, and after the lead of the SA, made all 13 tricks, but 12 Imps to us.</p>
Bd 19	54			
Dlr S	J87			
Vul EW	A95			
654		-		
AKQJT92		8763		
-		AKQT95		
KJT		843		
	QJT83			
	-			
	6432			
	Q762			
W	N	E	S	
	/	6H	//	
4H	/			

M 4	932			<p>On board 22 in the fourth match we had a simple auction to reach 3NT, during which Therese's 1S rebid was 4th suit and may not have spades, but I had shown at least 4 cards in both clubs and hearts.</p> <p>South decided to get cute by leading the S6, and I won the first trick with the ST, expecting South to have the spade length, and definitely the SK and SQ.</p> <p>I took the losing diamond finesse, and North cleared matters up for both me and South by cashing the HK before leading the S3, which I ducked.</p> <p>South won the SK and knowing the spades were now good, returned a heart, and When North took the HA I could claim 9 tricks for +600.</p> <p>At the other table EW were more conservative, and stopped in just 2NT, making only 8 tricks after the lead of the CJ. I do not see how EW were held to 8 tricks, but we gained a fortunate 10 Imps in a losing match to minimize the loss.</p>
Bd 22	AKT4			
Dlr E	Q8			
Vul EW	Q963			
J754		AT8		
2		QJ76		
AKJ95		T4		
K42		AT87		
	KQ6			
	9853			
	7632			
	J5			
W	N	E	S	
	/	1C	/	
1D	/	1H	/	
1S!	/	1NT	/	
3NT	//			

M 4 Bd 28 Dlr W Vul NS	Q742 T64 JT74 A5		Board 28 in the fourth match was doubly unlucky for us! Firstly, Therese opened a routine 4H as West and played there, and North led the CA followed by the C5, and a club back promoted the HT into the setting trick and there was nothing Therese could do.
98 AKQ9872 65 J7		AK5 53 KQ98 Q432	This may have been routine, and Meta and Tony could have emulated our pair by also defeating 4H, but we were secondly unlucky when West at the other table was able to open 3NT to show any solid suit, and played there.
	JT63 J A32 KT986		Since there is no trump promotion any more, 3NT is cold for 10 tricks, and we had a -430 to go with -50 for our game going off, and thus lost 10 Imps.
W 4H	N //	E	S This match ended up in a 12 Imp loss to a team that we hoped to beat, and was critical in the final wash-up.

M 5 Bd 5 Dlr N Vul NS	J2 AQT7 A962 J97		On board 5 in the fifth match I doubled the weak 1NT for penalties, and South passed, which forced a redouble for North, passed by South showing values. A club or diamond lead will likely defeat 1NTXX, as Therese can switch to the spade when in with the DJ or CK (the lead and dummy will show up clubs as a 4-card suit), but she wisely took out insurance by bidding 2S, which was passed out.
T98643 82 J3 K82		AQ7 543 KQ4 A654	After the redouble being passed, I was surprized when 2S was passed out but after the lead of the S2, Therese easily made 9 tricks for +140, so NS were right not to double after all.
	K5 KJ96 T875 QT3		At the other table Tony was allowed to play in a quiet 2H after a nebulous 1D opening by Wynne, 1H by Tony, and a 2H raise by Wynne. This was just high enough as the cards lie, and +110 to go with our +140, was a welcome 6 Imps.
W / 2S	N 1NT XX //	E X /	S / /

M 5 Bd 11 Dlr S Vul Nil	AQ9854 JT A984 5		On board 11 in the fifth match Therese took a calculated gamble when she bit a bold 3NT over the 3H opening with just a singleton spade. When North led not a heart but the S5, she must have had misgivings, but when dummy tracked, Therese went with the odds by playing the SK from the table, which held the trick!
3 A65 KJ2 AKQ984		KT762 3 Q53 T732	A diamond came next from the dummy, and Therese was able to garner 6 clubs, 2 diamonds and a trick in both spades and hearts, for 10 in all and +430.
	J KQ98742 T76 J6		The hand is much trickier if North just leads their partner's suit, the HJ, but with everything lying well, 9 tricks are there all the time. At the other table Tony opened 3H and West bid 4C, Wynne bid 4H and there the auction rested. The result was just 1 down for -50, and 9 Imps to us.
W 3NT	N //	E	S 3H

M 6 Bd 18 Dir E Vul NS	QT73 AQ6 K2 A532		On board 18 in the sixth match North was end-played at trick 1 in my simple 2D contract, but made a good fist of it by leading the CK and putting me in dummy with a club ruff.
K62 K5 AQ764 T74		J85 J873 JT983 K	The double seemed to place most of the points with North after the tale-out double, so I played accordingly.
	A94 T942 5 QJ986		After ruffing the club I played a diamond to my Ace (the DK may drop) and ruffed another club before exiting with a trump to end=play North again.
W 1D! /	N X /	E / / 2D	S / 2C //
			This time North exited with the S3 and South won the SA and led the HT, but I played low and all North could do is win 2 hearts allowing me to pitch a losing spade on the HJ.
			North was disappointed by the heart return, wanting a spade back instead, but I had planned to win the SK end exit with a spade, and North has nowhere to go except cash the HA, so +90 was easy. A more aggressive opening lead of the HA at the other table allowed -110, so we lost 1 Imp.

M 6 Bd 25 Dir N Vul EW	A64 2 Q6542 KT86		On board 25 in the sixth match I pushed the Precision 2C opening to the limit with my natural opening of 2C, which shows 5 clubs and a 4-card major or 6 clubs and 11-15, and came up lucky.
K983 KQ753 973 A		QJT5 A98 K J9732	South led the S2 to my 4S contract, and North won the SA and led back the H2, South being forced to contribute the HT when I played low from my hand and won in dummy.
	72 JT64 AJT8 Q54		I had thought that trumps were not breaking up to that point, but now found out the good news, and drew all the outstanding trumps.
W 2D 4S	N / / //	E 2C 2S	S / /
			When I came to hand with the HA the heart position was exposed, and I ran the H9 next, and now had 10 tricks for +620.
			At the other table the 4-4 spade fit was not found and EW finished in 4H, but the 4-1 break was fatal, and the contract only made 9 tricks for +100, so we gained 12 Imps.
			While not always true, this was another example of the good 4-4 fit playing better than the 5-3 fit, especially when trumps break.

M 7 Bd 13 Dir N Vul All	6 AKQ5 AT9832 93		On board 13 in the seventh match we saw what has been previously quoted as "the power of the closed hand". North pushed the limit a little with his good shape by reversing with 2H, not what I would recommend with no support for the suit bid by South, and South, with a solid club stop, bid the obvious 3NT.
KJT9 974 K5 QT62		A874 T62 J7 K875	South won the CA over my CK and to have any chance she had to attack the best source of tricks, but also try and protect the CJ from attack. She made a neat avoidance play by playing the DA and another (either hand may have the singleton DK), Tony winning the DK, and he was at the crossroads.
	Q532 J83 Q64 AJ4		Knowing that declarer had 9 tricks now, whatever the heart position, he had to find an entry to my hand and it was obviously the SA or we had no chance. Thus he cashed the CQ, and seeing no CJ next led the S9 expecting me to win the SA and lead back a spade. However, the S9 looked high to me so I continued clubs and declarer had 10 tricks for 11 Imps out.
W / //	N 1D 2H!	E / /	S 1S 3NT

M 8	A972			<p>On board 15 in the eighth match we were pushed around by a vulnerable NS and we failed to take full advantage.</p> <p>When North bid 4S after Therese's take-out double, I did not know what was the right contract, 4S, 4SX, 5C or 5H, and since I had a good club fit I took out insurance just in case we did not have a 4-4 heart fit.</p> <p>South led the SK and switched to the H4, which I suspected may have been a singleton, so I won the HK, ruffed a spade cashed the DA and played 2 rounds of clubs, end-playing North.</p> <p>Since the heart switch had given up the heart trick anyway, any reasonable line will work from here. A double of 4S would have yielded at least +500, and double-dummy could have been +800.</p> <p>At the other table Tony and Wynne did not put themselves in the firing line and allowed EW to play 4H for -420 and 1 Imp away.</p>
Bd 15	Q3			
Dlr S	86432			
Vul NS	K4			
3		J3		
A985		KT72		
KJT5		A		
AJT6		Q98532		
	KQT865			
	J64			
	Q97			
	7			
W	N	E	S	
X	4S	5C	2S //	

M 8	KQJT8			<p>On board 24 in the eighth match we failed to get to the good slam, so Therese was not put to the test on how to make it, but North's overcall may have helped.</p> <p>My 2S cue-bid showed at least a limit raise in diamonds, and the 3D rebid by Therese showed a minimum. I could have asked again with 3S, but after the overcall, it looked like any missing high cards would be in the wrong place, so I subsided in just game.</p> <p>The SK was led and Therese had to do no more than draw trumps, ruffing spades in the process, and then take the heart finesse for 12 tricks, but when it lost, only +400. (3NT was at least +430)</p> <p>To make 6D declarer has to play North for the short HK and the CQ, and eliminate the spades, drawing trumps in the process, then HA and another end-plays North to lead a club or give a ruff-sluff. At the other table slam was reached, but not the right play, so 10 Imps to us.</p>
Bd 24	K5			
Dlr W	5			
Vul Nil	QT963			
A97		5		
AQ8		JT9		
QT94		AK8632		
J87		AK4		
	6432			
	76432			
	J7			
	52			
W	N	E	S	
1D	1S	2S	/	
3D	/	5D	//	