

2008 Gold Coast Open Teams

A fantastic total of 274 teams contested the Open Championship, and about another 150 teams in Restricted events. From that 274, only the top 6 would qualify for the quarter-finals, with the top 2 going straight through to the semi-finals.

A Chinese representative team took one final place and the other was taken by the Irish Internationals (Tom Hanlon & Hugh McGann) who had earlier won the Open Pairs, and Kate McCallum from the USA playing with Australia's adopted son, Paul Marsden. The final was won by the composite Irish/USA/Australian team.

Tony Jackman, Meta Goodman, Wynne Webber, Sue Lusk, Therese Tully and myself had some success, mixed with failure at the wrong time, and when we ended with a bad loss, we just finished in the top third of the field. At one stage we were playing at table 272, but this was not because we were doing badly, but because an ACT of enthusiastic Juniors was doing well. Against us they went astray a few times by forgetting their artificial system at crucial times.

Our most satisfying result was against Murray Green's team, which included the Chinese pair which recently won the World Open Pairs, and in a very low scoring match we ended up on the right side of a winning draw. As usual with a 6-man team I did not play all of the matches and will confine my report to those matches that I did play.

M 2	KQJ64			On board 16 in match 2 I had a minor scare at the thought of possible bad things about to happen when Tony opened 2D, to show 4 spades, at least 4 hearts, many other distributions in the minors, and 11-15 HCPs.
Bd 16	KJ5			
Dlr W	J87			
Vul All	J9			
A753		8		After a few anxious seconds I hit upon the obvious answer and passed, hoping Tony was not 4504.
AT63		Q9		
A		K965432		He was a little surprised at my pass, as it rarely happens, but settled down when he saw dummy and managed to make 10 tricks when all suits behaved for +130.
KT52		876		
	T92			At the other table Wynne and Meta had a 1C opening, allowing a 1S overcall, but the final contract of 2S proved 1 too high for -100, but still a paltry 1 Imp to us.
	8742			
	QT			
	AQ43			
W	N	E	S	
2D	//			

M 2	AKT93			On board 19 in match 2 Tony opened with a forcing 1C and my 2C showed just 5-8 HCPs. My first instinct was to jump to 5C, but with such a long suit, I needed very little to make slam.
Bd 19	KT53			
Dlr S	K943			
Vul EW	-			When Tony showed his heart suit and South showed some values I gave up on slam, although from the 2S support it was likely that he had only 1 or 2 spades, and simply bid game in my long suit.
J		876		
AQ976		J4		
AQ762		-		When North bid 5S, my pass was forcing to a certain extent, and Tony, without good support and a minimum of high cards for his 1C bid, elected to defend.
AJ		KQ876543		
	Q542			I led the HJ, won by Tony with the HA to lead a small diamond, an unbid suit. Declarer could deduce from the opening 1C bid that Tony had the DA, and did not want to let me win the DQ, so rose with the DK which I ruffed, and had to lose 2 further diamonds for +300.
	82			
	JT85			
	T92			
W	N	E	S	
			/	
1C	1S	2C	2S	At the other table, EW continued on to 6C, which went off 1 for another +100 and 9 Imps.
3H	/	5C	/	
/	5S	/	/	
X	//			

M 2 T642
Bd 27 K7
Dlr S KT842
Vul Nil KT
 AJ753 KQ9
 Q92 T8653
 - 63
 AJ843 652

8
 AJ4
 AQJ975
 Q97

W	N	E	S
1S	3D	/	1D
//			5D

On board 27 in match 2 I was taken out of the bidding by North's limit raise in diamonds, and South's jump to 5D prevented Tony from showing his other suit, if he had wanted to!

The play was very simple, and declarer lost just the 2 Aces to make 11 tricks and -400 to us.

At the other table, North bid 2S to show the limit raise instead of 3D, and that gave my hand a chance to show the spade support by doubling.

This was a chance no doubt regretted by the end of the hand, as West, probably expecting their undisclosed second suit and diamond void to be an asset, grasped the bidding mantle and did not stop until it had reached 5SX.

The very reason that allowed 5D to make (the 4-1 spade break) made 5SX a disaster, it drifted 5 down for +1100 to us and a bonus of 12 Imps. If the spades were 3-2, the contract would probably have gone only 2 off, but 5D would have been 1 down also.

M 3 AJT763
Bd 5 KJ72
Dlr N Q6
Vul NS 2
 K5 -
 Q AT654
 KJT8 75432
 AKQT95 J84

Q98542
 983
 A9
 763

W	N	E	S
X	1S	2S	4S
	//		

Board 5 in match 3 was a complete disaster when not only did we miss the cold game in either minor suit (actually slam is on the diamond guess), but allowed NS to make 4SX.

My 2S was a Michael's cue-bid, and Tony knew that we had a good fit in one of the minors, probably diamonds, but he also had some trick-taking potential, and NS were vulnerable, so elected to go for the penalty.

On a minor suit lead 4S is cold off, as North must lose 2 hearts, a diamond and a club, even if he takes the spade finesse, but I led the HA to look at dummy and was initially glad to see the fall of the Queen.

I had nothing of value left in my hand, but led the H4 for Tony to ruff, as my clubs at least had an honour.

We can still take it 1 off by Tony underleading his club honours, but this was too hard, and while Tony could see by dummy's spade length that I had a void (and likely 3 clubs), he did not know that North's hearts were good enough to discard the diamond loser, so tried to cash 2 clubs. -790 to go with the -420 from 5C at the other table.

M 3 KQJ9
Bd 8 Q5
Dlr W QT87
Vul Nil 765
 A65 T72
 A2 9643
 KJ943 A6
 J83 AKQ9

843
 KJT87
 52
 T42

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

Board 8 in match 3 created much discussion as most people seemed to be going off in 3NT but Deep Finesse said it was cold!

Tony took the standard approach, as did the declarer at the other table, when he won the 3rd spade, ran the clubs, and tried the diamond finesse. North was under no pressure, and simply cashed his spade and exited with a heart, having discarded a heart on the 4th club. 1 off

Contrary to normal instincts, declarer must win the 2nd spade and run the clubs, discarding a diamond!

If North discards a heart, declarer cashes the DA and HA and exits with a spade, and North is endplayed to give the 9th trick to declarer by the forced diamond return into the tenace.

If North discards a diamond, declarer plays 3 rounds of diamonds to set up the 9th trick in diamonds immediately, with the HA as an entry.

M 4	T742			
Bd 15	AJ63			
Dir S	K98			
Vul NS	75			
J5			963	
QT852			974	
QJ65			T4	
62			JT943	
	AKQ8			
	K			
	A732			
	AKQ8			
W	N	E	S	
/	2NT	/	1C	
/	3H	/	3C	
//			6NT	

On board 15 in match 4 we seemed to have missed a golden opportunity, but as so happens in teams matches, the pair at the other table did not even get to slam so bidding 7S would have gained us very little, and as others found out when they did not take the right line, the penalty is high if you go off in a grand slam.

My 2NT response shows a balanced 8-10, and Tony's 3C was Stayman, but 3H does not deny a 4-card spade suit, so Tony could have bid 3S instead of 6NT, and I would have been able to cue-bid hearts on the way to a possible grand slam.

In 7S, declarer must cash the top 2 spades, and when the SJ falls, he can pitch a diamond on the 3rd club and ruff the 4th club low. Next lead to the HK and return to the DK to lead the HA for a diamond discard.

Finally lead to the DA and ruff a diamond with the ST while East watches helplessly and dummy takes the last 2 tricks. At the other table NS played in just 4S, so we gained 13 Imps.

M 4	QJ8			
Bd 22	K85			
Dir E	QT8652			
Vul EW	T			
92			A54	
T942			AQ76	
97			J3	
QJ863			AK92	
	KT763			
	J3			
	AK4			
	754			
W	N	E	S	
/	3D	/	1NT	/
X	//		/	/

On board 22 EW got themselves into trouble when West doubled my 3D (single-suiter) for take-out, but East thought it was a penalty double, so passed it out. In our system, 2D shows any single-suiter, but since that entails a 3-level bid if it is a minor, we leave 2D for good hands in a minor, and use weak-jumps otherwise.

Actually EW are already too high, with 4 top losers in a club contract, but 1NT had at least 7 tricks so 3D is okay even if 1 off. As it is, even though 4C is 1 down (probably doubled), is still better for EW than 3DX making.

In 3DX I had no worries, and when East did not find the double-dummy defense of underleading her club honours for West to lead a heart through, I made 10 tricks for +570.

At the other table, the opening bid was not 1NT, so South was able to overcall 1S, whereupon NS pushed all the way to 4SX, which went 2 off for +300 and 13 Imps.

M 5	KT962			
Bd 14	Q87			
Dir E	AQ			
Vul Nil	QT6			
853			AQ7	
T43			J95	
J8653			K2	
83			AJ974	
	J4			
	AK62			
	T974			
	K52			
W	N	E	S	
/	2D	/	1NT	/
/	2S	//	/	2H

On board 14 in match 5 after East opened 1NT (15-17) we stayed out of game on our combined 24 count, and were rewarded when game is not on.

My 2D showed a single-suiter, 2H was correctible, and 2S was passed out. East led the H5.

Since all of the outstanding high cards are marked by the opening 1NT, 2S was never in jeopardy, and in a desperate effort to beat 2S, after winning the SQ East led the DK and followed up after winning the SA with the CA, so I made 10 tricks for +170.

4S goes off with an opening club lead, as East can give his partner a ruff before trumps can be drawn. Even a club switch after winning the SQ will lead to a club ruff and only 9 tricks.

At the other table, Therese and Sue were playing a weak 1NT, so the opening bid was 1C, and somehow NS contrived to get to 3NT, which had no chance on a club lead. This was +6 Imps in a match won by 14-12 against teams 2.

M 6 T852
Bd 20 842
Dir W QT32
Vul All K6
 AQJ 97
 AQT65 93
 AK7 964
 AT Q98542
 K643
 KJ7
 J85
 J73

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

On board 20 in match 6 I forced to game with 2H, although perhaps a better bid would have been 2NT, after which Tony could have bid 3C to find out about a 5-card major if he was interested.

He now bid a natural 3C, but probably expecting me to have a 6-card suit, converted my belated 3NT to 4H.

North led the D2 to 4H and I could see how 4H was a slightly superior contract to 3NT, but neither game was a good bet.

First to get rid of the diamond loser (at least the diamonds looked to be 4-3), so I played 2 rounds of spades, won the diamond return and discarded my diamond loser on the SJ.

A successful diamond ruff and I was in dummy to take the trump finesse, but which one to finesse for?

I was very relieved when South covered the H9 with the HJ and my HQ won the trick. With the hearts well placed +620 was the result but only 1 Imp as 3NT at the other table was unbeatable..

M 6 JT2
Bd 26 QJT3
Dir E J62
Vul All A95
 AK765 9
 AK9 842
 - KQT873
 K8743 JT6
 Q843
 765
 A954
 Q2

W	N	E	S
1C	/	1D	/
1S	/	2D	/
3C	/	3D	/
4C	/	5C	//

On board 26 in match 6 we appeared to be given a chance in 5C when North did not start with 2 rounds of clubs, preferring the HQ.

It looked good for a while, as I was able to crossruff twice in dummy and twice in my hand before North came into the play, but when I led a spade for the 3rd ruff in dummy, North could pitch a diamond and then over-ruff me in diamonds.

The heart exit left me with no resort, as no matter what South did, I had to lose 2 more trumps and -100.

With the obvious misfit, we would have obviously been better to have played in just 4C, but at least we did better than EW at the other table, who got to the awful contract of 3NT, finishing 3 off for +300 to us and 5 Imps.

M 6 Q97632
Bd 27 -
Dir S 643
Vul Nil T875
 A4 KJT85
 T82 AQ4
 AKQ75 J
 Q93 J642
 -
 KJ97653
 T982
 AK

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

On board 27 in match 6 South picked a good time to open at the 1-level with their 7420, rather than a full-blooded 4H as at the other table.

In 4HX at the other table, declarer had no chance, and finished 4 off for -800, Deep Finesse even suggests that EW can make 7 tricks in hearts on their 3-3 fit, probably because South gets trump-bound.

Over 1H I overcalled 2D, and North was forced to pass, allowing Tony to bid 2S, which was forcing for 1 round.

If I had 6 diamonds, I would have forced to game with 3H, but lacking the length, I compromised by bidding 3S, hoping my SA would make up for the lack of a 3rd trump.

Tony would have been better to bid 3NT with his good hearts, but instead bid a normal 4S, which must have sparked North's interest, but no double was forthcoming. This contract went 2 off for another -100 and 14 Imps away.

M 7 A
Bd 9 KJT72
Dlr N AKT43
Vul EW 97
 KQJT76 95432
 A83 Q9
 - Q986
 KQJ8 T2

 8
 654
 J752
 A6543

W N E S
 4S H / /
 X //

On board 9 in match 7 North had a problem over Tony's 4S overcall, and, possibly looking at the Vulnerability, got it wrong when she doubled to show values. 4NT to show 2 places to play would have turned out better.
 This would have doubtless seemed like a good idea looking at 3 quick tricks and a possible heart trick, but the diamond tricks were not real, as North found out when she led the DA!
 With North on lead there was no way for NS to get a heart trick, and Tony finished with 11 tricks for +990. After ruffing the DA declarer can establish the clubs for a heart discard before leading trumps.
 Even if by some systemic flaw East was declarer, allowing South to lead a heart, EW still have 10 tricks.
 At the other table NS elected to bid over 4S, and conceded -500 in 5HX for 10 Imps.

M 9 AT82
Bd 3 AK75
Dlr S 7543
Vul EW A
 Q4 973
 42 Q9
 AKT82 9
 KT94 QJ87532

 KJ85
 JT863
 QJ6
 6

W N E S
 1D //

On board 3 in match 9 we caught North at a disadvantage when Tony opened 1D, showing a minimum of 2 diamonds and 11-15 HCPs.
 Nothing really appeals with that singleton club, as surely South will bid clubs in response to a take-out double, but I am sure that not many others would elect to pass with 3 Aces and a King!
 North elected to pass and await developments, but there was no more action! South was not inclined to bid on such minimal values, although I am sure most others would, and North led a small diamond.
 I think that South forgot to evaluate Tony's hand as having a maximum of 15 HCPs, so North was marked with quite a good hand.
 To make matters worse, NS contrived to let Tony make 9 tricks for +110. At the other table our NS were not so restrained and finished in 4H for 10 tricks and +420. +11 Imps

M 9 AQT964
Bd 7 3
Dlr S 2
Vul All AQT98
 - K8
 T9875 KQ64
 QJ943 AK5
 753 KJ42

 J7532
 AJ2
 T876
 6

W N E S
 / 1S / 3C!
 X 5C X //

On board 7 in match 9 we were gifted a huge swing when South was not fully conversant with the rules of the game. Tony's double showed the red suits, and South's 3C was a Bergen raise.
 On an earlier hand North had forgotten Bergen raises, but the error had not been costly. Then a few short boards later, South tried her hand again with a Bergen raise, and again North forgot.
 This time it was very costly as the final result was 6 down for +1700 to us. Since the result at the other table had been 11 tricks in 5S for +650, that was a massive 20 Imps.
 The problem with the rules was that South knew that North had forgotten Bergen again when she bid 5C, but did not realize that she was perfectly entitled to correct 5C to 5S, especially after the double.
 In the end she passed and complained aloud about North forgetting Bergen, but this of course makes it difficult North for to correct her mistake if she had woken up. However I think she did not realize it.

M 10	KQ52			
Bd 27	AKJ6			
Dlr S	QJT4			
Vul Nil	4			
A3		JT6		
QT97		42		
K85		A962		
AQ93		KT82		
	9874			
	853			
	73			
	J765			
W	N	E	S	
			/	
1NT	X	/!	2S	
	/	2NT!	/	
	/	3D	/	
	X	//		

On board 27 in match 10 we had a lucky escape when I initially doubled 1NT for penalties, rescued by Tony, but then thought I had enough to double 3NT when EW kept bidding, pass forces a redouble. Against 3NTX I led the HK (a mistake) and was disappointed to see dummy's spades as well as 8 points, which meant very little for Tony's hand, and I was resigned to writing down -550.

I could count 8 tricks, including 2 in spades for declarer, but what was I going to throw on the clubs? Still maybe declarer would try another line or have a club loser, so I exited with the SK.

Declarer made no mistake with playing the clubs for 4 tricks, and on the 4th club I was squeezed in 3 suits, having already pitched a heart and spade. Whatever I pitch is a telling card, if a heart declarer can exit to my bare Ace, if a diamond declarer can duck a diamond for 9 tricks, and if a spade, declarer can duck a spade to me and the forced diamond return gives up my second diamond trick.

In the end declarer cashed the DK before exiting with a spade so we got an undeserved +100. At the other table, NS found their spade fit and conceded only 300 in 4SX, but 10 Imps to us.

M 10	K74			
Bd 28	AK9853			
Dlr W	J6			
Vul NS	AK			
3		AQJT8		
QT76		J42		
75		T4		
QT9432		875		
	9652			
	-			
	AKQ9832			
	J6			
W	N	E	S	
/	1C	1S	3D	
/	3H	/	4D	
/	4H	//		

On board 28 in match 10, the last of the tournament, we finished on a low point when Tony elected to bid hi fine sui, possibly looking for slam, instead of 3S, asking me to bid 3NT with a spade stopper.

My 1C was Precision, and Tony's 3D was a positive response with diamonds, so I only got to show my good 6-card suit for the first time at the 3-level!

3NT makes 11 tricks from either hand, but in 4H EW did not make any mistake and I went 2 off.

Eats led the SA and continued with the SQ, but West did not make the mistake of ruffing my loser with his winning trump, so I won in hand to play 2 rounds of trumps.

I am still cold if West has the top 2 trumps, as EW cannot cash a spade trick, but no luck and the contract was off. 5D fares no better on a spade lead as East can cash 2 tricks and give his partner a ruff.

At the other table there was no spade overcall (?) and on the club lead South made 13 tricks in 5D.