

## 2008 Queensland Open Pairs by Richard Wallis

An extremely disappointing 34 tables fronted up to QCBC for the 2008 Qld Open and Novice Pairs On 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> October, 22 in the Open and 12 in the Novice. Even this low turnout was swelled by the subsidized pairs flown to Brisbane courtesy of the QBA from country zones.

The only good thing about the low number of tables was that for the first time since the event became an Open Congress, the numbers would allow a full round-robin to be played, instead of wasting Saturday qualifying for the final, and then starting over on scratch again on Sunday morning. Astonishingly, the QBA regulations for the event stipulate that it must be run as a qualifying on Saturday and a final on Sunday, so the Director's hands were tied – for this year.

While the Saturday scores were lost on the Sunday, the finishing order did not change! Bev Stacey and Rosa Lachman were the top qualifiers, followed closely by Tony Jackman and myself, and that is how we finished up on Sunday evening. Tony and I were in the lead after the 4<sup>th</sup> of 15 rounds, but then a below average result put Bev and Rosa in the lead and they were never headed after that to win comfortably, with Susie and Larry Moses in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

<b>F1</b>	K				We were off to a flying start in the final on board 2 when South doubled my 4S bid without any real basis, and North failed to find the physic lead that would have given Tony a problem.
<b>Bd 2</b>	Q9853				
<b>Dir E</b>	J653				
<b>Vul NS</b>	KJ5				After Tony's 1S overcall, 4S on my hand was automatic at the vulnerability, just because I have 5-card support, and my side suit and void, should even give Tony some chance to make 10 tricks.
A7652			QJ843		
J7			64		
AT98			-		As it turned out on the actual layout, if North had found the heart lead, Tony would have had to been physic himself to drop the stiff King offside after South had doubled.
T7			A98732		
	T9				
	AKT2				
	KQ742				
	Q4				However on the diamond lead, one of my heart losers went away on the DA, and with the clubs setting up, he had the luxury of losing a trump trick and still making 10 tricks for +590.
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>		
			1D		
1S	X	4S	X		In fairness to South they were probably relying on some points in North's hand for the negative double, and North was only too happy to pass with 2 potential tricks opposite an opening bid.
//					

<b>F1</b>	65				Board 12 in the first round of the final was a classic example of playing in your long suit when you do not have any outside entries.
<b>Bd 12</b>	QJT6				
<b>Dir W</b>	QJT97				On all but the most extreme breaks, when West denies primary spade support by bidding 2NT, the East hand figures to take at least 4 tricks if spades are trumps, but maybe no tricks at all in notrumps, unless West has Ax in spades.
<b>Vul NS</b>	J8				Accordingly, East should bid 4S and not 3NT to close out the auction, and a much happier result would have been obtained. Even though 2 spades must be lost, they are the only losers, and +450 would have been the result.
74			KQT982		
AK54			832		
A3			6		
AKQ93			T65		
	AJ3				
	97				
	K8542				
	742				
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>		
1C	/	1S	/		In 3NT, I led the obvious DQ, and Declarer could bring some pressure to bear by running 5 club tricks, but I could easily discard 2 spades and a heart, and we took our 5 tricks for 1 off and +50.
2H	/	2S	/		Declarer thought about winning the first diamond and immediately trying to sneak a spade trick, but it would have been easy to cash out.
2NT	/	3NT	//		

**F 1** 872  
**Bd 18** AKJ64  
**Dir E** 74  
**Vul NS** T63  
 K9543 JT  
 - T98753  
 KQJT9653 8  
 - KQJ9  
  
 AQ6  
 Q2  
 A2  
 A87542  
  
**W N E S**  
 5D / 2H 2C  
 // / X

Board 18 looked to be fairly routine when it was played at our table, West had a 1-loser 8-card diamond suit and little defence, his partner had shown a weak hand also, so he quite correctly ignored his second suit, and jumped to game in his long suit.

The was nothing we take except 2 spades and a trump, and this we duly did for +100.

When we saw all of the hands, it looked like a possible small pick-up for us, but surely most would bid 5D with the West cards?

Not so! At least some of the West players I spoke to bid their spade suit as well, and of course, East had a preference for spades, so 4SX became the final contract. Declarer loses control and even careful play has an 8-trick limit, so -300 was the minimum score and below average for us after all.

Unless partner introduced the spade suit himself, only a gun to my head would get me to bid spades at any time over diamonds.

**F 1** K532  
**Bd 20** Q5  
**Dir W** AJ3  
**Vul All** AQ52  
 A87 94  
 JT83 K976  
 64 9752  
 T863 KJ7  
  
 QJT6  
 A42  
 KQT8  
 94  
  
**W N E S**  
 / 1C / 1NT  
 / 3NT //

On board 20 in the first round of the final my 1NT response to Tony's artificial 1C opening showed 11+ and no 5-card or longer suit. Since he had an absolute minimum hand for the 1C opening, he had no ambition for anything other than game.

Since we both had balanced hands, it is often right to play in notrumps, and thus with honours in all suits, Tony just bid 3NT to finish the auction.

However, in a Pairs event, this was not the time to be playing in 3NT, especially with my hand as declarer, because West has a natural heart lead, and it was only the 3-3 heart break that allowed me to claim 9 tricks, but still a poor score against at least 620 in 4S.

If Tony had miscalculated his hand and opened 1NT (13-15), we could have been on a good score, as the HQ is protected, and North is likely to gain a trick on the lead.

**F 1** T3  
**Bd 23** 98754  
**Dir S** 632  
**Vul All** T76  
 KJ AQ976  
 JT AQ32  
 AKJ8 T974  
 K8532 -  
  
 8542  
 K6  
 Q5  
 AQJ94  
  
**W N E S**  
 2C // / 1H!

On board 23 in the first round of the final we were backed into a corner when South's 1H opening, to show 4 spades and a longer suit outside, caught us on the hop.

Tony did not like to bid 1S (for takeout) nor 1NT with his short hearts, so overcalled on his poor club suit. Pass would have worked out better, as then NS would have played in 2C, but still a poor score for us in a Pairs event.

When North passed, I was expecting a take-out double from South to be passed by North, and then I would be in a better position to act, so I passed on the first round, and that was it.

I knew from my hand that all other suits were playable, even spades if Tony had xxx, but I had no clear-cut action until the double was made.

Since we were cold for 6S according to deep finesse, even though Tony managed 7 tricks to only go 1 off in 2C, -100 was still a bottom.

**F 1**           KT853  
**Bd 29**        K  
**Dir N**         92  
**Vul All**      AT854  
4  
95432  
83  
KQ962

AJ  
AJT7  
KQT64  
J3

Q9762  
Q86  
AJ76  
7

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
X	/	1D	1S
	4S	X	//

On board 29 in the first round of the final my hand looked good, but was just below an opening bid, so I reluctantly passed as Dealer.

When Tony announced a 5-card suit with his overcall, I had no hesitation in jumping to game in spades, as even if he had no play for 10 tricks, it is very likely that EW have game themselves in hearts.

This does not mean I have been a convert to 'The Law', it is just bridge, and I have no doubt that hands such as this were used by Larry Cohen in his early analyses.

Note on the actual layout, the very thing that allows 4SX to make, the singleton club, is also the reason that 4H goes down, as South gets a club ruff in addition to a heart and the 2 minor suit Aces.

We have only 19 HCPs, but the DJ is a full trick after the diamond lead, and the surfeit of trumps are also worth a couple of tricks, so Tony had no trouble making 10 tricks for +790.

**F 2**           K54  
**Bd 4**         AJ7543  
**Dir W**         J63  
**Vul All**      2  
T972  
962  
8  
KJT98

Q83  
Q8  
AT9754  
A7

AJ6  
KT  
KQ2  
Q6543

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	/	1D	1NT
/	2D!	X	2H
/	4H	//	

On board 4 in the second round of the final my 1D opening did not promise diamonds, so I was glad to be able to use North's transfer bid to confirm that I did have diamonds.

South had a minimum 1NT overcall, North had the minimum for a jump to game in hearts, and yet with all finesses right, it looked like 10 tricks were going to be easy, but not so.

North did not give any thought to 3NT with his singleton club, but that contract is secure even on a club lead, as the club honours in the West hand show Declarer the other Queens are with me, and point towards the winning line.

Tony was probably going to lead his singleton anyway, but my double took away the risk. I won the DA and led back the D4 for Tony to ruff, as Declarer's D2 at trick 1 confirmed the singleton lead.

The D4 suggested a club entry, and Tony duly under-led his CK so I could give him another ruff for the setting trick.

**F 2**           K9765  
**Bd 7**         8  
**Dir S**         J32  
**Vul All**      QT87  
AQJ3  
JT76  
65  
A62

T84  
AQ432  
K984  
4

2  
K95  
AQT7  
KJ953

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
1S	1NT	2C	1C
2S	//		/

On board 7 in the second round of the final I expected Tony to have 5 spades for his overcall, and as such my 3-card support was adequate to be interested in game in spades, so I bid 2C to show at least a limit raise in spades.

Tony was not interested in game unless I had extras, so signed off in 2S, non-forcing. North was delighted, and I had nothing else, so that is where the auction finished. Even on an even spade break this contract was likely to fail, but on the 5-1 split, it was 2 off for -200 and a poor score.

However, after overcalling at the 1-level on his good 4-card suit, Tony missed a golden opportunity to put the auction back onto an even keel by bidding 2H instead of 2S over my 2C cue-bid.

He was worried that this might look like a game-try, and it probably would have, but I still only had enough to bid 3H and he could have passed. If I had a little more, like the DA instead of the DK, 4H was cold.

**F 2** K9843  
**Bd 10** A76  
**Dir E** AQ  
**Vul All** A84  
T5 A6  
8532 QJT  
952 KJT643  
K732 T5

QJ72  
K94  
87  
QJ96

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	X	1D	/
	4S	//	1S

On board 10 in the second round of the final I had too good a hand to bid 1S in the balancing seat, and even too good for 2S given that my diamond holding will produce 2 tricks if East leads diamonds, so I doubled first, intending to bid 2S over Tony's response.

Tony's 1S response was both good and bad news, in that we did have a good spade fit, but with Tony's hand as Declarer my diamond holding would probably only produce 1 trick.

However, I bid 4S anyway, as I thought that it was unlikely that Tony would accept any invitation. The DK may even be with West.

One of the hazards with the 'better-minor' openings is that partner cannot rely on a real suit to guide the best opening lead, but in this case, I would have thought that a diamond lead was likely to be more productive than a club, but West led the C2!

Not only did this kill the club suit, but West was never going to be on lead again, and when they covered the CQ, East was squeezed in hearts and diamonds for 12 tricks and +680.

**F 2** KJ943  
**Bd 15** A6  
**Dir S** 62  
**Vul NS** Q976  
Q2 A6  
KQJT85 43  
AJT 9743  
54 AKT82

T875  
972  
KQ85  
J3

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
1H	1S	2C	/
4H	//		2S

One of the most common problems facing defenders is when to lead a suit that has been bid and supported, and this arose on board 15 in the second round of the final.

It seems normal to overcall on the North hand, and to support on the South hand, although many in modern times would bid a preemptive 3S instead of 2S, saving 2S for hands with more values and possibly only 3 trumps, but still less than a limit raise in support.

After receiving support, North picked the wrong time to lead his suit, and Tony won the opening lead of the S4 in hand with the SQ to lead out the HK.

After winning the spade return on the table, Tony drew trumps and entered dummy with a club to lead a diamond, inserting the DT when South played low, intending to re-enter dummy with another club to take a second diamond finesse for 11 tricks. However, the DT won and he could then claim 11 tricks.

If South had bid a preemptive 3S, North would probably not have led his suit, and 10 tricks would be the limit.

**F 2** J32  
**Bd 17** QT8  
**Dir N** KQJT9  
**Vul Nil** 74  
AQ874 KT95  
A2 J97653  
A7642 -  
9 J83

6  
K4  
853  
AKQT652

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
1S	/	/	1C
5S	2D	4S	5C
//	/	/	x

On board 17 in the second round of the final we had yet another big fit jump to game, but this time I was hoping that my heart suit would be able to be set up to garner the 10 tricks necessary for game.

Considering the bidding, Tony was probably better to have doubled 5C rather than going on to 5S, and I am sure that this thought crossed through his mind when South doubled 5S.

In 5CX I could discourage a spade or heart lead and then he would be able to find the DA and give me my first ruff, and the other Ace would provide the entry for the second diamond ruff for +500.

However, when the DK was led and dummy went down Tony was more encouraged that he had done the right thing.

He discarded a club on the DA and cashed the top trumps in hand before cashing the HA and exiting with a heart to South. After ruffing the 2<sup>nd</sup> club, he drew trumps with the SK and ruffed another heart setting up the suit, and claimed 11 tricks for +650.

**F 2** QJ987  
**Bd 27** 76  
**Dlr S** T52  
**Vul Nil** A64

A63  
AKJ2  
8  
KJ872

52  
QT983  
KQJ3  
T3

KT4  
54  
A9764  
Q95

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
			/
2C	/	2H	/
4H	//		

There are many times where a trump lead is the best lead, but board 27 in the second round of the final was not likely to be one of them, given that West has at least a 5-card club suit, and South's Q95 looks vulnerable.

I do not know why Tony elected to open 2C (11-15) instead of 1C (16+), but he had no hesitation in accepting my 2H invitation bid and jumping to the heart game, which is where we would have ended up after a 1C opening bid.

After the passive trump lead I was able to win on the table and lead the D8, win the spade return on the table, finish drawing trumps with the HQ, and discard dummy's spades on the top diamonds.

Now I was in hand to tackle the clubs, and when the CJ forced the CA and they behaved, I had 11 tricks for a good score.

On a spade lead, much easier from North, I have to guess the clubs for 10 tricks, whereas I had the luxury of mis-guessing.