

## 2008 Queensland Open Teams by Richard Wallis

A total of 34 teams contested this year's Open Teams Championship at Toowong Bridge Club on the middle weekend in May, which seemed a few more than when I last played in the event in 2006. This year our team consisted of Richard Ward, Lindy Vincent, Sue Mabin, Therese Tully and myself. Why 5, well Richard Ward had school duties on Sunday and we were lucky enough to get Sue to take his place.

When the field was posted it looked like Braithwaite (Andy Braithwaite, David Appleton, Neville Francis & Magnus Moren) was going to be the team to beat, and so it proved when we finished ahead of them by 7 VPs, but 23 VPs ahead of the 3<sup>rd</sup> placed team.

The win/draw/loss of our team was not the best, with 6/1/1, whereas teams 1 & 4 had 7 wins and 1 loss, but our loss was only by 3 Imps (14-16) to team 1, and we had 4 wins of 25-5 or better. We started Sunday in the lead by 3 VPs, but a 14-16 loss to Braithwaite reduced our lead to just 1VP, and then a draw in our next match saw us behind Braithwaite by 7 VPs with just 2 matches to be played.

However, we had a 25 to their 19 on the 7<sup>th</sup> match to reduce the deficit to just 1VP, and then our final match was another 25 to their 17 and we were home. Thanks are due to the 2 teams that restricted them to small wins for the last 2 matches, as without that our 2/25s would have been to no avail.

<b>M 1</b>	AQ2			Transfers after the 1NT opening bid have taken off since they were invented many years ago, but like most artificial systems, they can bite if not used properly.
<b>Bd 4</b>	Q52			
<b>Dir W</b>	K94			
<b>Vul All</b>	A973			South bid 2NT instead of 3C as a transfer to diamonds, and then she had nowhere to go. The 3D bid should have warned North that South was unbalanced (at least showing 5 clubs and 4 diamonds), but he pressed on the 3NT anyway.
97654		K3		
AJ874		KT963		
T		Q76		
JT		K62		I led the obvious HT, and we took the first 5 tricks, after which Therese led a club, and North won the CA and led the top 2 diamonds, finding bad news again.
	JT8			
	-			
	AJ8532			The spade finesse now lost, and we had 8 tricks ourselves, with a 9 <sup>th</sup> emerging from nowhere for +500 due to careless discarding by declarer. At the other table Lindy mis-guessed the trumps to go off in 5D, but still 9 Imps to us.
	Q854			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	1NT	/	2NT	
/	3C	/	3D	
	3NT	//		Ironically, if NS can make North declarer in 6C, it is also on the diamond guess.

**M 1** A83  
**Bd 11** 874  
**Dlr S** 973  
**Vul Nil** A832  
 Q752 J64  
 A92 QJT53  
 AKJ85 QT6  
 6 54

KT9  
 K6  
 42  
 KQJT97

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
			1C
1D	X	1H	2C
2H	3C	/	
3H	//		

On board 11 in match 1 North made a point-showing double over Therese's 1D, and this gave me the opportunity to bid my heart suit.

I have not really got enough to bid a forcing 1H, and was only tempted to do it because of my good diamond support.

Therese supported hearts, and when North's 3C was passed around to her, she bid one more, probably expecting me to have a little more and go to game, but I was going nowhere!

South won trick 1 with the CK and switched to the ST, won by North who now led a trump, and with the aid of the trump finesse and 5 top diamonds, I had 10 easy tricks for +170.

Game on a finesse is about the right odds for teams, but I had already pushed my luck with the 1H bid, so was content with a plus score.

At the other table Richard and Lindy bought the hand in 3C, for another +110 and 7 Imps.

**M 2** AT  
**Bd 20** KJ4  
**Dlr W** QT7  
**Vul All** Q9764  
 KJ6 8632  
 T973 2  
 AKJ6 952  
 32 AKJT5

Q974  
 AQ865  
 843  
 8

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
1NT	/	2C	/
2H	/	3C	//

On board 20 in match 2 I was tempted by my 4-card spade suit into bidding 2C looking for a fit. When Therese bid 2H and I rebid 3C, I was showing clubs and spades, not forcing.

South made an ill-judged lead of the C8, and I was off to a good start, even though North wisely held back the CQ.

I took the spade finesse the right way, and was very surprised when North led back a trump and South showed out.

Now it looked like I needed North to have xxx in diamonds, and when that was not the way it was I was 1 off for -100.

At the other table their auction started out the same way but over 2H East bid 2S, and West was not sure if that was meant to be forcing, so bid 3S just in case.

This contract could not survive the bad split in both black suits, and finished 3 off for +300 and 5 Imps.

**M 2** Q54  
**Bd 23** J986  
**Dlr S** J98  
**Vul All** A72  
 JT72 A9  
 32 AT54  
 KT2 AQ73  
 KT65 QJ3

K863  
 KQ7  
 654  
 984

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	/	1H	/
1S	/	1NT	//

Board 23 in match 2 was nearly our undoing in a tight match. My rebid showed 15-17 with at least 4 hearts and less than 4 spades, and Therese did not consider trying for game with at most 24 HCPs between the 2 hands, and no fit.

In spite of the bid, South still led the S6, and with everything friendly, I made an easy 10 tricks for +180.

At the other EW had a similar start to the auction, but West invited with 2NT and of course East went to game with a maximum.

It must have been the presence of the 3 Tens that prompted West to invite with such a hand, and how vital they were too, as the black Tens were each worth a trick!

Lindy led the C9, but 10 tricks were still achieved and we lost 10 Imps when we could have gained 6 if 3NT had failed.

In spite of this board we still ground out a 7 Imps win, 16-14 in VPs.

**M 3**           KQT86  
**Bd 4**           9875  
**Dir W**          J4  
**Vul All**        96  
542  
J42  
AKT7  
AJ8  
  
                  J973  
                  T3  
                  Q8532  
                  54  
**W**           **N**           **E**           **S**  
1NT         /           2NT!       /  
3C          /           3H!        /  
4C          /           4S         /  
5C          /           6C         //

On board 4 in match 3 we were sweating on missed opportunities when I did not use RKCB to find out we had 13 tricks.

My 2NT forced 3C, and then 3H confirmed a club suit and at the same time was a slam try. 3S would have been similar but confirming diamonds.

4C set us on the slam path, but my 4S cuebid (seeming to deny heart control) did not help Therese so she signed off in 5C. I was looking for diamond controls, and would have happily bid 7C myself if I knew she had AK, but bid 6C anyway, hoping Therese had at least 2<sup>nd</sup> round control.

Since 4C confirms trump support, it would have been far easier for me to have bid 4NT, and over the 5D response, used 5NT to ask for Kings, which confirms we hold all the key cards.

If Therese has no Kings her response of 6C is passed, but either King in her hand will take care of my diamond loser so 7C would be the bid.

At the other table they just played in 5C, so yet again a Grand Slam would have led to little gain.

**M 3**           AK74  
**Bd 6**           J863  
**Dir E**          QJ876  
**Vul EW**        -  
JT82  
T752  
K  
T832  
  
                  3  
                  AK9  
                  A942  
                  A9754  
**W**           **N**           **E**           **S**  
/           1H!        /           1C  
//          /           /           2H

On board 6 in match 3 NS backed themselves into a corner by the wrong choice of initial bid.

There are many hands where South will have a difficult rebid after opening 1C if North responds 1S, but this time they escaped and 2H is a reasonable rebid.

However, North had a god hand, slightly flawed by the void in partner's opening bid, but worth 2 bids most of the time, especially when the second bid is likely to be at the one-level.

With these hands I believe that a 1D response is best, and that is what happened at the other table, and Richard and Lindy bid to 5D, making 12 tricks for +420. 7 is cold but only if you are psychic enough to drop the singleton King offside.

At our table North was not overly excited by his hand and passed it out in 2H, to which I led the CK. Even though 12 tricks are available by dropping the DK, North did not find a good line and only made 8 tricks for -110 and 7 Imps.

**M 4**           QT632  
**Bd 20**         J9  
**Dir W**          T74  
**Vul All**        863  
975  
AK2  
A653  
972  
  
                  J  
                  876543  
                  KQ9  
                  AJT  
  
                  AK84  
                  QT  
                  J82  
                  KQ54  
**W**           **N**           **E**           **S**  
1NT         /           2D         /  
2H          /           4H         //

On board 20 in match 4 after Therese opened 1NT (12-14) I transferred to hearts and bid game, which made 11 tricks when everything was breaking evenly.

An astute person may have noticed that the West hand only has 11 HCPs, but Aces are slightly undervalued, and when the King is also held in one of the Ace-suits, the hand is normally worth opening, especially if playing a weak 1NT.

Often you are completely at the mercy of your opponents as to how well you do, and this board was no exception, but we gained heavily because EW at the other table got mixed up.

At the other table West passed as dealer, and East opened with 1H, third in hand. EW were playing Drury, so West bid 2C to check up on East's opening bid, but East forgot and passed!

Because of the even breaks, West was able to cash 6 top winners and ruff 2 clubs for 8 tricks, but that was 11 Imps to us.

**M 5** Q763  
**Bd 9** T32  
**Dir N** T4  
**Vul EW** KQJ8  
 52 J  
 AK8764 9  
 QJ52 AK973  
 7 A95432  
 AKT984  
 QJ5  
 86  
 T6  
**W N E S**  
 3H / 1C! 2S  
 4S 5C //

Match 5 was against Braithwaite, where results count double, and on board 9 when I picked up the East hand I thought seriously about opening 1D to allow an easy rebid, and how I wished I had.

Our 2NT opening caters very well for the distribution, but it is either weak or strong, so minimum opening bids have to be opened at the one-level.

When 4S came back to me I would have liked to have bid 4NT to bring diamonds back into play, but was worried that Therese may prefer to rebid her 6-card heart suit in preference to a 4-card diamond suit, and I was right about that, so I hoped for the best and bid 5C.

Of course if I had doubled 4S, we can take this 4 off for +800, but that would have been another story.

When dummy hit the table I knew I was in trouble and did not play for the magic 3-3 club break that would have enabled me to get out for 1 off, which is just as well as I would have been more than 3 off, but still 14 Imps away against -600 for 5D at the other table.

**M 5** 983  
**Bd 12** 9862  
**Dir W** 98742  
**Vul NS** J  
 JT42 AQ75  
 KQ54 JT7  
 A5 KT  
 AQ6 K852  
 K6  
 A3  
 QJ63  
 T9743  
**W N E S**  
 1H / 1S /  
 3S / 4S //

On board 12 against Braithwaite in match 5 I was not particularly adventurous when Therese showed 15-17 and 4-card spade support, and simply bid game.

In just a game contract I was not tested by the lead of the DQ, and I was glad to see the Spade finesse lose and just claim 11 tricks for what looked like a flat board.

At the other table the contract was also just 4S, but by West, and years of Pairs play conditioned West to take the trump finesse after the CJ lead!

Sue was quick to win the SK and lead a high club for Lindy to ruff and return the suggested heart for another club ruff to set the contract, so we picked up +50 and 11 Imps after all.

This cancelled out my bad result on board 9 and enabled us to finish just 3 Imps down, but that was just enough to give them 16-14.

**M 6** 86  
**Bd 20** KQ93  
**Dir W** JT63  
**Vul All** J86  
 AQJ3 5  
 862 754  
 84 KQ72  
 K543 AQT97  
 KT9742  
 AJT  
 A95  
 2  
**W N E S**  
 / / 1C 1S  
 2S! / 3D /  
 3NT //

On board 20 in match 6 I was still smarting about a disaster on an earlier board in this match and I made an anti-percentage bid in the hope that we could regain the lost Imps, not normally a good idea, but on this occasion it was successful.

After Therese passed as dealer, I opened 3<sup>rd</sup> in hand with 1C and when Therese bid 2S to show a limit raise in clubs, I forced with 3D, hoping she had a spade stop, and she duly obliged.

There would have been no story if South had heeded his partner's S8 opening lead and with-held his SK, but he played the King at trick 1 and Therese had 8 tricks.

Now all she had to do was set up a diamond trick while NS were still in the dark about the hearts, so she led a diamond to dummy's King and South's Ace and held her breath while South considered his next play, before he led another spades and Therese checked out the club break and gratefully claimed 9 tricks for +600 and 11 Imps as EW only made 90 in 2C at the other table..

**M 6** AJ2  
**Bd 21** KT74  
**Dir N** 653  
**Vul NS** 643  
 T43 Q9765  
 - AQJ982  
 AQJ42 87  
 QT952 -  
  
 K8  
 653  
 KT9  
 AKJ87  
  

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	/	1H	2C
2NT	/	2S	/
4S	//	3S	/

On board 21 in match 6 I had a very good defensive hand if we had a fit, but a poor offensive hand, so having opened the bidding with 1H I elected to bid my 2<sup>nd</sup> suit rather than allow Therese to pass out 2CX.

Therese carefully chose 2NT over my 2S to allow me to complete my hand pattern, and when I rebid spades, raised to game in that suit.

I ruffed the opening lead of the CA and took the diamond finesse as I had no hope without that, and then I cashed the DA (a mistake) and when South did not drop the DK I ruffed a diamond back to hand.

Next I cashed the HA and led the HQ for effect, but when it was not covered I ruffed in dummy and ruffed a club and another heart and a club finishing in hand to lead a 4<sup>th</sup> heart. Since I only had 1 trump left in each hand South could ruff with the SK and lead a trump, and North would take the last 3 tricks with trumps for 1 off. However he discarded the CJ and the ST was my 10 trick, and the club off the table was ruffed small by North and the SQ was my 11 trick. Same contract at the other table but only 10 tricks for a measly 1 Imp.

**M 6** A8  
**Bd 25** AK65  
**Dir N** 5  
**Vul EW** AKT873  
 QJT954 K762  
 QJT 932  
 9 KQT763  
 Q42 -  
  
 3  
 874  
 AJ842  
 J965  
  

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
4S	1C	2D	3C
//	5C	5D!	X

Board 25 in match 6 was the disaster that often kills a teams chances, or at least their morale.

We had recently changed some aspects of the system and I was not sure what the 4S bid meant, as since it was a jump in a new suit, it could have been a splinter agreeing diamonds, or as it was a jump into game, a fit-showing bid.

I decided that either way it should show diamonds, so I had any easy sacrifice over 5C. The double by South shook my convictions a lot, and I almost pulled it to 5S, but that would have been disastrous if it was a splinter, so in the mess I stayed.

At the other table they played in 5C making 12 tricks for +420, so 5 off and -1400 was 14 Imps away instead of only 2 Imps for 2 off in 5SX.

Luckily we scraped up enough on the other boards to hold it to a 2 Imps loss, 15-15 in VPs.

**M 7** 2  
**Bd 2** QT653  
**Dir E** QJ986  
**Vul NS** A2  
 AK5 QJ98743  
 - 974  
 7432 -  
 JT9653 KQ8  
  
 T6  
 AKJ82  
 AKT5  
 74  
  

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
/	5H	/	X
5S	/	/	6H
6S	/	/	X
//			

Board 2 in match 7 caused excitement all around the room, and our auction was repeated a few times, but not at the other table in our match.

After a similar start to the auction, West at the other table must have been looking at some other cards as they bid 4NT in response to the 4S opening, or maybe it was a bluff bid to deter NS from entering the auction on their likely 10-card heart fit.

Sue showed great restraint when West signed off in 5S following the 5C response to 4NT, and how right she was! Neither of her red AKs took a trick, the only defensive trick being Lindy's CA.

The results that I saw had one team gaining a swing from doubled spade contracts, sometimes at the 4-level. I did not hear of any, but there must have been a few 1210s that were flat.

When I saw dummy I was concerned about a possible club ruff, so ruffed the heart lead and drew another round of trumps before leading the CK, but if I had been prepared to rely on a 2-1 break in trumps, could have ruffed all the hearts.

**M 7** K86  
**Bd 5** T4  
**Dir N** AJ732  
**Vul NS** AT4  
 Q92 JT754  
 K965 82  
 Q8 K65  
 KQ32 875  
  
 A3  
 AQJ73  
 T94  
 J96  
  
**W** **N** **E** **S**  
 / 1D / 2H  
 / 2NT / 3NT  
 //

On board 5 in match 7 declarer forgot the basic rule of removing the entry to the danger hand first, and paid the penalty of going off in a cold contract.

2H was natural and just showed an opening hand, and without 3-card support, North showed the balanced hand with 2NT, raised to game by South.

I led the S5 and was pleased to see Therese's SQ, which declarer correctly ducked.

Declarer won the next spade on the table and advanced the DT, covered by Therese, and won by declarer, who now, having set up my entry, made the serious mistake of taking the heart finesse.

Therese wanted to duck the HT to deny the rest of the hearts, but a quick count only came to 8 tricks, so she won the HK and led a spade.

After running the hearts, declarer led a diamond and I was able to take 2 more spade tricks for 1 off. At the other table Lindy made no mistake and we gained 12 Imps.

**M 8** A872  
**Bd 18** KQ94  
**Dir E** T3  
**Vul NS** AT5  
 JT953 6  
 8 AJ732  
 K9874 62  
 83 K9762  
  
 KQ4  
 T65  
 AQJ5  
 QJ4  
  
**W** **N** **E** **S**  
 2H //

On board 18 in match 8 a bad split in trumps worked in my favour.

South wanted to bid over my 2H opening showing 5+/5+ in hearts and a minor, but the lack of a heart stop prevented 2NT, and the lack of a 4<sup>th</sup> spades shied them off doubling.

When it was North's turn to bid, a similarly good hand, but the length in hearts suggested shortage in South's hand, so the absence of a double placed the missing points with Therese, so pass won out again.

A trumps was led and needing to get as many tricks with ruffs as possible, I exited with a spade. Since both minor suit Kings were well placed, and I was able to get in 4 ruffs, I made 7 tricks for -50.

At the other table Lindy and Sue found their way to 3NT and made 10 tricks for +630 and 11 Imps.

**M 8** A5  
**Bd 20** J3  
**Dir W** KJT763  
**Vul All** Q87  
 KJ942 QT7  
 AQ92 K4  
 Q5 A982  
 32 KT64  
  
 863  
 T8765  
 4  
 AJ95  
  
**W** **N** **E** **S**  
 1S 2D 3C /  
 3H / 3S /  
 3NT //

On board 20 in match 8 Therese needed very little in diamonds in my hand to make Q5 a stopper, so bid 3NT when I showed spade support after forcing to game with 3C.

I was certainly pleased with 3NT considering my diamond values, and a little surprised that Therese had a stopper.

North led the DT, which Therese let run around to her DQ and led another diamond, forcing North to use another honour, so now we had another stopper and could set about the spades.

North did shift to a club in response to South's signal on the 2<sup>nd</sup> diamond, but the honours in dummy prevented them from cashing any more than 4 tricks, and faulty discarding on the run of the spades gave her an extra trick for +630.

At the other table EW played in the popular contract of 4S, which when off on the club lead and diamond return, for 12 Imps.