

## 2016 Toowoomba Congress by Richard Wallis

For the first time in many years Therese and I ventured to Toowoomba for their annual Congress, which, when it started in May 1960, was the first bridge congress in Australia! Consider how much bridge congresses have proliferated since then, as we now have a couple of alternative congresses every weekend.

We had a warm-up in the Swiss Pairs on Saturday, which was just as well, as we were a little rusty, languishing in the lower half of the field for most of the day and only getting up to 9<sup>th</sup> with a good score in the last round. Ivy Luck and Ralph Parker hit the lead after round 5, and jostled for the lead with 3 other pairs before getting back to the front after match 10 (of 11) and staying there, with Murray Perrin / Neville Francis in second and Henry Eastment / Adiran Mayers third.

For the teams on Sunday and Monday, Tony Hutton and Richard Ward came up on Sunday and we gelled together pretty well for a comfortable win. In the non-official IMP datums, based on average scores, Tony and Richard, not unexpectedly, finished on top. Murray and Neville were second in the teams, playing with Patrick Bugler and Tim Runting, and Henry Eastment and Adrian Mayers, playing with Pat Larsen and Liz Zeller came in third.

As usual, TBC treated the players very well, with lunch provided each day and copious amounts of cakes, biscuits and fruit throughout the day, culminating in a supper at end of play on Saturday and Monday. The only negative as far as the slower players were concerned is that much of the supper was gone before they had finished playing.

<b>M 11</b>	96			Board 28 in the 8 <sup>th</sup> and last match of the pairs showed what a cruel game this is sometimes, but this hand also illustrates that when you have plenty of high cards and yet the opponents double a freely bid slam in a suit, look for bad distribution and consider Notrumps.
<b>Bd 28</b>	T976532			
<b>Dir W</b>	9543			
<b>Vul NS</b>	-			
K742		AQJT		From the bidding I knew that East had at least 4 hearts, thus Therese has 0,1 or 2, so I had already decided to lead the H2, hoping for a club return if she can ruff, or if she had the SA.
QJ		AK84		
87		K6		
AQ973		KJ4		After the double of 6H, asking for the lead of dummy's first-bid suit, the heart lead was marked, and Therese ruffed as expected and looked long and hard at the lead of the H2, as East is unlikely to have more than 3 hearts, so I am marked with a 6-card suit at least.
	853			
	-			
	AQJT2			Finally she made sure of setting the contract by cashing the DA, then returned a club for me to ruff and we took the first 5 tricks for 4 off and +800 and a top.
	T8652			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	Holding 21 HCPs opposite an opening bid, slam should only be defeated by ruffs, so East should bid 6NT to protect the DK, and then unless Therese cashes the DA at trick 1 there are 13 tricks.
1C	/	1H	/	
1S	/	4NT	/	
5H	/	6S	X	
//				

<b>M 1</b>	A52				On board 5 in the first match, not knowing it was Therese who had the best hand, I took advantage of the Vulnerability to jump to 3D over North's 1C opening, and South obviously passed.
<b>Bd 5</b>	Q93				
<b>Dir N</b>	4				
<b>Vul NS</b>	AQT853				Since a 2D jump would show a 6-card suit, Therese expected a 7-card suit for the double jump, and even if it was T9876543, there was a good chance of 9 tricks, so she tried 3NT, and North led the CA and a small club. Note the D2 would allow her to enter dummy.
KQ9874				-	
A4				K6	
AK2				QT97653	
K4				J962	
	JT63				Since I had the expected 7-card suit and a bonus HK, she had 10 easy tricks for +430, which seemed a normal result to me at the time, except a heart lead from North would have restricted the contract to just 9 tricks!
	JT8752				
	J8				
	7				
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>		At the other table I did not get the bidding, but West missed their best fit and subsided in just 3S where West ended up with only 4 losers for -140 to us and a total of 7 Imps.
	1C	3D!	/		
3NT	//				

<b>M 2</b>	98				On board 18 in the second match South had 2 viable actions for a rebid, and in my opinion he chose the wrong one when he rebid 1S, even if it confirmed at least 4 clubs.
<b>Bd 18</b>	A763				
<b>Dir E</b>	Q632				
<b>Vul NS</b>	KQT				South's diamond stopper could be more important than his motley club and spades suits, and this was especially so when North next showed some form of diamond stopper as well by rebidding 1NT.
QJ2				KT73	
92				JT85	
AJT54				87	
A95				J62	
	A654				South then offered North a heart part-score, and she accepted, but the bad break meant she had too much to do, and after the lead of the D8 finished with only 7 tricks for +100 to us.
	KQ4				
	K9				North was a little too good for a 1NT rebid, and even then she could have tried again with 2NT, but played from the wrong hand, 3NT is bound to fail.
	8743				
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>		At the other table the bidding started out the same, but Tony did rebid 1NT, and Richard raised to game. According to Deep Finesse, this can be defeated, but West led a diamond and Tony came to 9 tricks for +600, and 12 Imps.
	/	/	1C		
1D	1H	/	1S!		
/	1NT	/	2H		
//					

<b>M 3</b>	JT765				On board 14 in the third match I had too much potential to open 1D and risk being passed, so I started the ball rolling with 2C, and Therese's 2D response showed nothing about diamonds, but at least one control.
<b>Bd 14</b>	Q963				
<b>Dir E</b>	9				
<b>Vul Nil</b>	J86				Unfortunately this has the effect of making her hand the declarer, which puts my club holding at risk. When she set diamonds as trumps with her 4D rebid, I could then either cue-bid or ask for Key Cards with 4NT.
KQ8				32	
A				J542	
AKQJT2				8743	
K32				A97	
	A4				I possibly should have asked for Aces, but since my hand will be on the table, it is the CA I want, not the SA, so I cue-bid with 4H, and to my delight she bypassed 4S and showed a control with 5C. If all Therese had was the HK, I would not expect her to show a singleton club at this point, so I assumed it was the Ace and took the plunge.
	KJ5				
	65				South led the SA and Therese was able to claim the rest of the tricks very quickly for +920.
	QT54				
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>		At the other table EW had a bidding misunderstanding and stopped in just 3D, so we gained 13 Imps.
	/	/	/		
2C	/	2D!	/		
3D	/	4D	/		
4H	/	5C	/		
6D	//				

**M 4** 43  
**Bd 24** KJ85  
**Dir W** KQT83  
**Vul Nil** 52  
KJT962 A87  
Q2 A94  
AJ6 95  
KJ A9863

Q5  
T763  
742  
QT74

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
1S	/	2C!	/
2S	/	3S	/
4C	/	4H	/
4NT	/	5C	/
5D	/	5H	/
6S	//		

On board 24 in the 4<sup>th</sup> match I forced to game with 2C, and then showed my spade support and a better than minimum hand with 3S rather than jump to game. I do not have any major fillers, but I do have 3 Aces and a 5-card side suit.

Therese showed some slam interest by cue-bidding 4C, and I responded with 4H, which denied even second-round diamond control. Therese then asked about Key Cards with 4NT, and over my 5C reply (3041), she then asked for the SQ which I denied.

North had an easy lead of the DK, which Therese won and led the SJ towards dummy, for effect, rising with the SA to lead the S7, covered by South, perforce.

Now a club ruff revealed there was more work to do, so she led the DJ to put North in, and ruffed the diamond return in dummy to ruff another club and set up a discard for the heart and thus 12 tricks and +980.

At the other table West played in game, and only made 11 tricks, so we gained 11 Imps. A heart lead is the most challenging, but with the finesse on side, slam is easy.

**M 5** AK  
**Bd 2** JT7  
**Dir E** Q876  
**Vul NS** J764  
63 QJ98752  
KQ82 954  
JT93 A2  
952 Q

T4  
A63  
K54  
AKT83

<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>
		4S	//

On board 2 in the fifth match I made it as difficult as possible for NS by opening with 4S on the East cards.

This found South with a modest opening bid, but only 3 hearts and 3 diamonds, and he did not know what to bid, but gave the matter a lot of thought before finally passing.

Now when Therese passed, it was North's turn to bid, but he did not have any clear-cut action either, and while he must have suspected a double would reap a reward, South's long hesitation was enough to confirm it would be the right action so he passed.

South led the CA and switched to the D4, which set up a pitch for my 3<sup>rd</sup> heart if the HA was not onside, so 2 off and -100 was the result.

At the other table East only opened 3S, Tony doubled, and Richard bid 3NT, which had 9 easy tricks for +600 and 11 Imps.

**M 6** 6  
**Bd 19** 984  
**Dir S** J63  
**Vul EW** KQT865  
Q9542 JT8  
6 AT52  
A52 KQT984  
A732 -

AK73  
KQJ73  
7  
J94

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

On board 19 in the sixth match, knowing Therese was short in hearts from the bidding and my holding, I bid a practical 4S over North's simple raise to 2H, and thought to myself that South's penalty double was probably based on potential club tricks that were negated by my void. This was not the case, South thought he had 3 trump tricks.

North led the H9 and Therese won on the table and led the SJ, which held, followed by the ST, won by South who led the HK which Therese ruffed and led to the DK on the table. Later Therese realized that the second trump lead gave South a chance.

Now Therese led the DT, which South made the mistake of ruffing, Therese pitching the DA, and now, since Therese had the CA, 10 tricks were cold for +790. The key to beating 4S is ruffing the 3<sup>rd</sup> diamond and cashing the SA and cashing hearts and clubs since dummy is now dead. Versus -620 at the other table was 5 Imps.

If my hand is declarer, the AT52 in my hand protects against the heart force, and makes 4S cold.

**M 7** T5  
**Bd 7** AKJ653  
**Dir S** A72  
**Vul All** K2  
 6 AQJ932  
 T97 84  
 Q65 T84  
 AQT987 42  
 K874  
 Q2  
 KJ93  
 J65  
**W N E S**  
 / / / /  
 3C 1H 1S 2NT  
 // 3H / 4H

On board 7 in the seventh match I could not make a jump bid of 2S in our system as that would show a slightly stronger hand, and that worked against declarer during the play.

South showed almost an opening bid with her 2NT response, and Therese bid her clubs, over which North showed the extra heart, prompting South to bid game in hearts.

I led the C4, which Therese won with the CA and returned the S6, which was an obvious singleton from what I held and could see in dummy, so I won the SA and led back the SQ.

North was suspicious of the spade layout and thought about ducking, to keep his SK for a later discard, but succumbed to temptation and played the SK which was ruffed by Therese who returned a low club.

Declarer could still make 10 tricks by winning the second heart on the table and leading the DJ for a finesse, intending to finesse the D9 if the DJ was covered, but he took the normal diamond finesse and finished 1 off for 12 Imps to us versus +620 from the other table.

**M 7** 65432  
**Bd 12** 987432  
**Dir W** -  
**Vul NS** 83  
 KQJT9 A  
 6 AKQ5  
 A63 J952  
 AT64 KQJ2  
 87  
 JT  
 KQT874  
 975  
**W N E S**  
 1S / 2C! /  
 3C / 4C /  
 4D / 4NT /  
 5H / 6C //

Board 12 in the seventh match was too hard to assess, especially when I had such a poor diamond holding and only a singleton in Therese's first-bid suit.

I forced to game with 2C, which could be based on a 2-card holding, and we were off to a good start when Therese bid 3C, showing her second suit.

Since I was worried about diamonds, I set clubs by bidding 4C, hoping for Therese to show first or second round diamond control, and she obliged. RKCB confirmed she had the DA, but there was no way to count 13 tricks so I settled for 6C.

South led the DK, and when dummy tracked I could see that a grand slam was possible in 3 denominations, with 7NT frigid. The 7C I had been considering was immediately scuttled when North ruffed the DA, but I had an easy 12 tricks after that and scored up +920, for a potential loss.

At the other table EW subsided in 3NT for -520, so we gained 9 Imps.

**M 8** T7543  
**Bd 22** J842  
**Dir E** Q  
**Vul EW** A54  
 - Q982  
 A73 Q965  
 KJ97652 AT3  
 T76 32  
 AKJ6  
 KT  
 84  
 KQJ98  
**W N E S**  
 3D X / 1C  
 / 4S // 3S

On board 22 in the eighth match North got a bit pushy when he made a negative double over Therese's 3D overcall and South bid spades.

He got lucky in that South had a very good hand with a good fit for his hand and 4S should be makeable.

Therese led the D7 and declarer ruffed the second round and led a top spade, finding out about the certain trump loser. A club to dummy allowed one finesse, but I could not be denied a trump trick.

He then led out the top clubs in hand and I ruffed the 3<sup>rd</sup> club and led a heart, putting South to a guess.

South guessed wrongly and played the HK, leading to 4 losers and +50. Bearing in mind that Therese bid 3D at adverse vulnerability, it is highly unlikely that she did not have the HA, and possibly the HQ as well, so the HT was the only chance.

At the other table Tony did not make any mistake and another +420 was worth 10 Imps.