

## 2018 Qld Open Pairs by Richard Wallis

NSBC were again the hosts for the 2018 Queensland Open Pairs, and along with Alan Gibson as director, they put on a very good show. As has been the norm for most of the last two decades, numbers were down to below 23 tables, which meant that we were playing a complete round-robin over the event. This creates a lot more work for the club with many more sets of boards required but, from a player's viewpoint, is the fairest way to run it. Forty-two pairs meant 41 3-board matches.

Following our surprise success at last year's Open Pairs in our first game together, Lyn Carter and I fronted up again on October 13 to try for back-to-back victories. We started out well, being in the lead most of Saturday, but late on Saturday afternoon the hiccups started, and they reached a crescendo in the afternoon session on Sunday, during which I do not remember ever making so many careless plays and poor bids.

Richard Ward, having come second in 2016 with his sister Lindy Vincent, and again last year with Therese Tully, teamed up with Lindy again this year and they had a convincing win, with consistent scores throughout. Second were Eileen Li and Charlie Lu, with Neville Francis and Magnus Moren in third place, and Ralph Parker and John Mills taking out fourth prize. The best regional pair, in fifth place, was Ian Afflick and Terrence Sheedy.

<b>M 1</b>	AJT9				This was the first hand of the event and I was West. I looked at my cards I was sure that I would bid my 8-card club suit but, at equal vulnerability and before North had made a bid, I did not know how high that would be!  However, when Lyn overcalled North's 1D opening with 1H, it seemed more appropriate to have a go at 4H, considering my ruffing potential in 2 suits.  South's 3D response was meant to be weak, but North did not read it like that and bid 5D over 4H expecting it to make. Since we had distributional hands without quick tricks, neither of us bid again, nor did we double!  Lyn led the HQ, and North duly lost to our 2 aces and the SK, thus we scored up +50, which seemed poor reward for our likely game. We actually got 68%, because 2 declarers made 11 tricks in hearts, 2 made 10, and the other 10 declarers made 8 or 9!
<b>Bd 1</b>	K				
<b>Dlr N</b>	QJT84				
<b>Vul Nil</b>	AJ6				
Q			K652		
AT6			QJ9543		
7			A6		
KQT75432			8		
	8743				
	872				
	K9532				
	9				
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>		
	1D	1H	3D		
4H	5D	//			
<b>M 2</b>	643				The bidding was short and sweet, and looked to be going very well for us when West finished in 6S after a simple auction, and I was on lead with an AK!  West has a very poor opening bid, and his Gerber responses showed 0 aces and 1 king, but that did not deter East from going on to slam with such poor diamonds! Holding 3 aces herself, East could identify that the DA was missing, and if the DK was also missing, slam is likely to be down.  Sitting North, I confidently led the DA, but was set back on my heels when declarer claimed as soon as dummy was placed on the table, as he had an undisclosed singleton diamond!  Looking through the results, 11 out of 21 pairs bid the slam, so we scored only 25% but I am sure most of them did so in the knowledge of the singleton diamond with West.
<b>Bd 4</b>	J2				
<b>Dlr W</b>	AKJ74				
<b>Vul All</b>	J85				
QJT82			AK97		
Q75			AK8		
Q			985		
KQ62			AT9		
	5				
	T9643				
	T632				
	743				
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>		
1S	/	4C	/		
4D	/	5C	/		
5H	/	6S	//		

<b>M 4</b>	A6532			
<b>Bd 10</b>	JT95			
<b>Dir E</b>	J53			
<b>Vul All</b>	9			
KJ987		T		
K6		Q2		
AKQ874		T962		
-		AKQ543		
	Q4			
	A8743			
	-			
	JT8762			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
		3C	/	
3D	/	5D	//	

Sitting West I had high expectations when I first saw my cards, but this was reduced when Lyn opened 3C as dealer!

Starting at the 3-level, it could be difficult to describe my hand, but Lyn quickly raised my 3D response to game, to which North led the C9.

When dummy went down I thought that I could make 12 tricks, so discarded my hearts on the top clubs, intending to lead the ST next, but I was quickly brought back to earth when North ruffed the CK!

However 11 tricks were still there, and we scored up +600, for a 73% result.

Five EWs got to slam, none successful, and two played in 3NT with only one successful, probably because of the difficulty of getting to dummy to cash the clubs and back to hand to cash the diamonds. Interestingly East can make 10 tricks since a heart entry can be preserved, but it was the West declarer in 3NT that made 9 tricks!

<b>M 5</b>	KQ65			
<b>Bd 13</b>	J8752			
<b>Dir N</b>	953			
<b>Vul All</b>	4			
97432		AJT8		
QT43		A		
Q8		AJT764		
AQ		93		
	-			
	K96			
	K2			
	KJT87652			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
	/	1D	2C	
X	/	2S	3C	
4S	/	/	5C	
X	//			

I had a modest hand after Lyn (East) opened 1D, improved by South's 2C overcall and I showed both majors by my negative double.

South repeated his clubs and, pleased with Lyn's choice of major, I jumped to game in spades.

South should have considered that his partner was marked with at least 4 spades by the bidding and passed, but spurred on by his 8-card suit he bid clubs for the third time and I closed out the auction with a double.

I led the DQ and Lyn won the DA, cashed the HA and returned the DJ, hoping I would ruff, but South won the DK and tried to cash the HK, ruffed by Lyn.

A diamond was returned, ruffed and over-ruffed, and I could cash the HQ for four off and +1100 and an equal top.

After winning the CQ at trick 1, the standard safety play of the spade finesse would have ensured 4S, and many made 10 or 11 tricks.

<b>M 9</b>	Q72			
<b>Bd 25</b>	Q65			
<b>Dir N</b>	AQ98642			
<b>Vul EW</b>	-			
AJT5		K9864		
T932		84		
-		J73		
T7632		AQJ		
	3			
	AKJ7			
	KT6			
	K9854			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
	1D	/	2C	
/	2D	/	2H	
/	3D	/	5D	
//				

I did not like opening a 3D pre-empt with a void and reasonable 3-card support for both majors, so I resolved to open just 1D and rebid the suit.

Lyn's 2C (game forcing) response was not a good start for my hand, but I marked time with 2D, and Lyn showed her major suit stopper with 2H, and thus doubt about spades.

I have a potential spade stopper, but I like to give a 7-card suit a chance to be trumps, so I bid 3D, which Lyn raised directly to game. This is especially so when the suit is broken as on this hand.

North could deduce Lyn's singleton spade from the bidding, so got off with the lead of the D3.

My reservations about my potential spade stopper proved to be well founded, as 3NT has no chance, but 5D was cold and the perfect fitting hands yielded 12 tricks and 68%.

**M 12** J7  
**Bd 2** Q4  
**Dir E** KQ8652  
**Vul NS** AJ5  
 Q65432 AT98  
 A952 J3  
 - 43  
 732 KT984  
  
 K  
 KT876  
 AJT97  
 Q6  
  
**W N E S**  
 / 2D / 1H  
 / 3NT // 3D

Lyn opened 1H as South so I took a punt at the most logical game of 3NT when Lyn raised my 2D to 3D, hoping Lyn had a stopper. However my hopes were shattered by the sight of dummy when East led the S8!

Luckily the SK held at trick 1 and I could run 8 tricks, putting enormous pressure on EW in finding their discards, especially West who had to find 5 discards, as I deliberately won the 5<sup>th</sup> diamond on the table to lead the CQ hoping for a reflex cover.

East's lead of the S8 was not the norm from their holding, the ST would have been my choice, and thus West placed me with better spades and discarded 3 of their own, thus I should have led a heart off the table for my 9<sup>th</sup> trick!

However luck was with me when I led the H4 after cashing the last diamond and West won the HA and returned a spade to East, who was end-played into giving me a club trick at the end and 10 tricks in all for a 90% score.

**M 23** J  
**Bd 4** T83  
**Dir W** KQJ832  
**Vul All** 986  
 A94 QT865  
 AKQJ84 76  
 7 AT6  
 J54 A32  
  
 K732  
 52  
 954  
 KQT  
  
**W N E S**  
 1H / 1S /  
 3H / 4H //

After opening 1H as West I invited game by jumping to 3H following Lyn's 1S response, and Lyn wisely chose 4H, rather than the viable other option of 3NT.

In 3NT, South has a normal lead of the CK, which gives up the CJ as a trick, but even the lead of the SQ next does not allow East any more than 11 tricks, since South will not cover.

If North leads the C9, 4H can be held to 11 tricks also, but North went for the throat by leading the SJ, covered in dummy and ducked by South.

Now there were 12 tricks by drawing trumps and giving up a spade, but I had visions of 13 tricks since I was convinced that there were 6 spades in the dummy.

Thus I only made 11 tricks for +650 and only 30%. Even +680 was only 55%, as 5 pairs made 13 tricks, probably when South covered the SQ.

**M 33** KT863  
**Bd 4** K96  
**Dir W** 972  
**Vul All** AK  
 - 972  
 A54 Q82  
 KJ8543 A6  
 JT42 Q9853  
  
 AQJ54  
 JT73  
 QT  
 76  
  
**W N E S**  
 / 1S / 3D!  
 /! 3S! //

On this board we were EW and were fixed up by South's ethical considerations! South bid 3D to show a limited hand with 4-card support with the intention of bidding 4S over North's response, since he had a 5<sup>th</sup> trump. I dare say that most Souths bid 4S immediately, as would I.

However, North took a long time to rebid 3S, so South felt ethically bound to accept North's bid at face value and passed!

I could have doubled 3D for the lead, but with such a limited hand myself and a spade void, did not want to give anything away, and Lyn led the S2.

When dummy went down I thought that we on a hiding to nothing as 9 tricks may have been the limit and so it proved.

Seventeen pairs went down in 4S; 1 made it and 3 made 9 tricks in 3S, so we only scored 10%.

<b>M 37</b>	QJ			
<b>Bd 17</b>	AQ963			
<b>Dlr N</b>	KQ92			
<b>Vul Nil</b>	42			
K762		85		
T82		J74		
A		T864		
J9763		KQ5		
	AT943			
	K			
	J753			
	AT8			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	1H	/	1S	
/	2D	/	3C!	
/	3H	//		

We had enough points for game, but a misfit in the majors suggested caution.

3NT has chances (it made twice), but the best declarer can do after the normal club lead is to cash 8 tricks. However thanks to suit texture, either red suit offers a viable part-score.

Lyn's 3C was fourth-suit forcing, and I normally play this as a GF, so I was surprised when she passed my 3H rebid!

North led the CK, and I took my eye off the ball when I won the CA at trick 1, cashed the HK and led the D3 off the table.

Now my mistake at trick 1 came back to haunt me when West won the DA and put East in with the CQ to lead a diamond for West to ruff. I still had a trump and the SK to lose so that was 1 off and -50 for only 37.5%.

I have to duck the CK to sever communication and then +140 is worth 75%.

<b>M 39</b>	QT4			
<b>Bd 22</b>	A6432			
<b>Dlr E</b>	9			
<b>Vul EW</b>	QT93			
KJ72		A865		
KT8		QJ		
KJ52		Q3		
J5		K7642		
	93			
	975			
	AT8764			
	A8			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
1S	/	1C	1D	
2NT	/	2S	/	
		3NT	//	

EW agreed spades, then West offered a NT contract which East accepted, as he too had something in diamonds.

I was on lead, and since I had controls in the other 3 suits and only 1 diamond, I did not think we could set up Lyn's suit while she still had any entries, so I looked for her to have something in hearts (even xxx is enough), by leading the H3.

West won the HQ on the table and took the losing spade finesse, so I knew I had a chance if Lyn had xxx in hearts, so I led the H2 and West won the HK to lead the D2 towards dummy.

Lyn won the DA and returned the H9, so I could cash my hearts, and exit with a club for 2 off.

Our +200 was matched by 3 other pairs (1 in 3NT and 2 in 4S), and 2 EW pairs went 3 down in 3NT, but still 72.5%.

<b>M 40</b>	Q			
<b>Bd 26</b>	T763			
<b>Dlr E</b>	T976			
<b>Vul All</b>	KQ84			
J953		K		
Q8		K52		
AJ2		KQ843		
J753		AT92		
	AT87642			
	AJ94			
	5			
	6			
<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	
/	/	1D	2S	
3NT	//	X	3S	

South made a weak-jump over Lyn's opening 1D, and I passed, intending to respond just 2NT to Lyn's expected reopening double.

However, South surprised by bidding her suit again, and now I upgraded my meagre spade holding and bid 3NT, since passing 3SX seemed a poor choice for the same reason.

North led the SQ and South won and returned the S4 and I briefly considered covering with the S5 which would have won the trick, but the S9 seemed more sensible.

I now have 8 tricks and a heart towards dummy would have given me at least 9, but it seemed better to develop the clubs, and so it proved, as I now had 10 tricks for +630 and 85%.

3SX would have been worth only +500, but almost the same score since only 5 pairs got to game. 2 NS pairs found their heart fit but for one, 5HX was too high and yielded -1400.

<b>M 41</b>	652	
<b>Bd 29</b>	J75	
<b>Dlr N</b>	J765	
<b>Vul All</b>	K97	
93		AKJ74
83		KT42
AKQT8		4
QT83		AJ2

QT8  
AQ96  
932  
654

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

My play typified my poor choices over the whole of Sunday.

I have a maximum hand for my 1NT response, but playing 2/1 I am not strong enough to respond 2D, as that would be a GF.

Obviously Lyn raised my trial bid to game and North was on lead with no clear-cut lead staring at him!

Obviously from the bidding I have the minors, and a maximum of 3 hearts, so North led the H5, hoping South could cope, and I had to do all of the work myself.

South won the HQ over the HT and led the D2, which I won in hand to lead the CT, which North conveniently covered!

When I won the CA I gave thought to leading the S4, which would have forced South to cash the HA or concede 11 tricks, but decided to cash my clubs ending in hand and I got into a complete muddle and went 1 down for 5%, although the 9 tricks I could have made was only 25%.