

2019 Kenmore Graded Teams by Richard Wallis

Each year to date the Kenmore Bridge Club Congress in January has been forced to close off the entries due to restricted space in their library venue. But in 2019 that changed with a move to the Jindalee Bowls Club, which allowed for double the numbers. By a quirk of fate, the National Open Teams in Canberra started a week earlier this year, so it was over by 28th January, and again KBC had to restrict entry, but this time to 42 tables.

I played in the Pairs on Sunday with Craig Francis where we were mid-field most of the time. The most interesting hand was Board 5 in the first match, where East held AKQJ4-void-A-QJT7543 and opened 1S!!!!, Persistent bidding of the clubs thereafter prompted West to jump to 6C and East promptly bid the cold grand slam. Despite this bottom on the first board, NS still finished with a big win in the match.

In the teams on Monday I played with Terry Strong for the first time, with Neville Francis and Tony Hutton for team mates, and while we were not dominant, we went through undefeated for a comfortable win. Terry and I played a relatively simple version of Standard, had few misunderstandings and it was a great day.

Match 1		65		<p>On Board 1 in the first match I had a good idea it was our contract in spades, but how high? It seemed unlikely that two passed hands would find a belated fit and end in a making game, but I needed very little from Terry, so just bid game myself and North was on lead with no guidance.</p> <p>In these circumstances, while the CA is a possibility to look at dummy, I normally lead my better suit, that needs less help from partner, and hearts just falls into that category by a single pip!</p> <p>This time the heart lead gave me a chance, while on any other lead I have 9 tricks only. I drew trumps and since I did not have the luxury of trying a diamond to the king first, I had to take the heart finesse, discard a club, ruff a heart and then lead to the DK on the table, losing 3 tricks for +420.</p> <p>At the other table Tony made a light 1D opening in 3rd seat and thus North had an easy lead of the D4, thus -140 and 7 imps.</p>
Bd 1	Q854			
Dir N	Q754			
Vul Nil	AQ9			
AKQJ982				<p>A1073 K862 J10652</p>
K9				
103				
73				
		10743		
		J62		
		AJ9		
		K84		
W	N	E	S	
4S	/	/	/	
	//			

Match 1		KJ4		<p>On Board 6 in the first match I did not open with a weak 2H in 3rd seat, discounting my stiff CK, because of my 4-card spade suit, and when North overcalled 1NT and It came back to me I was wary of the strong hand over me and passed. 2H may buy the contract and only goes 1 off since Terry had some useful values, of course it may provoke South into bidding on!</p> <p>On the lead of the HQ, 3NT has no chance, but sometimes you can have too good an alternative lead, and Terry had no reason not to lead the CQ, and now 1NT was cold for 9 tricks and -150.</p> <p>At the other table Neville ended up in 3NT, and again East had no reason to lead other than the CQ and thus 3NT made 9 tricks for +400 and 6 imps.</p>
Bd 6	A2			
Dir E	K10985			
Vul EW	A53			
A832				<p>10965 Q9 42 QJ1098</p>
KJ8654				
Q7				
K				
		Q7		
		1073		
		AJ63		
		7642		
W	N	E	S	
1H	1NT	/	/	
		//		

Match 3	A10862		<p>On Board 21 in the third match I feared a misfit when Terry rebid 2C over my 1S response, and I had nowhere to go!</p> <p>I finally decided to bid 2D (4th suit forcing), but rebid 3D over Terry's rebid, trying to play the hand in one of my suits. That way I get tricks with the honours in Terry's hand and trumps in my long suit.</p> <p>We had discussed in the morning that a raise of 4th suit showed 4-card support, and I was so surprised by the raise to 3D that I did not infer the spade void and passed!</p> <p>When dummy tracked it looked like a disaster as North led the D9, so the diamonds were likely 2-1, and a game had been missed. It was worse than that as, with everything so friendly, I had no trouble making 12 tricks for +170.</p> <p>At the other table EW had a complete disaster, stopping in 3H and making only 5 tricks for another +200, so we had gained a lucky 10 imps, and 5D making 12 would only have been 12 imps.</p>		
Bd 21	J105				
Dir N	9				
Vul NS	A865				
QJ953		-	<p>AK764 AQ75 J743</p>		
3					
1086432					
A			<p>K74 Q982 KJ K1092</p>		
W	N	E	S		
1S	/	1H	/		
2D	/	2C	/		
	/	3D!	//		

Match 4	KQ854		<p>On Board 25 in the 4th match we had a routine auction to 4H after Terry opened with a natural weak-two, and NS were silent throughout. South led the SA and Terry ruffed the 3rd spade and drew trumps in three rounds. Then, with the DQ in the right place for declarer, the club loser was discarded for 11 tricks and +650. Even if North had the DQ, the club could have still been discarded for 10 tricks.</p> <p>At the other table Neville was able to make a weak opening with his black suits, and the vulnerability was favourable for a sacrifice in 4SX. Double-dummy EW could have cashed 3 diamonds to discard a club from East and hold declarer to 6 tricks after the club ruff for -800, but of course this did not happen, so only 3 down and 4 imps in.</p>		
Bd 25	6				
Dir N	654				
Vul EW	QJ63				
632		J10	<p>A109853 K10 1094</p>		
KQ4					
AJ83					
AK8			<p>A97 J72 Q972 752</p>		
W	N	E	S		
4H	/	2H	/		
	//				

Match 5	A		<p>On Board 6 in the 5th match Terry and I did not have an opening bid to show a weak two-suiter, so he passed as dealer and NS had a quick auction to 4H, to which Terry led the DQ.</p> <p>Declarer must have been so happy to get the 4-card heart suit from South that she did not think of slam when she jumped to game, and looking at dummy, 7H looks to be a good contract.</p> <p>7H would have been scuttled by the 4-1 break, but, when the club suit behaved declarer had no trouble making 12 tricks for -480.</p> <p>At the other table Neville was more optimistic and finished in 6C, and, when dummy went down, no doubt he wished that he had been in 7C, so we gained 10 imps.</p> <p>I did hear some tales of woe from other declarers who did play in 7C or 7NT, going down on the 4-1 heart break, but both of these contracts are cold, making on a double-squeeze, spades and diamonds for East and hearts and diamonds for West, so the D6 could have taken the 13th trick.</p>		
Bd 6	9842				
Dir E	K7				
Vul EW	AKQ854				
J96		K10872	<p>7 QJ1054 97</p>		
J1053					
982					
J103			<p>Q543 AKQ6 A63 62</p>		
W	N	E	S		
/	2C	/	1NT		
/	4H!	//	2H		

Match 5	K9752		<p>On Board 7 in the 5th match I missed a vital chance to make my contract and lost a third trick to the stiff HK.</p> <p>Terry's 3D over the 1-level overcall was still Bergen, 10-12 with 4-card support, so I took the plunge over 4S by South, instead of doubling for a likely +500.</p> <p>I have 24 HCPs and North overcalled and South jumped to 4S, so the outstanding 16 HCPs are likely to be evenly divided.</p> <p>North led the S5 (denying the K-Q or Q-J), marking her partner with either the K, Q-J or K-J so I should have led a diamond at trick 2, to find out who had the DA. If North wins the DA, I have a potential discard on the DK, but when South proves to have the DA, that gives him his share of the HCPs, and North is odds-on to have the HK.</p> <p>Thus the finesse is bound to lose and laying down the HA would have been a good bet, leading to +650. Declarer at the other table also took the losing heart finesse in 5H so it was a flat board.</p>				
Bd 7	K						
Dir S	109643						
Vul All	73						
108		A3					
AQJ952		10743					
QJ		K852					
A52		K109					
	QJ64						
	86						
	A7						
	QJ864						
W	N	E	S				
1H	1S	/	/				
5H	//	3D	4S				

Match 6	K95		<p>On Board 15 in the 6th match Terry had a difficult hand to bid when North responded 1H to South's 1D opening bid, as his heart holding may not be fully effective.</p> <p>Some sort of game try appears warranted, and Terry chose 3D which I was happy to raise to game since I had something good in diamonds and a maximum for my simple 2S raise.</p> <p>4H is cold by East, as a club lead from North will scuttle the contract if my hand is declarer, and a club lead also easily beats 4SW. To beat 4SE, South has to lead a trump, allowing North to win and switch to a club as losers in spades, hearts and diamonds are inevitable.</p> <p>South led the DA and DQ so Terry pitched a club on the DK, returned to hand with the CA and took the losing spade finesse. Now North led a heart for South to ruff but this was a loser anyway, so Terry was able to enter dummy twice in trumps to repeat the heart finesse for 10 tricks and +420.</p> <p>This was +7 imps versus -140 for 3S making at the other table.</p>				
Bd 15	K987						
Dir S	54						
Vul NS	9432						
AJ10		Q8643					
10652		AQJ43					
K1093		7					
Q5		A6					
	72						
	-						
	AQJ862						
	KJ1087						
W	N	E	S				
/	1H	1S	1D				
2S	/	3D	2C				
4S	//		/				

Match 7	Q75		<p>On Board 18 in the 7th match I passed on the first round of bidding, planning to possibly bid clubs later if it seemed prudent. North balanced with 2D perhaps a little light for his bid. But South took him seriously and made a game try with 2NT. Since North had help in spades and a reasonable 6-card suit, he accepted the invitation.</p> <p>Since I only had 1 spade to lead, I thought I would lead my suit, and laid the C6 on the table.</p> <p>Terry won the CA, perforce, and led the H2. I won the HT, cashed the HK and exited with the H8, and Terry was end-played again!</p> <p>All Terry could do was cash the DA to set the contract for +100 to us.</p> <p>At the other table EW ended up in 4S which was way too high and 2 down was another +100 and 5 imps.</p>				
Bd18	753						
Dir E	KJ8653						
Vul NS	K						
3		K109642					
K108		AJ2					
92		A104					
10876542		A					
	AJ8						
	Q964						
	Q7						
	QJ93						
W	N	E	S				
/	2D	1S	/				
//	3NT	/	2NT				