

Wollstonecraft Pairs

If you're looking for a matchpoint pairs congress in the Sydney area, Wollstonecraft Bridge Club runs one each year, and it is popular. This year the event was held on 27th September 2015 with maximum entries.

by RAKESH KUMAR



Rakesh Kumar describes himself as an enthusiastic non-expert who makes enough errors to have plenty of material for bridge columns.

There aren't too many weekend matchpoint pairs congress events in the Sydney area – I've only been able to identify 5 in the NSWBA calendar. However, Wollstonecraft Bridge Club runs one each year, and it is popular – this year the maximum number of entries for the event was 20 tables and the room was full. The eventual winners were *Heather Cusworth – Peter Jeffery*, who qualified first in their direction in the morning and had a very steady afternoon session. *Julian Abel – Rakesh Kumar* were second, with *Patricia Matheson – Judith Twigg* in third place.

Tight defence is always important at matchpoints. Julian Foster – Sophie Ashton got us off to a flying thud with their defence on this hand in the morning session:

Board 2

Dealer E | Vul N-S

<p>♠ 975 ♥ AJ864 ♦ ♣ KQ964</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td> </td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p>♠ AJ643 ♥ 93 ♦ T6 ♣ AJ85</p> <p>♠ Q82 ♥ KT72 ♦ AK982 ♣ 2</p> <p>♠ KT ♥ Q5 ♦ QJ7543 ♣ T73</p>
	N										
W		E									
	S										

	10	
10		12
	8	

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	1	–	–	–	–
S	1	–	–	–	–
E	–	–	3	–	2
W	–	–	3	–	1

Like almost everyone, we ended up in 4H by West. However, unlike the 14 pairs who made this contract, we had no chance. Sophie led ♠A, followed by a low spade to partner's king. On the club return, she gave Julian a ruff. That was a quick and merciless 8% for us!



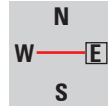
Here is an interesting oddity, also from the morning. What would you do as East? Vulnerable against not, an opening of 3H in first seat seems moderately insane even at matchpoints. But if East passes and West opens 1S, this may well get passed out! That's exactly what happened at 4 tables. Perhaps East can justify some sort of weak 2-bid given the extra length. I opened 2H, ostensibly showing 5 hearts, a 4+ minor and 5-9 hcp. Partner got very interested and promptly bid 4NT, but when I admitted to only 1 keycard, he stopped in 5H. As it turned out, this easily yielded 12 tricks on a spade lead.

Board 22

Dealer E | Vul E-W

♠ 974
♥ Q9
♦ AKJT
♣ J972

♠ AQJ653
♥ AJ4
♦ 2
♣ AK3



♠ KT87532
♥ 8763
♣ T4

♠ KT82
♥ 6
♦ Q954
♣ Q865

11
19 3
7

W	N	E	S
		2H	P
4NT	P	5D	P
5H			

If west opens 1S after 3 passes, it gets passed out

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	-	1	6	3	3
W	-	1	6	3	3

In fact 9 pairs did reach game, 4 tried for slam but stopped in 5H, while 2 actually bid 6H. The play is interesting if South leads a heart and North later rises with the ♦A to play another heart. However, East has enough entries to be able to set up the spades, losing just a diamond trick.

The first 7 pairs both NS and EW qualified from the morning session to the final. Somehow, we squeaked into the 7th spot. In the afternoon, though, there were once again plenty of occasions when things did not go well for us. For example, there was this:

Board 5

Dealer N | Vul N-S

♠ J6
♥ Q642
♦ A94
♣ KT75

♠ A54
♥ 87
♦ KQT2
♣ Q942



♠ K9873
♥ AK5
♦ 873
♣ 63

♠ QT2
♥ JT93
♦ J65
♣ AJ8

10
11 10
9

W	N	E	S
		P	P
?			

To pass or to open?

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	-	1	-	-
S	-	-	1	-	-
E	1	2	-	3	1
W	1	2	-	3	1

If you believe in the Rule of 15 (*points + spades = 15 or more to open in 4th seat*) then as West after 3 passes, you will pass, won't you? Three EW pairs out of 7 did pass out this hand. Paul Weaver didn't, instead choosing to open 1D and pass partner's 1S response. Nine tricks were duly made, giving us another 8% score!

Wollstonecraft Pairs winners – Heather Cusworth and Peter Jeffery.



Later in the session, Witold Chylewski demonstrated excellent hand evaluation on this board:

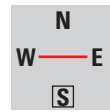
Board 19

Dealer S | Vul E-W

7
9 10
14

♠ J93
♥ A765432
♦ 9
♣ A4

♠ Q64
♥ Q
♦ KT853
♣ 9732



♠ 87
♥ KJT
♦ AQJ74
♣ QJ5

♠ AKT52
♥ 98
♦ 62
♣ KT86

W	N	E	S
			1NT
2D	P	2H	P
P	3D	3H	P
4H			

Showing 6+ major suit
pass or correct

	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	-	1	-	-	-
S	-	1	-	-	-
E	2	-	4	4	2
W	2	-	4	4	2

As South, I opened 1NT showing 14-17 hcp. Witold overcalled 2D, showing a 6+ major suit, partner passed and Warren Dobes bid 2H, pass or correct. Having a minimum overcall, Witold duly passed, and partner backed in with 3D. Warren, who might have had nothing but in fact was looking at a decent 10 hcp, now bid 3H. In the light of the bidding, Witold upgraded his hand and raised to 4H, which proved to be unbeatable. We earned a big fat zero for this one!

This wasn't our only zero, but fortunately quite a few good things came our way as well. Patricia Matheson – Judith Twigg apparently had an even more exciting ride than we did, with 3 zeros but 5 absolute tops – isn't that what matchpoint pairs is all about? 🍀