

Day 7 Asia Pacific Bridge Federation Championships, Hefei, China

Previous posts: [Day 1](#), [Day 2](#), [Day 3](#), [Day 4](#), [Day 5](#), [Day 6](#).

This is the last day of the teams championship. We are obviously in the best position since we are leading but today we play the other three contending teams – time to perform!

Match 5 RR 3 vs China (Hugh & George, David & Maurits)

We need to do well here – these are one of our rivals, currently running fourth and only 14 VPs behind us. A loss would make our position tenuous to say the least. George and I are playing the same pair that we played in our second RR win against China. This time it is on Viewgraph.

This felt terrible and we approached the score-up with some trepidation. David and Maurits produced the card that you want from good teammates. An unexpected 9 IMP win (45-36) for 12.36 VPs. This seems like a bullet missed.

[Board 17](#) saw the first board. Our Chinese opponents bid to 3NT and made when the diamonds divided 2-2. David and Maurits defended 2H for 2 down. 8 IMPs to them. This was a light game that we arguably pushed them into bidding by pre-empting on an unusual hand (I opened 2H showing 5 hearts and 8-11 HCP). Not a great start.

Two hands later on [Board 19](#) our opponents made a curious decision to play 3NT rather than the more obvious 4H in a 9-card fit. I led a D, the suit that George had opened. The contract failed by two tricks for +200 when teammates played the more pedestrian 4H at the other table. A 13 IMP gain.

[Board 20](#) was a slam decision. At our table I opened 1NT showing 15-17 HCP. I actually had 14 HCP with a 4-2-2-5 shape. When George transferred to hearts then invited with 4NT I had an easy pass. The lead of the C10 revealed a conservative decision by George. The wisdom of this soon became apparent when E showed out on the first C. I played safe for 10 tricks by winning the first C and playing the SK to set up my tenth trick in spades. West won and continued a spade. I now proceeded to misplay the rest of the hand missing the fairly obvious non-simultaneous double squeeze. As I cashed the club winners West had to keep the fourth spade and the four hearts so had to let go of diamonds. Now when I cashed the three hearts East was squeezed in hearts and clubs. Anyway I didn't see this and cashed my 10 tricks for +630. At the other table they tried 6C which went 2 down on the bad trump break. Another 13 IMPs in.

On [Board 24](#) George had a strong hand with a 5-4-0-4 shape. We bid to 5C in a 5-4 fit but my hand was not quite good enough to make 11 tricks. One down for -50 didn't feel great but gained 6 IMPs when the Chinese pair bid to 6C and were doubled for their trouble going two down for +300 to David and Maurits.

[Board 26](#) was a part-score swing. George opened 1NT and I bid 2C Stayman planning to pass any response. 2D turned out to be a 5-5 fit both tables making an easy 9 tricks when the opponents didn't find their H ruff. At the other teammates bought the contract in 2H making 10 on misdefence. Another valuable 7 IMPs.

[Board 27](#) was a tight slam decision that required some guesses. George opened 1S and this was passed to East who bid 2S showing at least 5-5 in Hearts and a minor. When partner showed some heart support and some values they bid 6H. I unfortunately chose to lead a diamond rather than a spade and declarer unblocked the clubs then played two top hearts – making easily. We will never know what would have happened if I had led a spade but I would be prepared to bet that they would have gone one down. At the other table S chose to open 4S (a strange decision in my opinion). David bid 4NT showing a two suited hand. Maurits bid 5D showing preference for D over clubs. David's 5H bid was passed making for an 11IMP loss.

[Board 28](#) saw George and I double the opponents into game and then fail to beat them. West opened 1C and I chose to overcall 1H rather than show both suits via a 2NT overcall. East

responded 1S, George passed, and the opener rebid 1NT. I could have bid 2D now but chose to pass. East rebid 2S and George doubled for penalties. West now rebid their 5 card club suit and George doubled them. The dummy was a pleasant sight for the declarer with unexpected 4-card support and a singleton. I could have beaten them by leading the HA and giving George two ruffs. Instead, I led a C and when west finessed against the HJ the contract made. Minus 470 and 12 IMPs away when teammates defended 3D for -130. A bad board for me both in the bidding and play.

This small win leaves us leading by 7 from Japan – our next opponents.

Match 6 RR 3 vs Japan (Hugh & George, David & Maurits)

A pivotal match against the team running second, again on Viewgraph. We all know that this may well decide the event.

A good win by 25 IMPs (46-21) for 16.21 VPs.

A great result which leaves us almost locked in for the win! We are more than 19 VPs ahead of Japan with one match to go. Our last opponents, Indonesia, are more than 20 behind in third so are no longer a direct threat. 1 VP will give us the win and even if we lose to 0 Japan will need to win 20-0 against China to get past us. A great position but we have all managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory in the past so we approach the last match determined to finish well!

Match 7 RR 3 vs Indonesia (Hugh & George, Phil & Terry)

We hung on for a 4 IMP win (22-18) for 11.28 VPs.

The quality of the bridge suffered from the stress and some element of fatigue.

We ended up winning the event by almost 22 VPs from Japan with Indonesia 2 more back in the bronze medal position. The host nation China were a close fourth. Three wins on the last day against the other place getters was a very satisfying way to end the event.

Time and celebrations have caught up with me. I will provide more details of the last two matches later. Saturday is the Zone 7 Play-off against NZ. No rest for the wicked!

All the scores and hands are available [here](#).