



Event 1: The Spring Nationals Womens Teams Qualifying

Margaret Bourke: Letter from Istanbul

When Anne asked me to write a short article on my Istanbul experience, I was on the eve of leaving for Turkey and confident that I was captaining a team that would do really well.

It was not to be -- the team finished a disappointing 12th of 21, with the top 8 qualifying for the Round of 16.

The post-mortem is easy -- the team lost 50 VPs on slams. Victory Points not imps!!! If the team had got 50% of the slam decisions right we would have qualified easily. It is a credit to the team that they were able to stay focussed and keen to the final board.

The tournament was held at the Grand Cevahir Hotel and Convention Centre -- a magnificent complex on the outskirts of Istanbul. The organisation was polished but there were initial teething problems in getting scores out on time and the many screen monitors rarely showed the correct progressive match score. It certainly makes one appreciate how lucky we are to participate in tournaments in Australia where high standards of organisation are the norm.

The World Bridge Federation is keenly promoting youth bridge. A University Bridge Tournament ran in parallel with the Transnational Mixed Teams during the second week. It was interesting to note that the age of many players in the Open and Women's teams is much younger than their counterparts in Australia. The Netherlands Open Team, (the silver medallists) has at least three players under 30, after a conscious national program to rejuvenate the team.

The hotel was about 30 minutes by taxi from the tourist areas of Istanbul -- the fabulous palaces of the Ottoman Empire, the mosques, the markets, the ferries to the Bosphorus and my favourite -- the Underground Cistern. The locals welcome the tourists but also see them as fair game and some of the contingent lost out to the pickpockets -- but we were warned.

Playing around - tournaments across OZ.

Helen Lowry: The Barrier Reef Congress

The Barrier Reef Congress is held each year over the long weekend in June. It is hosted by the bridge clubs in Cairns, Townsville and Mackay in turn.

In the great tradition of the country congress, this has to be a premium event. Many players do the full tourist bit and try to see as much as possible of the local area. They eat spectacularly well.... and often.

The competition is always lively, with some pretty committed local teams, as well as strong teams from Brisbane and interstate.

Next year the congress will be in Townsville and I'd recommend it to anyone. There is a lot to do and see and a lot of interesting history in the area. The Coral Sea Memorial is situated in wonderful gardens near the newly renovated Strand. Just stunning!



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PLAYER PROFILE:

BERRI FOLKARD

Profession: English/History teacher, first in high schools and then at TAFE.

Home: Beecroft, Sydney

Interests: Grandchildren (9!!), gardening, reading - fiction and non-fiction, travelling. (Berri and Ross have led a couple of bridge tours overseas.)

Bridge: Learnt to play as a teenager at home and had no formal lessons. As a young couple, she and Ross occasionally nipped out to play at bridge clubs - including Lindfield - while Grandma minded the babies. Other players would offer unsolicited advice on their play.

Proudest Bridge Achievement:
Member of Australian Women' s Team,
Monte Carlo, 2003

Playing around - tournaments across OZ

Barkley Walker: the Australian Swiss Pairs Championship

The Australian Swiss Pairs Championship was held at the Launceston Country Club Casino on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th October. This was an excellent venue for the 114 pairs who entered the event, with

outstanding grounds and gardens adjoining a carefully laid out 18-hole golf course. The weather was crisp and sunny and the atmosphere was relaxed: God was smiling on bridge players.

The event attracted some of the better Australian and New Zealand players, including several who were about to leave for the World Championships in Turkey, as well as an eclectic mix of Tasmanians. This is an important event for the state as it gives local players a chance to play at a much higher level than normal.

My wife and I were the ' house pair' and unfortunately did not play. This gave me a great chance to learn about bridge players rather than bridge. A very interesting experience. My education began when entries started to arrive. I was particularly impressed by some of the e-mail addresses: bidslam.....au, twoovertthree.....au, and deepfinesse.....au. It was revealing to match the addresses with the players.

The last ABF newsletter had names such as David Lusk, Margaret Bourke, Ishmael Del' Monte, Bruce Neill, Pauline Gumby and Peter Gill in it. It was interesting to match faces with names. Looking through my fringe of grey hair some of these looked so young.....

Next year the Aust. Swiss Pairs will be held in Hobart, a visitor' s heaven, whether it be just for a weekend of bridge and fine food, or for a longer stay.



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Ed: Anne Bates

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To top off a week of high quality bridge, why not play in:

THE MISSION AUSTRALIA CHARITY IMP PAIRS

DATE: Thursday 18th November

TIME: 10.00am

PLACE: Hakoah

COST: \$50.00 /pair

FORMAT: 3 stanzas of 16 boards

THE PRIZE: A receipt with the winning pair's names on it for a \$500.00 donation to the Sydney City Mission.

- ⊣ **Boards in this event will be the same as the boards played by the Spring Nationals Finalists.**
- ⊣ **Each pair will choose one of the finalist teams as 'team mates'.**
- ⊣ **The score of the team mates' opponents will be used to calculate the IMP's won or lost on each board.**