



# THE SYDNEY SPRING NATIONALS BULLETIN



No 16 Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Ed: Anne Bates

## Event 3: The Spring Nationals Open Teams Qualifying

### Playing Around - Tournaments across Australia

**John De Ravin: The VCC**

Every bridgeaholic's favourite long weekend has to be the June long weekend. Why? Well firstly it's a LONG weekend, so that means THREE days away from the drudgery of the workplace, which has to be 50% better than the usual crummy allowance of TWO. But also the VCC is on that weekend!

Those of you who are familiar with SWOTs, SNOTs, TWOTs, NOTs, GCCs, ANOTs and ANCs will know exactly what I am talking about. (Just kidding about the TWOTs, by the way.) The rest of you, read on. The VCC is the Victor Champion Cup, an annual bridge event that is always played in Melbourne. It is played in Swiss Teams format with ten 16-board rounds without a final. It starts on the Saturday morning and ends mid-afternoon on Monday. Hardy Sydneysiders and Adelaideurs who are low on their frequent flyer points can toss a few bridge buddies in the car and drive there and back without missing a day's work.

Like Canberra and Surfers, the VCC is a national event and it carries PQPS. No, I don't know what PQPs are either, but I do know that they are important if you ever want to make the Australian team, and THAT means there is usually a pretty good field in Melbourne to contest the event.

What else is good about the VCC? Well it's a chance to catch up with all your Melbourne friends and relatives - of course you have to educate them to understand that your time is

100% committed during session and post mortem time....

The VCC is played at a nice hotel (usually the Carlton Crest or the Eden on the Park). The bridge hosts and hostesses in Melbourne go out of their way to make you feel welcome, from the tournament convenor, Jenny Thompson, Chief Director, Martin Wilcox, (well known for his quiet and patiently explained Director's rulings), Chief Scorer, Jane Rasmussen, and Caddy Extraordinaire, Claire Rasmussen, whose cheerful presence makes the regulars feel at home.

I wouldn't miss the VCC for quids!

### Player Profile

### Rena Kaplan

Home: Edgecliff, Sydney

Profession: Bridge professional, teacher and director.

Family: A grown son and daughter

Loves: Escapist novels, romantic movies, travelling, and cooking.

Especially loves:

the people she's met through bridge, who've become her valued friends; laughing.

Pet Hate in Life: Judgemental people.

Pet Hate in Bridge: That bridge ethics aren't taught from the moment people start to learn bridge.

Bridge Mentor: Bobby Evans.

Best Times in Bridge:

2003 - the Zone Playoffs in Tahiti

2003 - being part of the Australian Women's Team in Monte Carlo



# THE SYDNEY SPRING NATIONALS BULLETIN



No 17 Wednesday 17th November 2004

Ed: Anne Bates

## Event 3: The Spring Nationals Open Teams Qualifying



*Elli with SpNOT convenor, Frank Budai*

### Player Profile

### Elli Urbach

**Home:** Roseville, Sydney

**Profession:** Maths teacher in high schools

**Family:** 2 grown children

**Interests:** Bridge, movies, theatre

**Abhors:** People who snort & hawk at the table

**Adores:** Minor Suit Keycard

**Least Favourite Opponents:** Whilst overseas she played against some people who assumed she was deaf & stupid because she couldn't speak their language. They tried to take advantage of her, tried to humour her and spoke in excessively loud voices.

**Enjoyed:** the potential to innovate while President of Lindfield Bridge Club. Tried to introduce new events and to create a 'vibrant' environment.

**The longest hand she ever played:** Whilst still not blasé about being at Table 1 in the NOT, she played against two top Australian players. One of them took 45 tedious, torturous minutes to go 2 off in a slam. At the end of the agony, the player said, "Sorry, I think I misplayed that."

To which Elli's partner replied earnestly, "Perhaps you rushed it."

**Most fun bridge memory:** The Zone Playoffs in Tahiti in 2003. It was a "wondrous" environment. The group bonded as a team and enjoyed themselves together. This contributed to their cohesiveness later in the year at the Venice Cup.

**Greatest Bridge Achievement:** Australian Women's Team, 2003, at the Venice Cup in Monte Carlo.

### Playing Around - Tournaments Across Australia

#### John Ashworth: A Selection of Tournaments in West Australia

There are three WA tournaments with PQPs and Gold Points - all played over single weekends.

1. **The Hans Rosendorff Women's Teams** was played on October 1st-4th this year. The venue was Nedlands Yacht Club - a pretty riverside setting. The weather was perfect.

2. **The Western Seniors Pairs** was held at the well-known Burswood Resort at the end of May. This is an enjoyable tournament in which interstate pairs are very welcome.

3. **The Swan River Swiss Open Pairs** was played at the Esplanade Hotel, on the waterfront at Fremantle, on August 28-29. (If you haven't stayed at this hotel, it would be worth **walking to WA** just to stay there.) The 2004 field was the strongest to date with numerous interstate competitors. This tournament now presents a real challenge to any of Australia's top pairs.

Firm dates for these events in 2005 have yet to be announced but should be available soon. Pencil in a trip (or two) to WA next year.

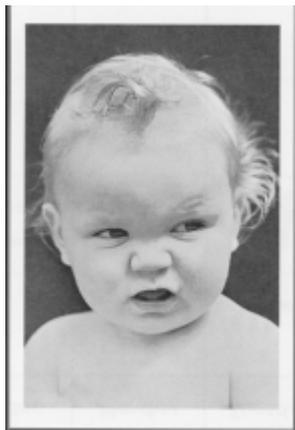


## THE SYDNEY SPRING NATIONALS BULLETIN



No 18 Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2004 Ed: Anne Bates

### Event 3: The Spring Nationals Open Teams Qualifying



**Don't shout at me!!!**



**Oh no! It was a splinter!**

**The editor thanks all the contributors to this newsletter as well as the people who agreed to be interviewed. Particular thanks to John McIlrath who printed the hand records and newsletters, & put them on the web.**

#### **Matthew McManus Australian Open Team in Istanbul**

It was my privilege to be asked to be non-playing captain of the Open Team for the Olympiad held recently in Istanbul.

Australia finished 7<sup>th</sup> in their group of 18, having needed to finish in the top four to qualify for the next stage. The team was always in contention for a top four finish, but needed several minor miracles in the last round, which unfortunately did not eventuate.

After the team was selected in March, the quest began with a practice weekend for all three representative teams in Sydney in August. Just before the start of the event, an internet practice match was organised against the Netherlands Open Team. Australia won emphatically (1 IMP), which augured well for the future. This form looked very good when the Netherlands made the final before losing to the all-conquering Italians.

The 1st round saw Australia pitted against the strong USA team. A small victory, followed by two substantial wins on the first day had Australia sitting nicely near the top of the table. Unfortunately Day 1 was followed by Day 2! Over the years, I have heard how Australia teams have been able to hold their own against the best, but have struggled to “put away” the bridge minnows. And so it proved again. The first match on Day 2 was a 21-9 loss to Tunisia – our worst loss of the tournament. Another loss to Martinique in the afternoon match contributed to a rather miserable Day 2. An extra 20 VPs from those two matches would have made our position far more promising in the later rounds. It is instructive to note the performance of the USA Open Team, who qualified quite comfortably in our group. They lost to seven of the top eight teams in the 17-round round-robin, but were so successful in beating up the lower ranked teams that they were always in a qualifying position.

The organisation of the event made me realise how lucky we are in Australia. Whereas here things run like clockwork, there they are still using sundials. Just as an example – it was very difficult to gauge where you were running in your group, as the display of results at the venue was inadequate and inaccurate. The best way was to call someone who had internet access and ask them to look it up! Otherwise, you could wait to the next day and look in the Daily Bulletin. The other thing that really struck me was the prevalence of smokers and smoke. Even though the regulations prohibited smoking near the playing areas, the rules were frequently ignored and, as far as I could see, never enforced!