

Mary & Teri

in

AUSTRALIA



Teri and I are in Canberra, Australia, (lovely city, nice weather) playing in their summer bridge festival; this is a picture of our women's team (with three male friends).

The team was organized in advance over the Internet with help from the festival organizers. Anna and Kim were wonderful teammates and oodles of fun.

We came in seventh but needed to be fourth to qualify for the finals. Try again!



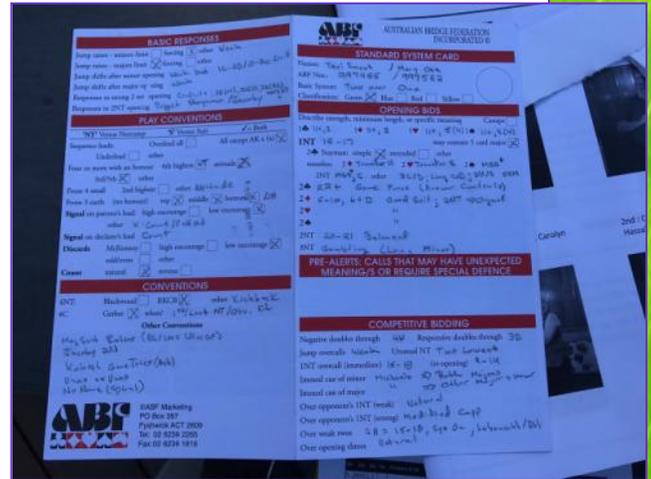
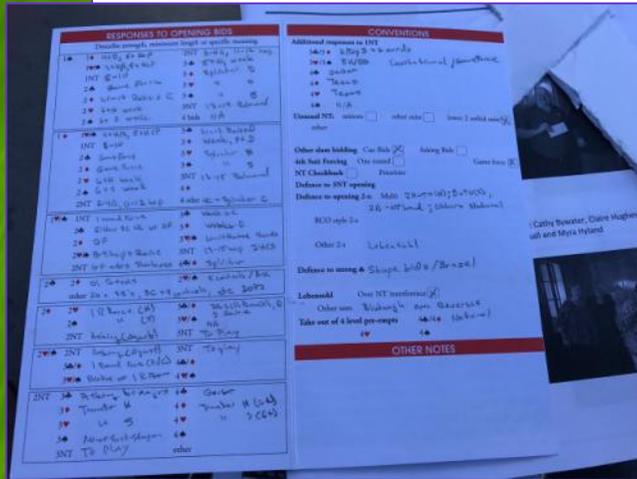
Mary and I have just finished playing in the Summer Festival of Bridge. This roughly equivalent to an American NABC. We played in three events over the course of nine days. These included a National Women's Teams event (think Wagar), the TBIB Swiss Pairs (think IMP pairs), and the South West Pacific Teams (think Roth Swiss or equivalent). There were 24 teams in the Women's event, 228 pairs in the Swiss event and 128 teams in the last event (we finished 7th, 29th, and 22nd respectively, winning about 32 Australian master points). We had arranged teammates before coming through the tournament organizer. Our women's team shown below.



When you play bridge overseas, the game itself is essentially the same as it is in the USA. The structure of the events however is quite different and, in my opinion, far superior to the way we play in the US. For example, the team events are roughly equivalent to a round robin Swiss but the matches are twenty boards long (taking some of the luck out) and all of the hands are pre-dealt and all the teams play the same hands (allowing for hand records and a comparison of your performance to the field). The scoring and matching are also done via computers and projected on screens (the ACBL is generally woefully behind the times in this area).

Other differences:

The convention cards used are quite different (as are the allowed agreements). They are closer to the EBF cards. A picture of ours is below.



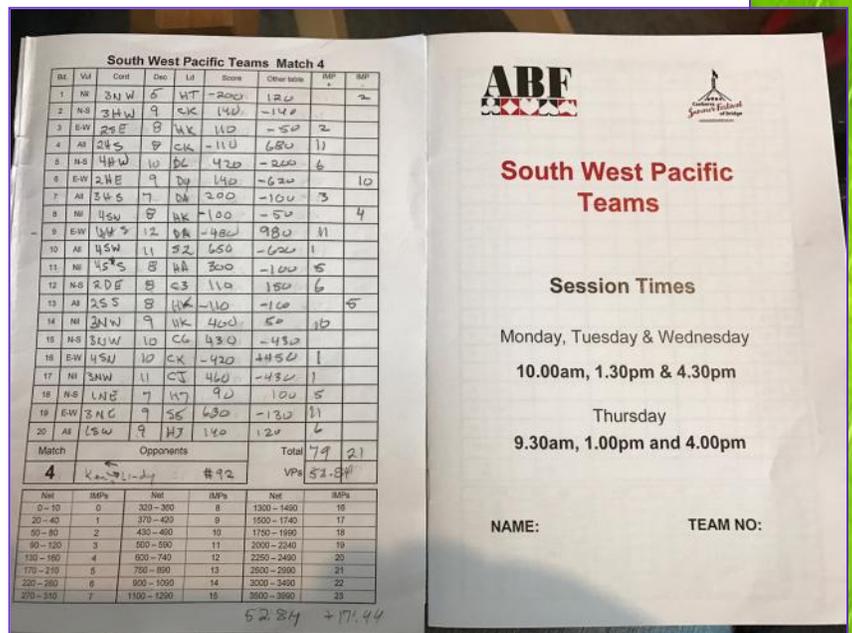
The tournament also provides score forms designed for the event. A picture of these below.

Alerts and announcements are different. A 1C bid is announced as "three or more". Transfers are alerted, support doubles are not alerted, Stayman is alerted, etc. It took Mary and I quite a while to get used to this.

Finally, perhaps the largest difference is in the conventions and agreements allowed. We played against the Multi 2D a lot (including variants not allowed in the US), transfer systems, ACOL and other stuff. All this makes you do more thinking about what is happening and really develops your skills.

In summary, playing bridge here has been lots of fun and a great experience. The people have been great (and good bridge players though not as good as an American NABC event in an overall sense).

Teri

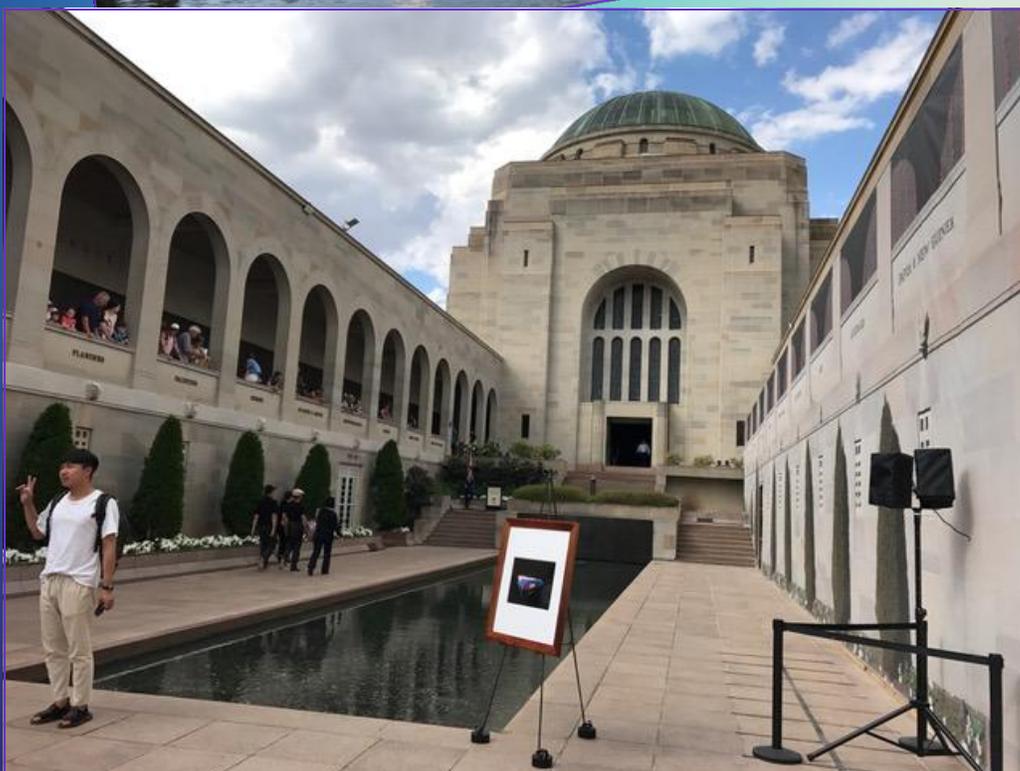
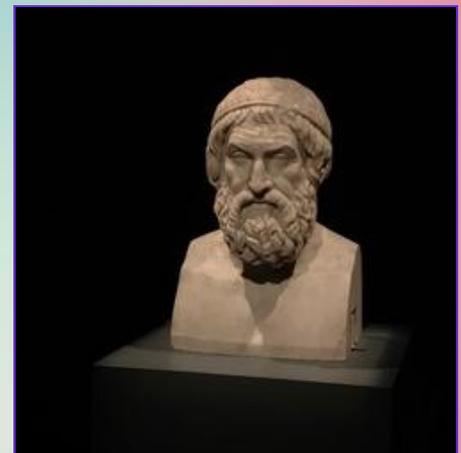


Sightseeing Australia

We finished the Swiss pairs 29th out of 228 pairs. Another 7 Australian gold points. Next event a 12 session (over four days) team event (think Swiss with 12-20 board matches. Right now (at the half way point we are sitting 5th. The top 8 teams go on to play a championship event. Lots of tough bridge ahead!

The nice part of this is that we are a six person team. That means that we get one session off each day to explore.

So far, we walked around and enjoyed fountains, Carolina, etc. we also visited their museum which had a view of history in 101 objects. Very nice. Couple figures from this below. We also visited the Australian war museum. Moving experience.



2 objects of 101 . . .



Boat ride with panoramic views.



Finally, tonight our team captain gave us a ride home and we went kangaroo hunting. And we found them—see pictures!

