

OPEN OLYMPIAD - AUSTRALIA IN THE ROUND OF SIXTEEN

Note: As Australia has been eliminated, this is the last report in this series. While the last eight teams play off, some of the Aussies will be playing in the World Transnational Mixed Teams. The next World Championships for which we plan to have Daily Summaries is the World Junior Championships in Rio de Janeiro in August 2001.

Our OPEN Team = NPC Denis Howard, players Paul Marston - Stephen Burgess (M-B),
Peter Newman - Matthew Thomson (N-T), Bob Richman - Matt Mullamphy (R-M)

qualified 4th of 18 teams behind USA, Netherlands and Russia in Group 2, averaging 18.0 VPs per match, and moved into the Knockout Round of 16.

Reports are that our excellent first half of the Round Robin featured numerous outstanding contributions from Marston and Burgess.

Italy having won their Group selected Australia as their opponents.

The top ranked Italians were favoured to win the 64 board match. For the first 16 boards, Newman-Thomson were opposed to Lauria-Versace, who rate as one of the top five pairs in the world (possibly rating 2nd after Mecksroth-Rodwell).

Boards	1-16	17-32	33-48	49-64	Total
AUSTRALIA	31	20	22	31	104
ITALY	65	26	30	63	184

Lineup M-B M-B Not Reported
N-T R-M for 2nd half

On Board 4, Marston-Burgess missed 6S which Italy bid to collect 13imps:

AKQ1073 652
Q42 10
AK7 QJ95
A K10972

If NS are silent and the bidding began 2C-2D-2S, would you play 4H as a splinter? If you do, then 6S is easy to bid. Note that if you miss a slam against a team like this Italian one, you usually lose imps. There are no second chances.

On the very next board Newman-Thomson were over board in 5C doubled down 800, against a 2S partscore at the other table. Two boards later, Newman-Thomson held:

53 K862
AK3 94
AK92 1076
J1072 AQ43

South may have opened a weak 2H as dealer. How would you bid the EW cards (i) against the 2H opener and (ii) if South passes?

The Italians reached 3NT. They made nine tricks when the club finesse worked and the clubs broke 3-2 and the spade ace was onside. Newman-Thomson stopped in 3C and were no doubt not chuffed to see finesse after finesse work, resulting in 11 tricks for plus 150. 10 imps to Italy.

On Board 9 Italy bid to 3NT:

J86 A5
A32 QJ10
965 103
AKQ3 1098754

Diamonds broke 4-4 and the heart finesse worked. When you're hot, you're hot. 7 imps to Italy.

Some joy came on Board 15. Newman-Thomson pushed their opponents to 5H down one doubled, against 4H making at the other table, for a 13 imp swing to Australia:

W/NS AQ874
 QJ74
 93
 J2
1065 KJ92
65 2
AKJ102 Q65
K75 Q9843
 3
 AK10983
 874
 A106

Thus we trailed by 34 imps at quarter time. The match was a bit like taking on Essendon - our classy opponents were very well and the bounce of the ball had been bellissimo.

To see the hand records of the swingy boards for the rest of the match, it's "do-it-yourself" - see Note 3 below if you want to find the scorecard for each 16 board quarter.

Open Quarter-Finals: Italy vs Brazil, Norway vs England,
Iceland vs Poland (1991 Grand Final replay), Austria vs USA.

Our WOMEN'S Team (NPC Seamus Browne, players: Lidia Beech - Margaret Bourke,
Felicity Beale - Di Smart, Sue Lusk - Therese Tully)

came 13th out of 20, averaging 13.6 VPs over 19 matches. They were 40 VPs from qualifying. Due to Zone 7's below average performance in this event, Zone 7 will have only one spot in the Venice Cup in 2001 and 2003, making the Final of the next Easter's Zone 7 Women's Championships a more vital match than it has been.

Women's Quarter-Finals: Germany - China, South Africa - Canada,
Norway - Chinese Taipei, Nethl'ds - USA.

Our SENIORS Team (NPC Bob Evans, players: Ron Klinger - Alan Walsh,
Jim Borin - Bill Haughie, Gabi Lorentz - John Lester)

came 5th of 24 teams, close to the Bronze Medal, averaging 17.3 VPs over 23 matches. Had we won our last match 20-10 we would have won the Bronze Medal.

Gold = USA, Silver = France, Bronze = Sweden (no Finals). If you are familiar with the names of bridge stars of the past, the team rosters of the three medallists will look familiar.

Notes:

1. NZ Open came =5th/18 in Group 4, 12 VP behind 4th, a very good performance.
2. NZ Women came 14th/20 in Group 1 (their team included Jillian Hay).

3. To check out the performance of the Australian Open or Women in ANY SEGMENT of the ROUND OF 16, or for ANY MATCH from the Round Robin, go to: www.bridgeolympiad.nl/results.html , click on the red Round Number for the result of the match, then click on the red number to the left of Australia's result (giving you the lineups and the scorecard of the match), then click on the red Board Number (on the left) of any hand where the imp turnover is interesting to see the Hand Record of that hand. We would have let you know this earlier had we known about it ourselves.
4. You want to know what the Italians are like? They were expected to win their Group and they did. Lauria-Versace are one of the world's very best pairs. Lauria's record goes back to Italy's halcyon days, and Versace had almost as big a reputation as Helgemo at the World Juniors in the early to mid 1990s. Bocchi-Duboin are highly regarded too. Dano de Falco also was around in the halcyon days of Belladonna and Garozzo. Dano's partner Ferraro is meant to be good player too. Italian teams have a good recent record e.g they won the 1998 Rosenblum Teams in Lille with a sponsor (Angelini) in the team.
4. The latest online Daily Bulletin includes an interesting article about the new WBF Teaching Program.