

Australian National Championships 2025, Brisbane - Day 1

From Hugh Grosvenor

The 2025 Australian National Championships has started in Eight Mile Plains a suburb about 8 miles South South East of the Brisbane CBD. Tasmania is represented in the Open, Seniors and Womens divisions of the Interstate Teams Championships. The teams championships started today, The qualifying stage will continue until Thursday with the finals on Friday.

We are playing in the Open division. The team is Hugh Grosvenor and Tania Lloyd, Andrew and Sandra Richman and John and Mardi Grosvenor. We have already won the award for the team with the least number of surnames!

All six states and the two territories are represented in the Open. The field is more evenly balanced than any time that I can recall. There is certainly no stand out favourite. There are 4 sixteen board matches each day in a double round robin format – in other words we will play all of the other teams twice in the qualifying stage.

Our [first opponents](#) were Victoria. Sandra and Andrew played Neil Ewart and David Beckett while John and Mardi took on Chen Ding and Paul Ruan. Tania and I got the morning off.

A lot of IMPs were traded in all the matches on [Board 13](#).

BOARD 13					
BD: 13		<div>♠ K8762</div> <div>♥ 9875</div> <div>♦ 753</div> <div>♣ 6</div>		Dir: N Vul: ALL	
<div>♠ A3</div> <div>♥ J</div> <div>♦ KQJ986</div> <div>♣ AT54</div>				<div>♠ QT4</div> <div>♥ T6</div> <div>♦ AT42</div> <div>♣ KQ93</div>	
		<div>♠ J95</div> <div>♥ AKQ432</div> <div>♦</div> <div>♣ J872</div>			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N			4	2	
S			4	2	
E	5	5			1
W	5	5			1

		3	
15			11
		11	

In our match John and Mardi sold out to 4H by South. With the SA favourably located 10 tricks were easy. At the other table Sandra and Andrew pushed their opponents to 6D and beat it one trick. An 11 IMP loss. The Victorians made three games that failed at the other table. We lost by 56 IMPs to be running eighth – not the start we were hoping for.

[Match 2](#) was against NSW, traditionally one of the powerhouses of ANC Interstate teams. Tania and I played Yumin Li and Simon Zhang, Sandra and Andrew played the father and son pair of Lavy and Tomer Libman.

There were two big swings in this match. [The first](#) went in our favour:

BOARD 19					
BD: 19		<div>♠ T98</div> <div>♥ AQJT73</div> <div>♦ J3</div> <div>♣ Q3</div>		Dlr: S Vul: EW	
<div>♠ 72</div> <div>♥ 62</div> <div>♦ K974</div> <div>♣ AJ872</div>				<div>♠ AKJ53</div> <div>♥ K4</div> <div>♦ Q65</div> <div>♣ K94</div>	
		<div>♠ Q64</div> <div>♥ 985</div> <div>♦ AT82</div> <div>♣ T65</div>			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N					
S					
E	4	3		4	2
W	4	3		4	2

		10	
8			16
		6	

At our table Yumin opened 3H in third seat and I overcalled 3S. Tania had an Ace and a King but a relatively flat hand with only doubleton support. She chose to pass so I was the declarer in 3S. I had a heart loser, a diamond loser and some work to do in both trumps and clubs as well as the possibility of another D loser. Yumin ducked the heart lead so I won the King. I wanted to play the spades from the dummy so I decided to take an immediate club finesse. When the J lost to the Q my chances looked grim. Yumin switched to a trump and there seemed nothing better than to try the J. This lost and a diamond came back to the J and my Q. When both black suits divided in a friendly manner I emerged with an unexpected 10 tricks.

At the other table the Libmans bid to an optimistic 3NT contract. With only one heart stopper the declarer had to hope that the black suits would play for 8 tricks. With both black queens offside this was doomed to failure. 3 down was -300 for 10 IMPs to us.

[The second](#) was not so good for us.

BOARD 29					
BD: 29		<div>♠ K93</div> <div>♥ J42</div> <div>♦ AQ54</div> <div>♣ QT5</div>		Dlr: N Vul: ALL	
<div>♠ AQ7</div> <div>♥ AQ3</div> <div>♦ K983</div> <div>♣ J32</div>				<div>♠ JT86542</div> <div>♥ KT8</div> <div>♦ 6</div> <div>♣ K6</div>	
		<div>♠</div> <div>♥ 9765</div> <div>♦ JT72</div> <div>♣ A9874</div>			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N	2	2	2		
S	3	2	2		
E				3	
W				3	

		12	
16			7
		5	

Both tables got to 4S by East. At our table Yumin opened a Precision 1D and Simon led the DJ. With both the SK and the CA offside I couldn't avoid losing 4 tricks.

At the other table Andrew opened 1C and Sandra led the CA. 10 tricks made for 12 IMPs to them. We got the better of the smaller swings and emerged with a valuable 12 IMP win.

[Match 3](#) was against South Australia. Another team that has been very successful in recent ANCs. Tania and I played Arjuna Delivera and Nicolas Croft while John and Mardi played the veteran pair of Roger Januszke and Peter Chan.

The biggest swing of this match was on [board 10](#).

BOARD 10					
BD: 10		♠ JT64		Dlr: E	
		♥ A7		Vul: ALL	
		♦ AJ843			
		♣ 83			
♠ Q7				♠ K932	
♥ J983				♥ 652	
♦ T6				♦ 7	
♣ AQ642				♣ KJT95	
		♠ A85			
		♥ KQT4			
		♦ KQ952			
		♣ 7			
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N		5	3	2	2
S		5	3	2	2
E	2				
W	2				
					10
					9
					7
					14

I took a big position in the bidding on this hand. Tania opened 1D showing either an unbalanced hand with diamonds or 18-19 balanced. I responded 1S and she raised to 2S. I bid 2NT asking her to describe her hand. She bid 3H showing a three card raise with 4 hearts – very likely 3-4-5-1. 5D seemed a long way away given my minimum values so I tried 4S.

Nicholas led his singleton diamond. I won this in hand and ran the ST losing to the Q. Arjuna played CA and another C. Now if the spades were 3-3, I was making, losing 2 spades and a club. When they were not, they were able to draw trumps and cash all the clubs. Four down for -400.

At the other table they reached 5D. Can you see how to make that? You have a club loser so you have to avoid losing 2 spades. How do you play A8x opposite JTxx to lose only one trick? You do not need three tricks since the fourth spade can be pitched on the HQ. Lead a small one from the Ace towards the JTxx. If second hand has honour doubleton they have no winning option. If they rise with the honour you can now finesse against their partner's honour. If they play low, you play the J and this loses but now when you cash the A the short honour falls. If you can't see this, try it out with some cards.

At the table the SQ was led so 5D made easily.

A disappointing result losing by 31. The way the VP scale works IMPs up to 30 count for a whole VP each – after that they are only 0.1 VP each – so -31 is a bad number!

Our [last match](#) for the day was against Western Australia who had won their first three matches. Tania and I played Jane Reynolds and Viv Wood while Sandra and Andrew played Pim Birss and Deana Wilson.

BOARD 32					
BD: 32		<p>♠ 54</p> <p>♥ 7</p> <p>♦ K972</p> <p>♣ QJ8542</p>		<p>Dir: W</p> <p>Vul: EW</p>	
♠ 3				♠ K82	
♥ T95432				♥ AJ86	
♦ 3				♦ AT854	
♣ AKT63				♣ 7	
				♠ AQJT976	
				♥ KQ	
				♦ QJ6	
				♣ 9	
	♣	♦	♥	♠	NT
N				2	
S				2	
E	1	1	5		
W			5		

		6	
7			12
		15	

On [board 32](#) Tania opened 2D showing a weak 2 in one of the majors. I bid 4C asking partner to bid the suit below her major suit ('transfer me to your suit please'). Viv bid 4S. Tania knew that I had some length in both majors so elected to bid 5C. This was undiscussed but I presumed she had something like her hand. I bid 5H and that was the contract. Viv led the HK and I had an easy line for 11 tricks cross ruffing diamonds and clubs. They got the SA and a trump.

At the other table Andrew bought the contract in 4S which went two down for -200 and an 11 IMP win.

The other double digit swing ([board 28](#)) resulted from the choice of opening lead against 3NT.

Jane led the HT to the A and after the H continuation Tania was able to make 3 hearts, 1 spade, 4 diamonds and a club. Andrew led the CK. This set up 3 club tricks to go with the major suit aces for 5 defensive tricks. Winning by 31 IMPs recouped the ground lost in the last match.

At the end of the day we are in 6th position but still in touch. 3 more matches in the first round robin tomorrow. Full results for all the divisions are available [here](#).