

Issue No. 8

Sunday, 22nd September 2019

FOUR TEAMS ARE IN



Today's Programme

Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, d'Orsi Trophy, Mixed 10.00 - 12.20 13.30 - 15.50

	10.00 Round 22	
BB	China - England	VG/BBO I
BB	New Zealand - Italy	BBO 2
BB	Israel - Canada	BBO 3
VC	Russia - USA2	BBO 4
SD	Chinese Taipei - India	BBO 5
MX	Latvia - France	BBO 6
VC	Sweden - Japan	BBO 7
SD	Denmark - Netherlands	BBO 8
MX	USAI - Russia	BBO 9
VC	Canada - France	BBO 10
SD	Sweden - Australia	BBO 11
VC	Scotland - USAI	BBO 12

13.30 Round 23 to be announced



When you are No. I in a competitive endeavor, it's not unusual for every opponent to come at you extra hard. The veteran Nick Nickell team – **USA I** in the *Bermuda Bowl* – know what that's like as one opponent after another views a match against them as a chance for fame and maybe a championship. The Nickell team's impressive record in high-level bridge competition indicates they know how to handle these situations. That's not to say, however, that the team is unbeatable – just nearly so.

On Saturday in Wuhan, **USA I** suffered two defeats, one of them by the surprising score of 54-3 at the hands of the strong team from Norway. That disappointment was followed by a narrow loss to Israel, who moved from ninth to seventh.

Even with the two losses, **USA I** is still a lock to qualify for the quarter-finals, which begin on Monday, by virtue of the fact that they are nearly 50 victory points ahead of the team in ninth place. Any of those behind them can earn a maximum of 40 victory points with just two rounds to go, so **USA I** is mathematically safe from being overtaken. Three other teams are in the same position — **Sweden** in the Bermuda Bowl and **England** and **USA 2** in the Mixed Teams.

Captains' Meeting

The Captains' Meeting on Sunday 22nd will be held in the Vugraph Theatre at 16.30. Because playing time is one hour earlier each day, we decided to move it up one hour earlier as well.

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Videos

Check out the following videos from the Championships:

















Bermuda Bowl After Round 21

	7 titel Hourid	
	TEAM	VP
1	USA I	296.94
2	SWEDEN	296.28
_	CHINA	283.51
_	NORWAY	277.33
-	NETHERLANDS	268.63
_	POLAND	254.77
_	ISRAEL	253.63
8		253.42
_	ITALY	251.19
	NEW ZEALAND	242.44
11	AUSTRALIA	227.98
	CHINA HONG KONG	212.48
. –	INDIA	203.84
	CANADA	201.81
	USA 2	197.17
. •	CHILE	189.45
	INDONESIA	188.23
18		177.01
. •	RUSSIA	177.01
	ARGENTINA	163.04
21	EGYPT	146.31
	BANGLADESH	133.15
	GUADELOUPE	91.82
	MOROCCO	42.23
7-7	TIOROCCO	72.23

World Championship Book 2019 Pre-ordering

The official book of these World Championships in Wuhan will be out around April or May next year. It will comprise approximately 400 full colour large pages as in previous years.

Principal contributors will be Ron Klinger, Maurizio Di Sacco, Barry Rigal, Brian Senior and GeO Tislevoll.

The book will include many photographs, a full results service, and extensive coverage of the major championship events. The official retail price will be US\$35 plus postage but you can pre-order while in Wuhan at the special price of US\$30/200 Yuan post free (surface mail). The books will be posted from England before your local retailer has a supply.

The pre-order can be done in either of two ways:

- I. Through Jan Swaan in the Press Room, which can be found opposite the bottom right-hand exit from the vugraph theatre.
- 2. By email from Brian Senior, the editor, and pay by PayPal.

The address is bsenior@hotmail.com

Championship offer

The new dealing machines that are [only] used during the championships will be sold at the end for **EUR 2299**. Price incl. aluminium carrying case and five years warranty. Cards and boards are also sold at special prices. Shipping at subsidised rates from Sweden. See the Duplimate stand or email anna@jannersten.com



Venice Cup		d'Orsi Trophy		Mixed				
	After Round 21		After Round 21		After Round 21			
	TEAM	VP		TEAM	VP		TEAM	VP
- 1	CHINA	282.60	- 1	INDIA	268.82	-1	ENGLAND	281.66
2	NORWAY	267.52	2	USA 2	259.67	2	USA 2	278.91
3	USA I	259.54	3	DENMARK	254.34	3	ROMANIA	266.35
4	POLAND	258.91	4	ENGLAND	247.07	4	CHINA	261.27
5	SWEDEN	254.26	5	CHINA	245.21	5	RUSSIA	261.16
6	ENGLAND	253.83	6	FRANCE	244.94	6	FRANCE	259.11
7	JAPAN	253.52	7	CHINESE TAIPEI	240.22	7	LATVIA	249.43
8	NETHERLANDS	253.34	8	NETHERLANDS	236.34	8	USA I	240.87
9	USA 2	244.88	9	TURKEY	234.22	9	SWEDEN	236.62
10	CANADA	242.85	10	SWEDEN	228.55	10	DENMARK	229.31
11	SCOTLAND	225.67	11	POLAND	228.12	П	INDONESIA	229.11
12	RUSSIA	224.63	12	USA I	226.03	12	POLAND	225.87
13	FRANCE	223.89	13	AUSTRALIA	206.71	13	CHINESE TAIPEI	225.53
14	CHINESE TAIPEI	220.49	14	ITALY	204.37	14	ITALY	224.33
15	DENMARK	214.53	15	CANADA	204.18	15	AUSTRALIA	208.51
16	NEW ZEALAND	195.09	16	NORWAY	195.19	16	BRAZIL	203.25
17	BRAZIL	192.32	17	IRELAND	195.08	17	THAILAND	187.91
18	CHINA HONG KONG	179.26	18	JAPAN	192.71	18	INDIA	172.73
19	AUSTRALIA	171.46	19	CHINA HONG KONG	183.63	19	CANADA	169.85
20	PAKISTAN	149.10	20	INDONESIA	177.54	20	EGYPT	157.98
21	INDIA	142.99	21	U.A.E.	148.18	21	NEW ZEALAND	153.84
22	TUNISIA	117.73	22	NEW ZEALAND	140.93	22	BARBADOS	129.31
23	SOUTH AFRICA	104.58	23	BULGARIA	140.05	23	MOROCCO	108.71
24	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	100.01	24	REUNION	130.15	24	PAKISTAN	72.13

The WBF Women's Online Autumn Bridge Festival

The next in the series of very successful Online Women's Festivals organised by the WBF in co-operation with BBO will be held from 11th – 17th November 2019. Women players from all over the world are able to participate in the tournaments held at different times to account for different time zones.

Full details will be published very shortly at: http://www.wbfwomensbridgeclub.org/

These Festivals, started by the late Anna Maria Torlontano, an outstanding advocate of Women's Bridge, provide a relaxed environment in which women can play and have fun competing in the various tournaments.



The prize for the winner, offered by the World Bridge Federation, is free entry to the Women's Pairs Championship at the 2020 World Bridge Games (venue and dates to be announced) together with bed and breakfast accommodation in a double room for herself and a female partner of her choice for the duration of the Pairs event.

In addition to the main prize there will be spot prizes offered during the sessions so it's not all about winning! It's about having fun as well!

"Bridge for Peace" enjoyable it can be.

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M22 M23

Bermuda Bowl

10.00	- 12.20
BANGLADESH	CHILE
GUADELOUPE	MOROCCO
NORWAY	AUSTRALIA
NEW ZEALAND	ITALY
SWEDEN	USA 2
USA I	INDIA
ISRAEL	CANADA
CHINA HONG KONG	SINGAPORE
NETHERLANDS	ARGENTINA
CHINA	ENGLAND
INDONESIA	RUSSIA
EGYPT	POLAND

13.30 - 15.50				
GUADELOUPE	BANGLADESH			
MOROCCO	CHILE			
NORWAY	CHINA HONG KONG			
NEW ZEALAND	NETHERLANDS			
SWEDEN	CHINA			
USA I	INDONESIA			
ISRAEL	EGYPT			
AUSTRALIA	SINGAPORE			
ITALY	ARGENTINA			
USA 2	ENGLAND			
INDIA	RUSSIA			
CANADA	POLAND			

Venice Cup

10.00 - 12.20					
PAKISTAN	CHINA HONG KONG				
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	SOUTH AFRICA				
TUNISIA	CHINESE TAIPEI				
SWEDEN	JAPAN				
CANADA	FRANCE				
NORWAY	CHINA				
POLAND	BRAZIL				
RUSSIA	USA 2				
ENGLAND	DENMARK				
SCOTLAND	USA I				
AUSTRALIA	NEW ZEALAND				
INDIA	NETHERLANDS				

13.30 - 15.50				
CHINA HONG KONG	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO			
TUNISIA	PAKISTAN			
CHINESE TAIPEI	SOUTH AFRICA			
NETHERLANDS	SWEDEN			
JAPAN	CANADA			
FRANCE	NORWAY			
CHINA	POLAND			
BRAZIL	RUSSIA			
USA 2	ENGLAND			
DENMARK	SCOTLAND			
USA I	AUSTRALIA			
NEW ZEALAND	INDIA			

d'Orsi Trophy

10.00 - 12.20				
U.A.E.	USA 2			
DENMARK	NETHERLANDS			
NEW ZEALAND	REUNION			
CHINESE TAIPEI	INDIA			
TURKEY	JAPAN			
FRANCE	CHINA HONG KONG			
INDONESIA	NORWAY			
ENGLAND	CANADA			
SWEDEN	AUSTRALIA			
ITALY	USA I			
IRELAND	POLAND			
CHINA	BULGARIA			

13.30	- 15.50
USA 2	SWEDEN
NETHERLANDS	ITALY
REUNION	IRELAND
DENMARK	CHINA
U.A.E.	BULGARIA
INDIA	POLAND
JAPAN	USA I
CHINA HONG KONG	AUSTRALIA
NORWAY	CANADA
ENGLAND	CHINESE TAIPEI
INDONESIA	TURKEY
FRANCE	NEW ZEALAND

Mixed

	10.00 - 12.20
THAILAND	CHINESE TAIPEI
PAKISTAN	ENGLAND
EGYPT	SWEDEN
POLAND	INDONESIA
ITALY	MOROCCO
USA I	RUSSIA
DENMARK	AUSTRALIA
INDIA	NEW ZEALAND
LATVIA	FRANCE
BRAZIL	BARBADOS
CANADA	CHINA
ROMANIA	USA 2

13.30 - 15.50				
USA 2	CHINESE TAIPEI			
CHINA	ENGLAND			
BARBADOS	SWEDEN			
FRANCE	INDONESIA			
NEW ZEALAND	MOROCCO			
AUSTRALIA	RUSSIA			
THAILAND	ITALY			
PAKISTAN	POLAND			
USA I	EGYPT			
DENMARK	ROMANIA			
INDIA	CANADA			
LATVIA	BRAZIL			

Lost and Found

A large number of items are accumulating at the Hospitality Desk, so if you have mislaid something important you might be re-united with your property by paying the staff a visit.

Partnership Desk

If you are looking for a partner for the Transnational Teams, you can visit the WBF web site:

http://championships.worldbridge.org/44thworld-bridge-teams-championships/partnership-desk-2

Closing Ceremony

The prize giving and closing ceremony will take place in the playing area on Saturday 28 September at 19.30, followed by a Buffet dinner.

If you are planning to attend you must inform the Hospitality Desk, and collect your invitation, otherwise you risk not being admitted.

IBPA Annual General Meeting

Monday September 23rd

The IBPA annual general meeting will be at

9.00 on September 23rd. Meeting room is the Press

Room
(not WBF meeting room as previously announced)

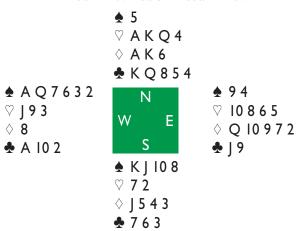


The Safe Hand

by Brian Senior

Often declarer will know that he can afford to lose the lead to one defender, the safe hand, but not to the other, the dangerous hand, and must play accordingly. Take this deal from Round 20.

Board 20. Dealer West, All Vul.



West	North	East	South
♠	Dble	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

West led a low spade to the nine and jack, and declarer led a club up to the two, queen and nine. If the spades are six-two, it is vital that declarer continues with the \clubsuit K

when the queen scores. The point is that West cannot do anything to threaten the contract as, with him on play, declarer has two more spade stoppers so can afford to lose two club tricks. But see what happens if he instead continues with a low club, hoping to bring down a now bare ace on his left. East wins the \$\delta\$ and pushes a spade through and the suit is established while West still has the \$\delta\$A as an entry and down goes the contract.

If West actually began with ♣AJ2, it would not matter what declarer played to the second round of the suit – he would always be successful. So West has to put in the jack on the first round, hope that East holds the ten, and that declarer gets careless/greedy by leading low on the second round.

In the Bermuda Bowl, a spade lead saw the contract succeed I3 times and fail seven times, while in the Venice Cup it was II to six. The other two series did less well, five making and six going down in the Mixed teams, and eight making and II going down in the Seniors.

Of course, this is all assuming that spades are six-two. If they are five-three and declarer plays queen then king of clubs to a doubleton ace, West can lead a second low spade and when East wins the third club he pushes a spade through to beat a contract that could have been made by leading low to the second club. As West is unlikely to have rebid his suit, the only time declarer can be certain that the suit is six-two would be if West had opened a constructive weak two bid or similar, going up to 11 or 12 HCP.





Mixed Teams RR 17

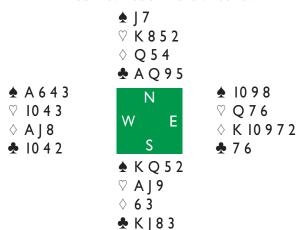
England v Denmark



As we head towards the sharp end of the round robin, England have a healthy lead at the top of the table and look heavily odds on to qualify for the knockout stages, while Denmark occupy the last qualifying spot, less than one VP from their nearest challengers. The BBO commentary team featured the same lineup with Peter Lund from Denmark and me with my English hat on.

Board I saw England playing 2 in both rooms, Byrne in South in the Open failing by one trick, Myers in the Closed failing by two tricks. Bringing to mind Lady Bracknell's famous line in "The Importance of Being Earnest." To lose one parent, Mr. Worthing, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness." So, a careless 4 IMPs to Denmark to get us going.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.



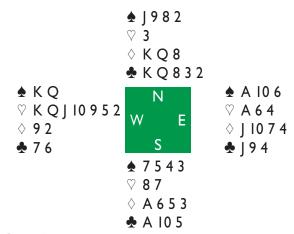
The auctions were identical:

West	North	East	South
Hammelev	Brown	Krefeld	Byrne
Myers	Caspersen	Brock	Farholt
_	♣	Pass	I♠
Pass	INT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

The lead was identical too, the \$10. In the open room, Hammelev took the ace, returned the jack, and the defence took its six tricks. In the Open Room, Myers played the jack to the first trick, and now declarer was in with a chance. Double dummy we can all see that you 'just' take a successful heart finesse and find the suit 3-3. Easy-peasy. At the table, Caspersen went for the possibly better-odds line of diamonds 4-4 when he attacked spades after cashing his four clubs. Was it better odds? I'm not so sure. Firstly, and most importantly, from North's point of view the lead could have been from A/K109(+) or from 109(+), from West's either of those or Q109(+). So, what four-card holding does West have from which he plays the jack? Secondly, on the first round of clubs both players gave (according to the convention card) a negative Smith signal, which doesn't add up. Thirdly, on the third round of clubs,

East discarded the \$\\ 8\$ (high encouraging). Whatever his reasons, Myers was quick to take his ace of spades and cash out the diamonds. One off for a loss of 3 instead of +13 had it made.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hammelev	Brown	Krefeld	Byrne
Ι♡	Dble	2♦	2♠
3♡	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Myers	Caspersen	Brock	Farholt
$I \heartsuit$	Dble	Rdbl	l 🏚
3 00	Page	4 ♡	All Pacc

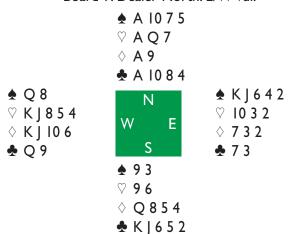


Stense Farholt, Denmark

Denmark missed an opportunity here. In the Open Room their E/W pair stopped in a safe 3%, making an overtrick when North led a spade, quite reasonably on the auction. In the Closed Room North took more notice of his own hand than partner's bid, and led the \P K then a small one to South's ten. South then tried to cash the ace of clubs, which Peter described as lazy. It surely can't be wrong to cash the \lozenge A first, when partner will signal violently for a continuation with the king. 6 IMPs to England instead of 5 IMPs the other way.

More missed opportunities at both tables on:

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hammelev	Brown	Krefeld	Byrne
_	I ♣	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Krefeld led a fourth best \$\\Delta\$4 to the queen and ace. Brown cashed the ace of clubs and after some thought finessed the jack. Maybe she sensed something at the table, because the odds certainly favour playing for the drop, especially when the spades might be 5-3. Hammelev returned his partner's suit but she now cashed a further top spade before switching, too late, to diamonds Declarer now had two spade tricks, two hearts, one diamond and four clubs. Declarer's play of the ace of spades at trick one surely marks her with four, so mistakes here on both sides.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Myers	Caspersen	Brock	Farholt
_	2♣*	Pass	2◊*
Pass	2♡*	Pass	2♠*
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

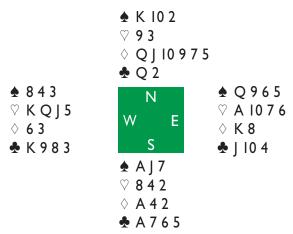
2♣ 18-19 balanced or 22+ balanced, the next three bids showing the weaker option.

With nothing much to go on East led a club, so nine tricks were easy for a flat board. If I have read the N/S convention card correctly, they didn't look for a major-suit fit, so maybe a major-suit lead was indicated. On the other hand, leading away from honours into big balanced hands is usually

wrong, so a spade lead was contra-indicated.

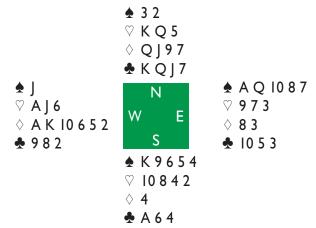
Ahead by 16-9 after 11 boards, England added another 10 to their score when system – a weak $2\Diamond$ opener – and a bit of luck – the \Diamond K onside and hearts 4-4 – put them into a making vulnerable 3NT, while their teammates were going three down in $3\heartsuit$ for –150. This was the deal:

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.



Denmark needed to gain some swings if they wanted to stay in a qualification place. They got 9 IMPs on:

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.



At both tables North opened $I \clubsuit$, South responded $I \spadesuit$, and West intervened with $2 \diamondsuit$, followed by two passes, and it was decision time for South. I opined that England might gain here if Michael Byrne found a re-opening double, but Peter pooh-poohed that, saying he was too weak for that action, and $2 \heartsuit$ would show the hand. Byrne agreed with him for that is what he bid, and Fiona Brown closed the auction with 2NT, which she made on the nose. In the other room, Stense Farholt was made of sterner stuff and doubled for +500. I expect Peter will have words with her when she gets home.

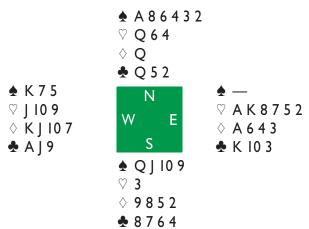
Two boards later Denmark gained II more, this time fairly luckily when they bid a slam where on the surface you need to find two of three queens – two of them with two-way finesse positions, the other a finesse or drop decision with a nine-card fit. Not to mention the fact that their auction failed to disclose East's void, when West would have devalued his king of that suit and might well have stopped short of slam. But when your weak no-trump system makes West declarer, North is endplayed on the



Henrik Caspersen, Denmark

opening lead to find one of the queens for you or to give you a useful discard. In the other room England played in game, also from the West hand.

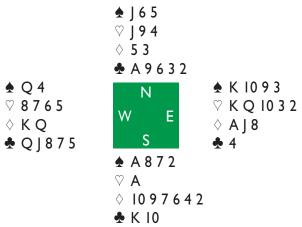
Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.



It looks on the surface as though leading the $\lozenge Q$ doesn't cost too much, since declarer still needs to find one of the others, and finding the $\lozenge Q$ is odds against. But in fact declarer can simply play trumps from the top then continue with diamonds, and if North declines to ruff just exit with the third round and North is endplayed again. The best chance of beating the slam is the unfindable, but truly devilish, lead of a small heart. But even then, declarer can make by finding the club queen. In the event, Brown led the $\triangle A$ so a small club subsequently went away from the East hand. Where East is the declarer, as will often be the case around Wuhan, the obvious $\triangle Q$ lead makes life harder but still by no means impossible.

And Denmark gained yet more on the final board.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hammelev	Brown	Krefeld	Byrne
Pass	Pass	Ι♡	2♦
2NT*	Pass	4♡	All Pass
2NT 4+ hea	art fit and 10+	HCP	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Myers	Caspersen	Brock	Farholt
Pass	Pass	I	Pass
2◊*	Pass	4♡	All Pass

In both rooms the \$10 was led, and the key to making the game was playing the trump suit for just one loser. In the Open Room Byrne's 2\$\phi\$ overcall on a 10-high suit suggested at least a six-carder, and when the second round of the suit wasn't ruffed Krefeld did the right thing by finessing against the jack. In the other room the auction offered declarer no help, and she went down; 12 IMPs to Denmark who had scored 32 IMPs in the last four boards to win the match 40-26 (13.75-6.25). Disappointingly for them they still dropped to 10th place, while England held onto a rapidly narrowing gap at the top.

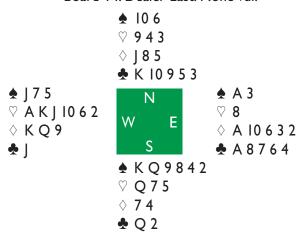


The Mixed Team from England

Nicely Played Slam

David Stern came on from the vugraph to tell us about this slam, played by Espen Lindqvist of Norway in their big Round 19 win over long-time leaders, USA1. Lindqvist and Boye Brogeland had bid to 6\(\display\) on the E/W cards, South having overcalled 1\(\hat{\Phi}\), while in the other room, Steve Weinstein and Bobby Levin had played 3NT+4 as E/W.

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.



How would you play 60 on the lead of the king of spades? You will have to bring in the heart suit and it is tempting to set about the hearts immediately, but which way to take the finesse?

You have to assume that South does not hold jack to four diamonds, as that will surely doom the contract, while if North holds \lozenge Jxxx you will have to play hearts via the simple finesse and hope that South does not have queen to four or more. Prospects are much better if trumps split three-two, which is when you have genuine options in the heart suit.

Lindqvist delayed his red-suit play, instead winning the ace of spades and playing a spade straight back towards the jack. South won the queen and, fearing that declarer might need a discard on the ¶J, played a third round to ruff it out. North duly ruffed and Lindqvist over-ruffed. He led a heart to the ace then ruffed a heart, and drew two rounds of trumps ending in dummy. Next he cashed the king of hearts and the fall of the queen meant that the hand was over; +920 and 9 IMPs to Norway.

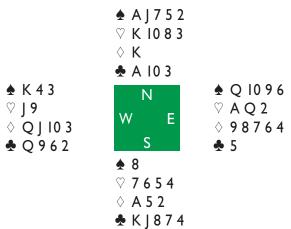
Because trumps were two-two after the third trick, Lindqvist would have been OK if someone had held queen to four hearts, as he could have ruffed out the queen and still had a trump with which to get back to dummy to cash the two established winners.

One interesting question. Had North discarded on the third trick, would declarer have assumed that he was protecting a four-card trump holding and found a way to go down when trumps were actually three-two all along?

Stepping Stone by Adam Stokka

by Povl Sommer (Danish Mixed team captain)

Round 19. Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.



In the Mixed match between Denmark and Sweden, Sweden's Adam Stokka reached the tough 4%, playing as North against Blakset/Bekkouche.

East led the singleton club and dummy's seven was allowed to win the trick. Stokka led a heart to the nine, ten and queen, and back came a diamond to the ten and king. He cashed the ace of spades then ruffed a spade to get to dummy to lead a second heart to the jack, king and ace. East returned the two of hearts to prevent any further ruffs in the dummy and Stokka won the eight, cashed the ace of clubs, then played a club to the king and ruffed a club, bringing down the queen.

Down to only $\triangle Jxx$, Stokka used West as a Stepping Stone by playing the $\triangle 3$ to West's king, and West had to give the table the last two tricks with the $\lozenge A$ and $\triangle J$. Contract just made.

Of course there are other chances to make the contract, and in the other room the Danes took II tricks but were only in 2 \degree . That meant 9 IMPs to Sweden in the battle for eighth place. The match ended in a single IMP win Denmark, leaving them in tenth place in the rankings, while Sweden held on to that vital eighth spot with four matches to play.



Adam Stokka, Sweden



Jos Jacobs

d'Orsi Trophy RR - R17

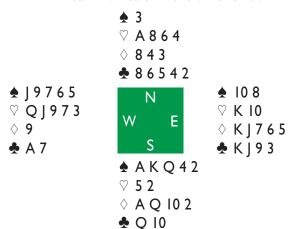
Turkey v. France

For the Seniors match between France and Turkey, I was expecting a contrast in style. Over the years, Turkish bridge has always been entertaining, due to their usually enterprising approach which may as well include the odd spectacular disaster. The French, on the other hand, have been impressive over the years with their steadiness and discipline. The different approaches have led their Senior teams to great successes in the past.

Here in Wuhan, the Turkish team took its time to get to the top eight but has stayed there since. On the other hand, France showed the consistency we have seen on many earlier occasions but this time, mainly in staying around the 8th and last qualifying spot. Would this match bring any major changes?

The first board was a perfect illustration of what I suggested in my opening paragraph, I think.

Board I. Dealer North. None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lévy	Ince	Abécassis	Kokten
_	Pass	1♦	Dble
I♠	Pass	INT	Pass
2♡	Dble	2♠	Dble
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Dble	All Pass		

North's double of 2° was for penalties and so was South's double of 24, obviously. When North did not believe in this (his own double had been very light indeed), N/S had to pay the price. When West did not lead a heart but tried a spade to the ten and king, declarer escaped for down two; France +300.

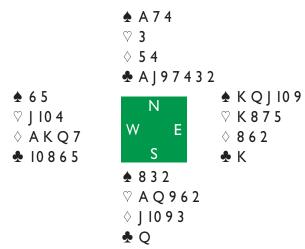
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Lebel	Avcioglu	Soulet
_	Pass	I ♦	♠
Dble*	Pass	2♣	2♠
All Pass			

When Soulet preferred spades over strength, West's double first of all showed hearts, his spades just being 'collateral damage' later on. One off, Turkey +50 but 6 IMPs to France.

Another example of this difference in style and approach came only two boards later.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lévy	Ince	Abécassis	Kokten
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

Declarer won the second round of spades and tried a heart finesse, hoping to actually make his contract if it worked. Dummy's \(\times \)Q won the trick, a diamond went on the $\heartsuit A$ but when it turned out that declarer had to lose two trump tricks, the earlier good work had been in vain after all. One down; France +50.

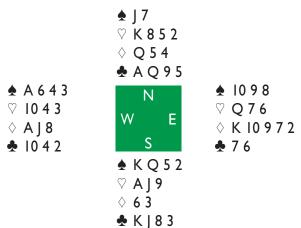
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Lebel	Avcioglu	Soulet
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	3♣	3♠	4♣
4♠	All Pass		

In the replay, Avcioglu indeed made the 3♠ overcall Abécassis had rejected and when Soulet made a tactical raise of partner's suit, Zorlu could not possibly pass. A double would have saved the day for him but when he opted for the likely (from his point of view) vulnerable game instead, he could call himself lucky that Soulet had no reason to double this. Down two; France another +200 and 6 more IMPs.

Another two boards later, we saw 'a spectacular disaster.'

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Lebel	Avcioglu	Soulet
_	♣	Pass	I
Pass	INT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

A perfectly normal transfer auction against which East led an equally normal $\lozenge 10$. When West forgot to take the $\lozenge A$ and continue the suit, declarer suddenly had a chance. Lebel could even afford to establish his spades once East discarded a diamond on the run of the clubs, thus avoiding the working heart finesse; France a lucky +600.

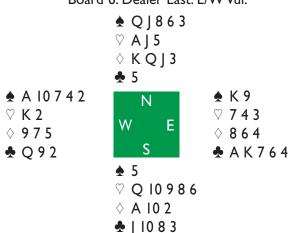
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lévy	Ince	Abécassis	Kokten
_	♣	Pass	
Pass	INT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Basically, the same auction and the same lead but Lévy made no mistake; France another +200 and 13 unexpected IMPs to them.

On the next board, for once the French were more enterprising.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lévy	Ince	Abécassis	Kokten
_	_	Pass	Pass
I ♠	Pass	INT	All Pass

With his main suit already bid on his right, Ince wisely passed. South led the $\heartsuit 10$ to the king and ace, North cashed the $\heartsuit J$ and continued the $\diamondsuit K$. When he went back to hearts, the defence did not cash out immediately for down three, but first tried the effect of a spade from South. This resulted in down only two; +200 to Turkey.

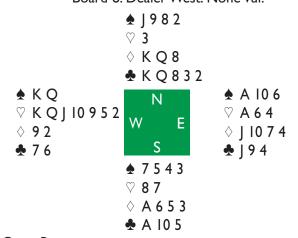
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Lebel	Avcioglu	Soulet
_	_	Pass	2◊*
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	4♡	All Pass	

In the replay, Soulet decided to use a gadget. His 2\$\times\$ showed a strong hand or a weak two in hearts. In either case, Lebel was interested. When East led his top clubs, he had made it easy for declarer to get to ten tricks. Lebel ruffed in hand, crossed to the \$\times A\$ (overtaking his jack) and ruffed another club, bringing down West's queen. The \$\times A\$ was cashed and a low diamond went to dummy's \$\times 10\$. A trump went to West's king and at this point, even the defence of a low spade away from the ace would not have helped West as he did not have any trumps left to ruff a club; France +420 and 6 more IMPs to them.

Two boards later, Namyats caused an interesting auction.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lévy	Ince	Abécassis	Kokten
4♣	Dble	4♡	Dble
Pass	4♠	5♡	Dble
All Pass			

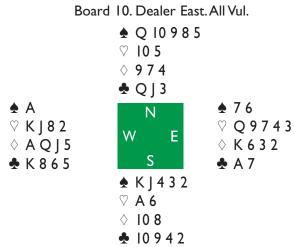
Well, $4 \triangleq$ looks as good a shot as anything but for the fact that there are four top losers. East adopted the strategy of the lesser risk, not wanting to score -420 and thus finishing with -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Lebel	Avcioglu	Soulet
4♡	All Pass		

When West could not open 4♣ but simply showed his suit, everyone nodded in respect. Turkey an undisturbed +420 and their first 11 IMPs of the match.

Two more boards later, slam time started.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lévy	Ince	Abécassis	Kokten
_	_	Pass	Pass
I ♦	Pass	2♡	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♡*	Pass
6♡	All Pass		

The classic approach of a fit-showing jump shift on a passed hand worked very well here. With diamonds set as trumps for the time being, the excellent slam was reached easily; France a fine +1430. The slam was missed more often than not, by the way.

Closed Room

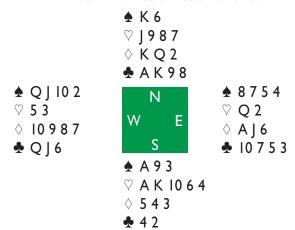
West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Lebel	Avcioglu	Soulet
_	_	Pass	Pass
♣	Pass	◊*	I♠
4♡	All Pass		



East's $1\Diamond$ just showed hearts, so when West did not splinter, the double fit in the red suits remained a secret. Turkey +680 but 13 more IMPs to France.

Another slam appeared on Board 14:

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Lévy	Ince	Abécassis	Kokten
_	_	Pass	I
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♡
Pass	3♡	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♡
All Pass			

North's 2♣ was FG but when South denied a diamond control over North's 4♣, North quite rightly called it a day. The ◇A has to be well-placed and the trumps have to behave for the slam to make, so +450 was the deserved reward for the Turkish discipline.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zorlu	Lebel	Avcioglu	Soulet
_	_	Pass	100
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♡	Pass	3♠*
Pass	3NT*	Pass	5♡
Pass	6♡	All Pass	

To me, South's 5% implies that something is missing in the red suits, so North's 6% looks a bit optimistic. One down when declarer had to lose two diamonds in the end. Turkey another +50 and 11 IMPs to them.

A good slam on the next board brought I more IMP to Turkey to make the final score 59-23 or 17.59-2.41 VPs to France. As a result of all this, France went up again to 7th and Turkey managed to stay within the top eight, just over 3 VPs ahead of the now 9th-placed team: the Netherlands, another of the teams that has hovered around the 8th qualifying spot over the last few days.



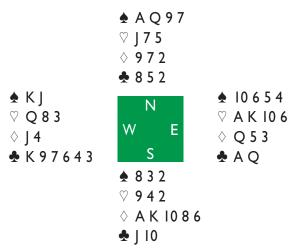
Bermuda Bowl RR - R18

Norway v Netherlands



Norway and the Netherlands are familiar teams to BBO followers in Europe. Marc Smith and I took our seats, expecting plenty of worthwhile action. Were we right? That will be for you to judge. Feel free to write your eventual 'Yes!' answer in capital letters.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Lindqvist	Van Prooijen	Brogeland
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	Pass	INT	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

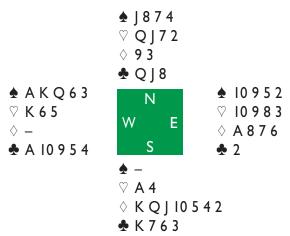
Louk Verhees' response of 2NT was Puppet Stayman, looking for a 5-3 heart fit. Boye Brogeland led the $\Diamond A$ and continued with a low diamond. Declarer won with the jack and was soon writing +660 on his card. On the face of it, I was not expecting to write up this deal in my bulletin report.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Aa	Bob Drijver	Livgard	Nab
_	_	_	2♣*
Pass	2◊*	Pass	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

Bart Nab opened $2\clubsuit$, which could be (a) a weak two in diamonds, (b) forcing to game, not with diamonds, or (c) 22-24 balanced. Five-card two-level openings have been incredibly successful in these championships, bringing in IMPs by the bucket-load. Allan Livgard did not like to double $2\diamondsuit$, nor to bid further after partner's $3\clubsuit$ protection. Terje Aa collected +110, but it was 11 IMPs away.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Lindqvist	Van Prooijen	Brogeland
♣*	Pass	I ♦	4 ♦
Dble	All Pass		

Verhees' opening was the Blue Club, East giving a negative response. What action should West take over South's leap to 4♦? When he chose to double, his partner didn't like to guess which major to bid. He elected to defend. Marc and I preferred a 4♠ bid on the West cards, but it's difficult to be sure we weren't influenced by a sight of the full deal.

Brogeland ruffed the $\blacktriangle K$ lead and led the $\lozenge Q$. East won and crossed to the $\clubsuit A$ for a club ruff. Declarer rose with the $\heartsuit A$ on the heart return, drew trumps and gave up a heart trick to West's king. He was only 200 down, and all present had noted that a bigger prize was available to East/West in spades.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Aa	Bob Drijver	Livgard	Nab
I ♠	Pass	3♣	5◊
5♠	All Pass		

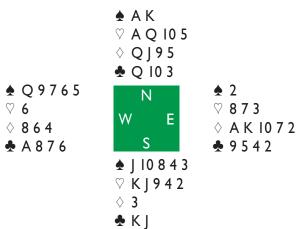
Allan Livgard's 3♣ is described as 'mini-splinter in a minor'. As took the push to 5♠, and this ended the auction. He won the diamond lead with dummy's ace, ditching a heart. After ace of clubs and a club ruff, he led a heart, Nab rising with the ace. The diamond continuation reduced declarer to four trumps. He played the ♠A, discovering the break, and ruffed another club in dummy.

A heart to the king permitted a third club ruff. South's overcall then guided declarer to lead a heart, rather than a diamond, from dummy. He ruffed with the ♠3, North following, and claimed +650 for a swing of 10 IMPs.

After ten boards, the Netherlands led 27-13. Was this a foretaste of how the match would continue? No. Norway

proceeded to win the last six boards by 50 IMPs to nil. Ardent Netherlands fans might like to switch to a different report. Let the big swings roll!

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Lindqvist	Van Prooijen	Brogeland
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3◊*
Pass	3♡	Pass	4 ♦
Pass	4♡	All Pass	

With a 5-4 fit in hearts and two aces missing, this board did not seem to have much swing potential. East led the $\clubsuit 2$ to the three, five and king. Declarer drew trumps and led a club to the king. West won and returned a diamond, declarer claiming +450.



Bart Nab, Netherlands

Closed Room

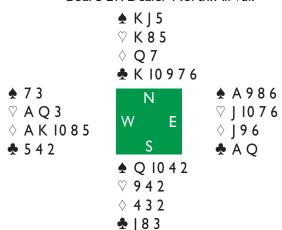
West	North	East	South
Aa	Bob Drijver	Livgard	Nab
_	_	_	Pass
2◊*	2NT	Pass	3♡*
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♡
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Once more, a five-card two-level opening caused havoc. Whether it should have done is another matter. The opening $2\lozenge$ showed a five-card major and 4-8 points. Nab's $3\heartsuit$ was a transfer to spades and his $4\heartsuit$ rebid apparently then showed 5-5 in the majors. Drijver took a different view and returned to $4\clubsuit$. There was no happy ending to this strange story. The spade game went three down and Norway gained 12 IMPs.

What other interpretation was possible for the 4% bid? It could hardly be a control-bid, with spades agreed, since this would mean that South held no controls in either minor. Anyway, a passed hand was unlikely to have a slam in mind opposite a 2NT overcall.

My colleague, Marc Smith, has already written up several deals where these five-card pre-empts have reaped sizeable swings. Personally, I cannot remember a single board where they have misfired.

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Lindqvist	Van Prooijen	Brogeland
_	♣	Dble	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♡	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Brogeland led the $\clubsuit3$ to the king and ace. A heart to the queen lost to North's king, and North's $\clubsuit10$ cleared the club suit, South unblocking the \clubsuit J. Van Prooijen led the \lozenge J, not covered, to the ace. He cashed three heart tricks next, North throwing a spade, and ran the $\lozenge9$ to the queen. North's $\clubsuit976$ then put the game one down

Everything had depended on declarer's guess in diamonds. North had opened the bidding, vulnerable in first seat. 14 points were missing, after South had produced the \$\Delta\$J. If North did not hold the \$\Q\$Q, he would need the \$\Delta\$KQI to

bring his hand up to an aceless 12-count. All one could say is that it was a difficult guess for declarer.

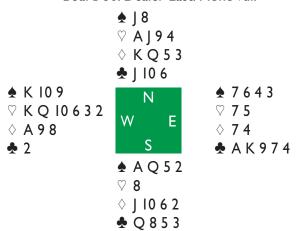
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Aa	Bob Drijver	Livgard	Nab
_	♣	Dble	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♡	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

The bidding was the same, as you see. This time Nab led the ♣8 to the king and ace. The next few tricks were the same as in the Open Room. Livgard then led the critical second round of diamonds and rose with the ♦K. The queen fell from North and it was +660 for Norway and a swing of 13 IMPs.

You may have noted that the swings so far portrayed do not yet add up to 50 IMPs. Well, I will end my report with the one more double-digit swing that edged the total closer to that mark.

Board 30. Dealer East, None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Lindqvist	Van Prooijen	Brogeland
_	_	Pass	Pass
Ι♡	Pass	I♠	Dble
Rdbl	2♦	Pass	Pass
2♡	3♦	All Pass	

I can imagine Terence Reese wincing at South's second-round double. "Did you see that awful double by the Brogeland fellow? What was the point of it?" However, it was made at both tables of this match. Verhees was glad to hear it, because he could make a Support Redouble to show three spades. He rebid his hearts at his next turn and North's $3 \diamondsuit$ closed the auction.

A spade lead would have beaten the contract, and this was indeed the recommendation of that fine player, Mr. GIB. Few humans have yet reached his level of prowess (give us a few more decades), and East yielded to the seductive allure of his AK. Switching to a spade would then have been too late, since the club ruff would be lost.

Van Prooijen delivered a club ruff at trick two, and declarer won the ∇Q return. Lindqvist continued with the

king of trumps to the ace and won the trump return. He was then able to ditch a spade on the $\clubsuit Q$ and claim his +110.

You may be wondering how this mundane action could develop into a double-digit swing...

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Aa	Bob Drijver	Livgard	Nab
_	_	Pass	Pass
$I \heartsuit$	Pass	l ♠	Dble
Rdbl	2♦	Pass	Pass
2♡	Dble	All Pass	

Bob Drijver, perhaps with previous boards in mind, ventured a penalty double of 2° . Terje Aa ducked the $^{\diamond}$ K lead and won the $^{\clubsuit}$ J switch with dummy's ace. After discarding a spade on the $^{\clubsuit}$ K, he crossed to the $^{\diamond}$ A and ruffed a diamond in dummy.

A spade to his king is needed next, but declarer mysteriously gave the defenders a chance by ruffing a club instead. Now came another key trick — declarer led the ∇K . If North lets this win, declarer must dig his own grave. Another trump will allow North to win and force declarer. If declarer then exits with another trump, North draws his last trump and gives South the $\triangle A$ and $\triangle Q$. If instead declarer exits with a spade after the ∇K wins, he loses two spades and two trumps.

Sadly for the Netherlands, North missed this difficult chance and won the ♥K with the ace. His ♠J exit ran to declarer's king and eight tricks were made. It was +470 and another 11 IMPs to Norway.

Their thirst not yet quenched, Norway picked up 8 and 6 IMPs on the final two boards, winning by 63 IMPs to 27. The match had been a exhilarating or harrowing experience, depending on which team you supported. For the two thousand or so kibitzers on BBO, it had been time well spent.



Bob Drijver, Netherlands



Venice Cup RR - R18

China v Denmark

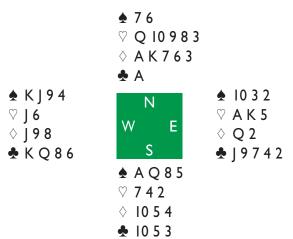


After 17 rounds China maintain their first place in the table whilst the Danes are languishing in sixteenth place some 25 VPs behind that crucial eighth spot, they desperately need a big win if they are to maintain hopes of reaching the quarter-final stage.

Both Chinese pairs play Precision Club with a 13-15 notrump whereas the Danish pairs employ five-card majors, two-over-one and a 14-16 no-trump.

The first five boards arrived at the same contract in both rooms. There was little scope for creative bidding or interesting play as Denmark surged to a 1 IMP lead.

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Shen Q	Rasmussen	Wang W	Bilde
_	I♡	Pass	l ♠
Pass	3◊	Pass	4♡
All Pass			

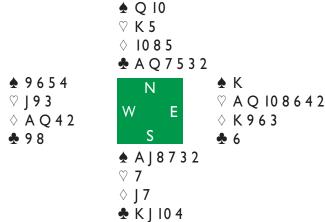
South had a INT bid available to her where one meaning was 3-7 with three hearts. One might have thought that limiting her rather sparse collection was the better option and might have deterred North from being a little forward. Although the 30 bid was limited to a 15-count as hands with 16 points or more she would use an artificial 24 rebid. I will leave you, dear reader, to decide if you agree with South's jump to game. After a club lead declarer was always going to be two down if the defence continually punched her with clubs. This was not the most difficult defence to find and so 200 out.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Buus Thomsen	Zuo	Houmoller	Wang N
_	ΙŸ	Pass	I♠
Pass	2◊	Pass	2♡
All Pass			

N/S were much more circumspect and did not value their combined 19-count worthy of game and this gained them seven IMPs.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



Open Room

We	st North	East	South
Shen	Q Rasmussen	Wang W	Bilde
_	_	Ι♡	I♠
2♡	3♣	4 ♦	4♡*
5◊	6♣	All Pass	
4♡	alerted as a cue-bid		

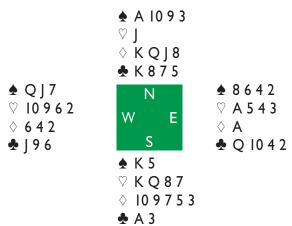
After North had shown her club suit South was almost never going to allow E/W to win the auction. $6\clubsuit$ was a good save against $5\diamondsuit$ or $5\heartsuit$ and even better when it was not doubled. The defence cashed their three top tricks on the go for two off.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Buus Thon	nsen Zuo	Houmoller	Wang N
_	_	2♡*	2♠
3♡	Dble	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♣	All Pass	
2♡ 10-	13. 6+♡		

I have tried using similar openings to the Two Hearts bid here but gave them up because as a partnership we found that it was difficult for responder to know how well the hands fitted. In this case the answer is that the fit is exceptional and 4° is gin even if the king of hearts is offside. But if you were to swap the $^{\diamond}AQ$ with the $^{\bullet}98$ then Two Hearts might be the limit. East did not compete over North's Double, which permitted South to show her clubs. North with her exceptional fit and good partial fit in declarer's first suit tried for the game. Little did she know she was saving against a potential Four Hearts and that failing by one trick would be an excellent result. Not many IMPs in, just two, but could so easily have been a loss.





Open Room

West	North	East	South
Shen Q	Rasmussen	Wang W	Bilde
Pass	1♦	Dble	ΙŸ
Pass	I♠	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

2♣ Forcing

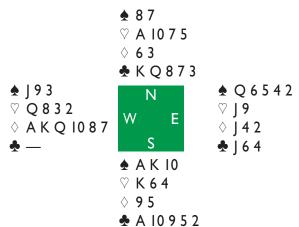
Had South redoubled it would have shown a doubleton in her partner's opening suit. Her subsequent 2♣ bid was forcing and when North showed a genuine diamond suit she leapt to game. There was little to the play and declarer soon had written +400 in her scorecard.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Buus Thomsen	Zuo	Houmoller	Wang N
Pass	I♦	Dble	Rdbl
Pass	Pass	Ι♡	Dble
All Pass			

Wang could redouble, seeking to inflict a penalty, and she then doubled One Heart for penalties. She led the \$10, taken by declarer in hand. The ten of clubs from hand went round to North's king. North now continued with the $\Diamond K$. This allowed declarer to ruff in hand with one of her little trumps. North would have done better to play her trump. A small club had to be taken with South's ace. South continued the diamond assault, which was just what declarer needed as again she made a small trump in her own hand. Another small club was trumped by South, who now tried the king of spades and, when that held, continued with another to North's ace. Now N/S could take only two more trump tricks. Declarer was only one off when, with a more spirited defence, 500 could be in the out column instead of 100. The failure to exact the correct penalty cost China 10 IMPs, the 7 IMPs they actually lost

Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Shen Q	Rasmussen	Wang W	Bilde
_	_	Pass	INT
Pass	2♣*	Pass	2◊*
Pacc	3NIT	All Pacc	



The Danish Venice Cup Team

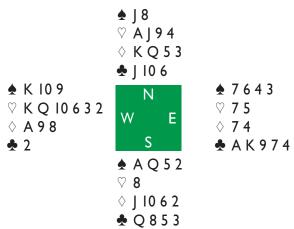
Opposite her partner's 14-16 no-trump North unilaterally decided to go to game. Not a success as West was not hard-pressed to find the diamond lead and hence take the first six tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Buus Thomsen	Zuo	Houmoller	Wang N
_	_	Pass	INT*
2♦	3♣	All Pass	
INT 13-15			

North had no interest in game opposite a 13-15 notrump and just bid her suit and took ten tricks and 8 IMPs.

Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Shen Q	Rasmussen	Wang W	Bilde
_	_	Pass	Pass
ΙŸ	Pass	I♠	Pass
2♡	All Pass		

I was surprised to see that the normally aggressive Danes let this one go quietly. When declarer organised a diamond ruff in dummy she was comfortably home.

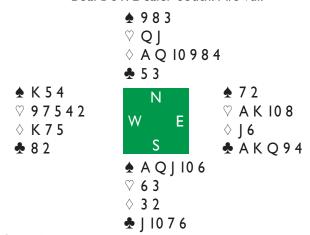
Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Buus Thomsen	Zuo	Houmoller	Wang N
_	_	Pass	Pass
2♡*	Pass	Pass	Dble
Rdbl	2NT	Dble	All Pass
2♡ 10-13, 6	5+♡		

It was the turn of the Chinese pair to be mildly aggressive. I assume the redouble showed a maximum. North, with a good double stop in the heart suit, essayed 2NT and East, believing her side to have at least half the points, tried a double. Her opening lead was the $\clubsuit 4$ which declarer ran to her six. The queen of diamonds was ducked and a small diamond continuation to the jack was taken by West's ace. She then tried the effect of the $\heartsuit 2$, and after some thought declarer inserted the jack which held the trick. The jack of spades was run round to West's king and she got off lead

with a diamond, taken in dummy with the ten. With her contract now assured, a low club from dummy was passed to East who exited with a spade. Had declarer come to hand with the last diamond and cashed her ace of hearts, she could then have discarded from dummy the same suit as East and then exited with a club to make an overtrick. I suspect the prospect of making a doubled into game contract overrode the prospect of having made an error in the reading of the ending and so she just took her eight tricks.

Board 31. Dealer South. N/S Vul.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
Shen Q	Rasmussen	Wang W	Bilde
_	_	_	2♠*
Pass	Pass	Dble	Pass
3♡	Pass	4♡	All Pass
2♠ 5 spac	les + a minor		

Having seen her partner's bid, North led a spade, taken with the ace by South, who continued with the queen. In with the spade king, declarer cashed the ace and king of trumps felling the queen and jack, then cashed three rounds of clubs, discarding a diamond from hand and claimed ten tricks.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Buus Thomsen	Zuo	Houmoller	Wang N
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	Pass	♣	Pas
ΙŸ	Pass	4♣*	Pass
4 ♡	All Pass		

With no bid opposite to guide her North started with the \$5, won in dummy. One round of trumps was cashed, drawing the queen from North. Declarer then inexplicably cashed a second top club and led a third round, which was overruffed by North who switched to a spade. In with the ace of spades, South returned a diamond for North to take two tricks in the suit and an unexpected 10 IMPs.

China had run out 45-14 winners or 16.88-3.12 VPs. This put a severe dent into the already slender hopes of the Danish team.



Venice Cup Round RR - R19

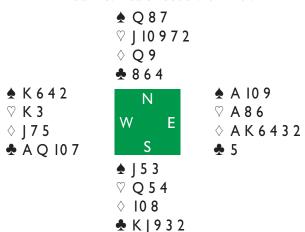
The Netherlands v Russia



With five rounds to play in the Venice Cup qualifying round robin, the Netherlands lay in seventh position, just 3.88 VPs clear of ninth-placed Sweden, while Russia lay eleventh, 14.26 behind eighth-placed USA I. With the strong USA 2 squad also in the mix in tenth place, and a couple of other teams still in with a shout if they could put together a big finish, this was a crucial match for both teams

The first couple of deals were not particularly exciting, but we didn't have long to wait for the first potential swing deal to come along.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.



West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
_	_	_	Pass
INT	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♦	All Pass

West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
_	_	_	Pass
♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♡	Pass	3♡	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♦	Pass	6♡	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

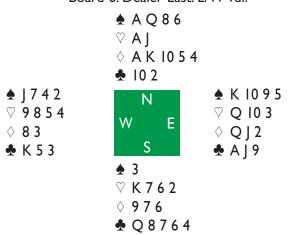
For the Netherlands, Wietske van Zwoi's INT opening was 14-16. According to my reading of their convention card, Martine Verbeek's 30 response should have been invitational, with 34 being either weak or strong with diamonds. Obviously, that is not the case. Van Zwol responded 44, presumably simply a cuebid facing a known slam try, and Verbeek checked on key-cards then bid the small slam. Tatiana Dikhnova led the four of hearts, Verbeek

winning dummy's king and leading a diamond to the ace followed by a club to the queen. When that won, she cashed a second diamond, and had all 13 tricks when they proved to be two-two; +1390.

For Russia, Elena Khonicheva's $1 \clubsuit$ opening was a variant of Polish Club and Diana Rakhmani's $2 \diamondsuit$ response natural and game-forcing. From there things got a little mysterious. I suspect that Rakhmani took Khonicheva's $2 \heartsuit$ rebid as natural with the 17+ variety of strong club, otherwise why raise with ace to three and later convert $6 \diamondsuit$ to $6 \heartsuit$? Anyway, I'm quite sure that they will know what it means next time it comes up.

Six No Trump is quite a bit inferior to 60, needing another trick even if diamonds come in, and needing significant good fortune if there is a diamond loser. Today, of course, it was impossible to go wrong. Khonicheva won the heart lead in hand and cashed the ace and king of diamonds then the jack. She crossed to the ace of spades to cash the rest of the diamonds, by which time she had seen a spade discard from South so led a spade to the king and another spade to establish her twelfth trick; +1440 and 2 IMPs to Russia. Had spades proved to be four-two, she could have fallen back on the club finesse.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



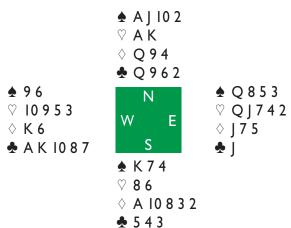
West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
_	_	I ♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	I
Pass	I♠	Pass	INT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
_	_	I ♣	Pass
I ♦	INT	All Pass	

Verbeek opened 1♣, possibly two cards if 4-4-3-2 in an II-I3 balanced hand, and that was passed round to Victoria Gromova, who doubled in pass-out seat, then went on with

I♠ over the I♡ response. When Dikhnova now bid INT, Gromova raised her to game. On a spade lead, this would have been a hopeless spot, but why would West lead dummy's likely five-card suit? With no particularly attractive alternative, Van Zwol chose to lead the three of clubs, hoping to find partner with a genuine suit. There might still have been a chance for the defence had Verbeek won the ace, though her next play would have been an awkward one. But in practice she put in the nine, losing to declarer's queen. Dikhnova led a diamond to the ten and jack, and Verbeek played ace then jack of clubs. That set up two club winners for declarer, who rose with the ace on the spade switch and cashed the diamonds, then crossed to the ace of hearts to cash the clubs; ten tricks for +430.

Rakhmani opened a Polish Club and Khonicheva responded I♦, 0-6. Merel Bruijnsteen overcalled a slightly heavy INT and was left to play there. Against that contract Rakhmani led the ten of spades round to declarer's queen. Bruijnsteen played three rounds of diamonds so Rakhmani was back on lead and, having seen her partner's signal on the diamonds, Rakhmani played the king of spades. Bruijnsteen won the ace and cashed the diamonds, then the top hearts and had eight tricks for +120 but 7 IMPs to Russia.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.



West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	INT	Pass	Pass
Dble	Pass	2♦	Dble
2♡	All Pass		
West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	INT	All Pass	

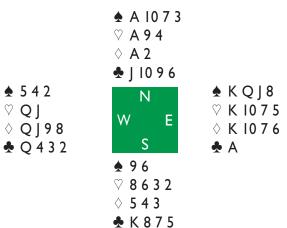
Both Norths opened INT. Bruijnsteen was left to play there and made eight tricks after a heart lead, taking the double diamond finesse: +120.

Van Zwol could double with the West hand, showing a four-card major and longer minor. Two Diamonds asked for the major, and Van Zwol duly bid 2° and played there. Gromova led out the top hearts, Dikhnova following eight,

six as suit preference for a higher-ranking suit, and Gromova did as suggested by switching to the jack of spades. That was covered by queen and king and Dikhnova returned the seven of spades to the ten. Gromova switched now, to a low diamond to her partner's ace, after which declarer had the remainder for +110 and 6 IMPs to the Netherlands.

Incidentally, if you overbid to 3NT, played by North after West has shown clubs, you might get the jack of clubs lead, ducked by West. To make the contract you must duck this, or West has four club tricks to cash when in with the king of diamonds. (Akiko Yanagisawa duly found this play for Japan in their win over England in the Venice Cup. Of course, she also subsequently got the spades right to make her game and pick up 12 IMPs when combined with the Japanese E/W pair's +110 in 2 \heartsuit in the other room.)

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.



West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
Pass	♣	Dble	Pass
I ♦	Pass	2♣	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
Pass	♣	Dble	Pass
INT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

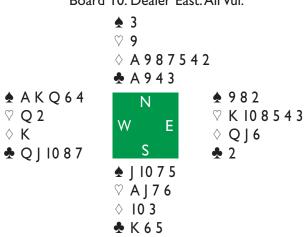
Both Wests became declarer in 3NT after North had opened I♣ – not that either opening promised the suit. Gromova was playing Polish Club and could have had any 16+, a weak no trump, or a three-suiter including clubs, while Laura Dekkers could have held a doubleton club.

Gromova led the three of spades, Van Zwol winning dummy's king and leading a diamond to her queen. Gromova won the ace, and led the jack of clubs to dummy's bare ace, but it was too late. Van Zwol led a heart to the queen and ace and Gromova continued with the ten of clubs. Dikhnova won the king and played another club and van Zwol had nine tricks for +400.

Bruijnsteen led the jack of clubs. Khonicheva won the ace and led a heart to the jack and ace. Bruijnsteen continued with the club attack, leading the nine, and Dekkers played

low, allowing declarer's queen to win the trick. The defence had five tricks to cash now, but the position apparently was not clear to Bruijnsteen. Khonicheva led a low spade, winning the king when Bruijnsteen ducked, then led a heart to the queen, a spade up, again ducked, and cashed the king and ten of hearts. Finally, she led a diamond to the jack and ace and Bruijnsteen returned a diamond. The contract was made exactly for +400 and a push board, but a big chance squandered by the Netherlands.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.



West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
_	_	2◊	Pass
2NT	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♡	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
_	_	Pass	Pass
I♠	3♦	Pass	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Rakhmani passed as dealer and Khonicheva opened I♠ in third seat, then competed with 4♣ when Bruijnsteen's 3♦ overcall came back to her. Rakhmani gave preference to 4♠ and Bruijnsteen led ace and another diamond. Khonicheva discarded her low heart on dummy's diamond winner and led a club to the queen and ace. Bruijnsteen returned her heart, Dekkers winning the ace and continuing the suit. Khonicheva discarded a club so Bruijnsteen made her singleton three of trumps and returned a club. Khonicheva ruffed in dummy and led the eight of spades to her queen and could take another club ruff, but had to lose a trump at the end, so was down two for −200.

Verbeek opened a multi 2♦ and Van Zwol inquired. Gromova overcalled and Verbeek passed to show a minimum, after which Van Zwol bid a pass or correct 3♥ and played there. Gromova led ace and another diamond, Van Zwol winning the jack and discarding a club from hand. She led a club to the queen and ace and back came the three of spades to the two, seven and king. Van Zwol ruffed a club then led a heart to the queen and, when that held, a second heart to the ten and jack. Dikhnova returned the jack of spades, declarer winning the ace and ruffing a club then playing the ♥K to South's ace. Back came the ten of spades. Van Zwol won the queen and could have cashed the



The Russian Venice Cup team

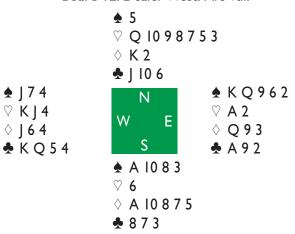


Martine Verbeek, Netherlands

rianlge 6 and made her contract, but she had lost track of the spade spots and instead played her club winner, discarding the $\Diamond Q$ from dummy. Dikhnova scooped in the trick with the seven of hearts for down one and -100.

That was worth 3 IMPs to the Netherlands, but it could have been more.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.



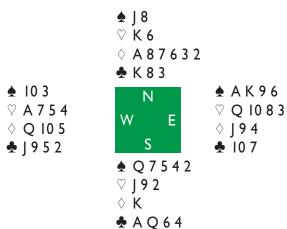
West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
Pass	2♦	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass
West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
Pass	3♡	3♠	Pass

Both E/W pairs did well to bid and make 3NT on this one. Around the room, five pairs bid to 4♠ and were down, twice doubled, five went down in 3NT and ten made it. There were three spade partscores and one +500 from 3♥ doubled. Anyway, back to our match.

Gromova led the jack of clubs so Van Zwol won the king and led a spade to the king, Dikhnova taking the ace and returning her heart to the seven and ace. Van Zwol played a spade to the jack, then back to the queen and a fourth spade. Dikhnova won that and played a club and Van Zwol crossed to the ace of clubs, cashed the long spade, then split the clubs; nine tricks for +400.

Bruijnsteen led the ten of hearts round to declarer's jack and Khonicheva led a spade to the king, ducked, and continued with a low spade to her jack then a third round to South's ten. Dekkers tried a low diamond, Bruijnsteen winning the king and returning the $\lozenge 2$. When Khonicheva played low from dummy, Dekkers thought for a bit then tried a not very hopeful ten and Khonicheva won the jack and had ten tricks when the clubs broke three-three; +430 and I IMP to Russia.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.



vv est	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
_	1♦	Pass	IŸ
Pass All Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
West	North	East	South

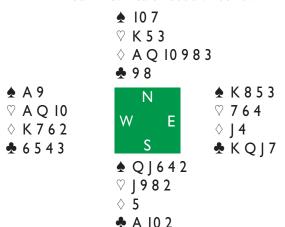
West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
_	I♦	Pass	
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

Gromova's 2♣ rebid was a transfer, showing six diamonds (had she held clubs she would have rebid INT, transfer). Dikhnova looked for game with 2NT but, holding a minimum opening, Gromova passed. Van Zwol led the two of clubs to the ten and ace and Dikhnova led a spade to the jack and king. Verbeek returned the three of hearts to her partner's ace and Van Zwol continued with the ♥4 to dummy's king. Dikhnova led the eight of spades to her queen then cashed the king of diamonds, crossed to the king of clubs, and cashed the ace of diamonds. Finally, she

led a club back to her queen, but when the suit was not three-three she was out of breath and the defence had the rest, down one for -100.

The Dutch N/S had a natural auction at the end of which Bruijnsteen judged that her long weak diamonds might be difficult to establish and cash in no trump but could be more useful as trumps, so corrected 2NT to 3 \Diamond . Rakhmani led the ten of clubs. Bruijnsteen won dummy's ace and cashed the king of diamonds, crossed to the king of clubs and played ace and another diamond. The three-three split was good news, and it got better when Khonicheva won the \Diamond Q and led a low heart and Bruijnsteen put up the king and it scored. She cashed out now and had nine tricks for +110 and 5 IMPs to the Netherlands.

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.



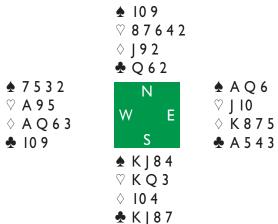
	1 /(10 2				
West	North	East	South		
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova		
_	_	_	Pass		
I ♣ INT	I♦ All Pass	Ι♡	Pass		
West	North	East	South		
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers		
_	_	_	Pass		
♣	2♦	Dble	All Pass		

Gromova overcalled a simple I ◊ and was then content to leave her opponents to declare INT. She led the ten of diamonds, which proved not to be the best start for the defence, and Van Zwol won dummy's jack. Van Zwol played the king of clubs and Dikhnova won immediately and played back the nine of hearts to the ten and king. Gromova returned a heart, so Van Zwol won the queen, cashed the clubs, and cashed the ace of hearts before playing ace and another spade to the king and had eight tricks for +120.

Bruijnsteen made a weak jump overcall of 20 and Rakhmani made a negative double. Khonicheva now did well when she passed it out on a not particularly good trump holding. I suppose that nothing else appealed very much with her weak no trump and no major. It is often a good idea to lead trumps when partner leaves in your takeout double, but I wouldn't have thought that this was such a situation, particularly when holding such an easy alternative lead as the club holding. Anyway, Rakhmani led

the jack of diamonds so Bruijnsteen won the queen and played the ten of spades. Khonicheva won the ace and returned a club to the jack, ducked. Rakhmani continued with the ♣K to dummy's ace and Bruijnsteen led a heart up. Khonicheva won the ace and played a club. Brujnsteen discarded her losing spade but had ruffed when Rakhmani won and played the fourth club. Now declarer played ace and another diamond but Khonicheva could win and get out safely so had to make the ♥Q at the end for down one and −200; 2 IMPs to Russia.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.



	, -	-	
West	North	East	South
Van Zwol	Gromova	Verbeek	Dikhnova
Pass	Pass	INT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
West	North	East	South
Khonicheva	Bruijnsteen	Rakhmani	Dekkers
Pass	Pass	♣	Pass

Pass

Rakhmani, playing a 15-17 no trump, opened 1♣ and rebid INT and played there. Dekkers led the king of hearts, Rakhmani winning dummy's ace and playing a spade to the queen. That lost to the king and Dekkers played queen and another heart, establishing her partner's suit. Rakhmani simply cashed out her winners; eight tricks for +120.

INT

All Pass

Verbeek's INT showed 14-16 and Van Zwol used Stayman then raised to game. Any lead other than a spade should see the defence prevail, but Dikhnova knew that declarer did not have a four-card major so led a spade — a club round to a hand with minor-suit length didn't look any more attractive, and why should partner have heart rather than spade values — but that proved to be fatal to the defence. Verbeek won the ♠Q and played on hearts to establish a second trick in the suit and a ninth overall, and that was +600 and 10 IMPs to the Netherlands.

What had been a tight match throughout saw the Dutch finally break the virtual tie at the last gasp to win by 26-13 IMPs, converting to 13.52-6.48 VPs. They moved up to sixth, but still too close to ninth for comfort, while Russia slipped to twelfth and would need a big finish over the remaining four rounds if they were to make the knockouts.



IBPA Awards

IBPA Awards Shortlist - Juniors



Just a Child (Süleyman Kolata, Istanbul)

At the 20th Iskenderun Bridge Festival Hatay, Turkey, you are playing in the Swiss Teams and hold this hand:

Board 30. Dealer East. Neither Vul.



The bidding has gone:

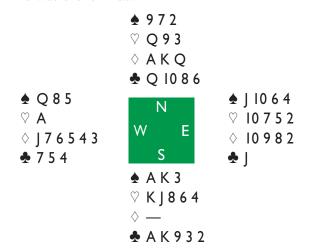
West	North	East	South
Tuana	Sinan	Toygar T.	Mehmet Ali
Altun	Seyfittinoglu	Altun	Kuru
_	_	Pass	I
Pass	2♣	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♡	Pass	6♡
Pass	Pass	Pass	

What do you lead?

The killing lead was found by Tuana Altun, an eight-year-old girl playing with her brother, Toygar Tuncay Altun.

Tuana led a club. Then, when she regained the lead with the ace of hearts, she led another club. Her brother ruffed the second club to put the contract one down.

This was the full deal:



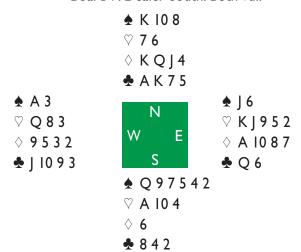
That represented an II-IMP gain for their team. As a consequence, this win made them the leader of our U-16 teams. Twenty-three of 31 tables made six hearts.

When her dad asked Tuana about her lead and continuation of a club after winning with her ace of hearts, Tuana replied: "I knew from the bidding that the opponents held a lot of clubs. I thought my partner was likely to ruff the first trick. He did not ruff the first trick, but I was sure he was going to ruff on the second round, so I played another club without hesitation."

Hengtong WYBTC Round 9 U-21, FRA v FIN (Kees Tammens, Amsterdam, Netherlands)

Christophe Oursel, the French coach and a strong player himself, reported a pretty coup executed by Aleksi Aalto of the Finnish Youngsters team. It is sure to be on the shortlist for 'Best Defensive Play'

Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.



West	North	East	South
Sammalisto	Fragola	Aalto	Dufrene
_	_	_	Pass
Pass	I ♣	Pass	I♠
Pass	INT	Pass	2♣ ²
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 15-17

2. Check-back Stayman

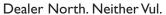
West led the jack of clubs. Declarer won with the ace and continued with the queen of diamonds to the ace, followed by the queen of clubs to the king. Declarer disposed of his losing club on the king of diamonds and carried on with a low spade to the queen and ace. West played the ten of clubs, North following suit, and East ...?

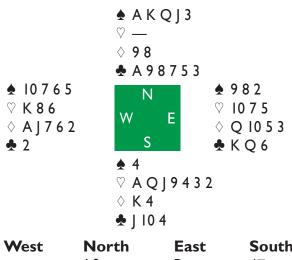
Without any hesitation, Aalto discarded a heart! If he had ruffed, the deal would have been over. A losing heart would have disappeared on that trick and the other heart would have gone on the jack of diamonds. However, after Aalto's defence, declarer had a tricky decision in the trump suit. When he played a spade to the ten, East made his trump trick after all, with a heart still to come, for down one.

That defence won Finland 12 IMPs when four hearts, declared by North at the other table after a one notrump opening bid, came home on the jack-of-spades lead from East.

Venit, vidit, vincit' (Kees Tammens, Amsterdam)

On the following deal, Julien Bernard of France found an excellent defence to defeat a four-heart game contract.



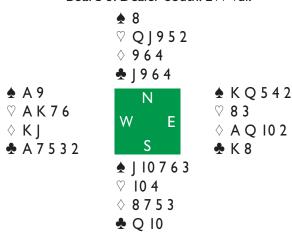


vv est	North	East	South
_	♣	Pass	4♡
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Bernard, West, led his singleton club. Declarer took the ace of clubs and three top spades to dispose of the two clubs from South. Declarer had arrived at an interesting moment - should he play a diamond from dummy to the king, or the jack of spades to see what happens? The latter was the winning move: East ruffs with the ten of hearts and South overruffs with the jack and plays the ace and queen of hearts for the loss of just one trump trick and two diamonds. In real life, declarer played a diamond to his king; West won with the ace and crossed to East's queen of diamonds for a club play. Declarer ruffed with the nine of hearts and West rightfully discarded a diamond. Declarer played the ace and queen of hearts to West's king. Bernard exited with his last spade, and when East was able to produce the ten of hearts, that card uppercut the jack of hearts to promote the eight in West for down one.

Ist European Mixed Team Championship Round 17 Bulgaria v. Sweden (Mark Horton, Shrewsbury, Shrops., U.K.)

Board 3. Dealer South, EW Vul.



Wes	st	North	East	South
Ekenl	perg	Karakolev	Clementssoi	n Mitovska
_		_	_	Pass
2♣ ا		Pass	2♡2	Pass
2♠ 3		Pass	2NT ⁴	Pass
3♣		Pass	3♦	Pass
3♡		Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣		Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4♡		Pass	4NT ⁵	Pass
5◊6		Pass	6NT	Pass
Pass		Pass		
Ι.	20-21 b	palanced or g	game forcing	
2.	4+ space	des		
3.	Balance	ed		
4.	Enquiry	/		

- 4. Enquiry
- 5. RKCB
- 6. 0 or 3 key cards

Two spades accepted the spade transfer and showed a balanced hand in context. A series of natural bids at the three level, control-bids at the four level and Roman Key Card Blackwood led to the superior slam.

South led the ten of hearts. Declarer won with dummy's ace, overtook the jack of diamonds with the queen and played the two of spades. When South followed with the three, declarer put in dummy's nine(!) and had 12 tricks. This was the only table where a slam was made. I daresay that, at the other tables, declarer started with two rounds of spades, intending to claim as long as the suit was no worse than 4-2, and then fell back on a 3-3 club break. That was probably declarer's intention here, but I am informed that she noticed an almost imperceptible flicker when she played the spade. Even had the nine of spades lost to the ten or jack, Clementsson would have been no worse off than the other declarers.

At the other table, declarer won the heart lead, cashed the ace of spades and led another, getting the bad news; minus 100 and minus 17 IMPs.

Wes	st North	East	South
Nane	v M.Grönkvist	Nikolova	I.Grönkvist
_	_	_	Pass
2NT	Pass	3⊘I	Pass
3♠	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT ²	Pass
5◊3	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		
Į.	Transfer, game forcing		
2.	RKCB		
_			

3. 0 or 3 key cards



2019 Memphis Spring NABC Hurts So Good (John Hurd, New York, NY, USA)

Although it is always nice to be able to have played the deals where the great plays occur, sometimes you can receive more of a challenge when you don't know the deals. Take this board from the final of the Platinum Pairs...

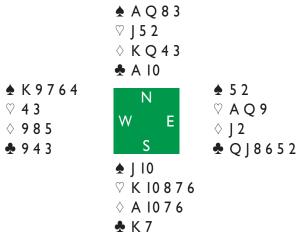
Board 8. Dealer East. Neither Vul.



Here, you reach four hearts from the South seat:

West	North	East	South
_	_	Pass	I
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♡	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♡
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♡	Pass	Pass
Pass			

South showed his 2=5=4=2 shape and admitted that he would cooperate with a slam venture over three spades, rejected by North. As declarer, you win the club lead in dummy and have to decide how to play trumps. At the table, declarer, Hurd, led a low heart from the board, took the queen with the king, then ran the eight of hearts. This was the full deal:



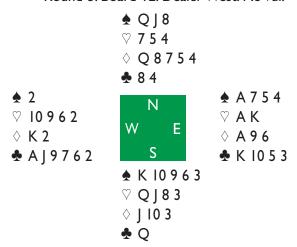
When Kevin Rosenberg made the nine, he not only had a brilliancy prize entry, but the admiration of his opponents, Hurd and Jeff Meckstroth, and partner David Gold!

The Most Famous Guy of All (Aarnout Helmich, Rotterdam, Netherlands)

Perhaps the best-known player in the tournament is the Dutch junior, Guillermo Pedro Herman Maria Mendes de León, Guy to his friends.

The Dutch Junior team had an excellent first day of the tournament. The following board contributed to their success. At most tables, the bidding went Pass-Pass-One Club-Pass-One Heart-Pass-Two Notrump-Pass-Three Notrump-All Pass. No West could find any other bid than three notrump, because three clubs wouldn't have been natural. However, Mendes and his partner Thibo Sprinkhausen showed that, with some esoteric agreements, bidding slams can be much easier.

Round 5. Board 12. Dealer West. NS Vul.



West	North	East	South
Sprinkhuiz	en	Mendes d	le Léon
Pass	Pass	ا 🚓 ا	Pass
I ♡2	Pass	2♢³	Pass
2NT ⁴	Pass	3 ♣ 5	Pass
3♠6	Pass	4 ◊ ⁷	Pass
4 ♠ ⁸	Pass	4NT ⁹	Pass
5⊹10	Pass	5♠Ⅱ	Pass
6 012	Pass	7 ♣ 13	Pass
Pass	Pass		

- 1. 2+ clubs, forcing
- 2. 7+ HCP, natural, could have longer diamonds
- 3. Either (i) 18-20 balanced or (ii) natural (16+)
- 4. 4 hearts and 6 clubs/diamonds
- 5. Relay
- 6. 4 hearts and 6 clubs
- 7. Club slam try (4♣ would have agreed hearts)
- 8. Spade control, no heart control
- 9. Asks for key cards
- 10. I key card
- II. Grand slam try, stronger than 5NT
- 12. King of diamonds
- 13. This should be easy

Mendes knew it would be an excellent grand, as he could ruff dummy's heart losers in hand. A well-deserved 14 IMPs to the Netherlands when the other table ended up in three notrump.



IBPA Awards



IBPA Awards Shortlist - Defence

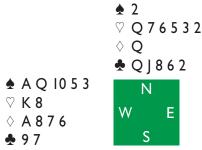
Championship Defence Ostend Redux (Marek Wójcicki, Nienadowa, Poland)

In the European Team Championships Women's series, from the Poland-Italy match, Justyna Zmuda was sitting East with: ♠ AQ1053 ♥ K8 ♦ A876 ♣ 97

With both sides vulnerable, the bidding went ...

West	North	East	South
Dufrat	Pomares	Zmuda	Campagnano
Pass	INT	Pass	2♦
Double	2♡	2♠	4♡
Pass	Pass	Pass	

After a 15-17 notrump and transfer, Zmuda led the diamond ace. This is what she saw (hands rotated):

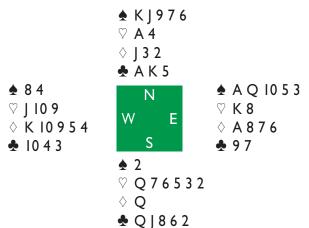


On the diamond ace, the nine appeared from partner and the two from declarer. What next?

Except for diamond honours, partner has at most a jack. Thus, there is no hope for a trick in clubs. The only chance was in trumps. Zmuda found the only defence to defeat four hearts.

Zmuda cashed the spade ace (Dufrat followed with the four, upside-down signals) and continued with another spade (eight from Dufrat). When declarer took the second spade in hand with the jack and played the ace of trumps and another, Zmuda won with her king and played one more spade, promoting a trick for the trump jack and setting the contract.

Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

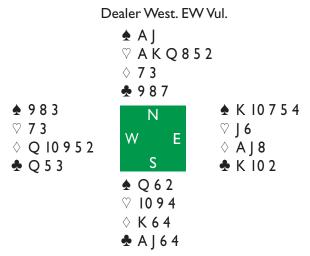


It was the only table in the Women's series where the contract was set. In the Open and Senior series, the four-heart contract was set only a few times.

2018 NABC Life Master Pairs A Club Tale ...

(Ron Klinger, Northbridge, NSW, Australia)

The timing of the Australian Nationals (July 28 – August 9) clashed with the World Youth Teams (August 8-18) and the USA Summer Nationals in Atlanta (July 26-August 5). Liam Milne of Sydney contested the USA Life Master Pairs, an event of three days duration. He partnered Eivind Grude, a 27-year old Norwegian and an Under-26 world champion. They finished thirteenth out of a field of 336 pairs. This deal from the final was one of their triumphs:



Wes	st North	East	South
Grude	e	Milne	
Pass	$I \triangle I$	♠	2♡
Pass	3♡	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	
Ι.	5+ hearts, 11-15 points	5	

With South prepared for a spade lead, West chose the ten of diamonds for the opening lead. East took the ace and returned the jack. After a little thought, South played low and West followed with the nine. If West had started with the king-ten-nine-to-five diamonds and a certain entry, such as the ace of clubs, West would have followed with a low card at trick two to encourage East to continue the suit.

The diamond nine therefore denied such a holding. East interpreted the message correctly. Logically, the diamond nine must be simultaneously discouraging and showing tolerance for a shift. South's choice of three notrump was also revealing. Would South have bid three notrump without the ace of clubs? As a spade was out of contention, East switched to a club. Not the two or the ten, which would have been fatal, but the king!

South took the ace of clubs, cashed the king of diamonds and ran dummy's hearts. The first three discards for East and West were three spades each. On the last heart, East discarded the ten of clubs, and West the 'five of clubs. Thinking that East had started with the king-queen-ten and had been strip-squeezed down to the spade king-ten and

the club queen, declarer exited with the two of clubs from dummy, expecting to endplay East. West promptly claimed the last three tricks for one down.

East/West's plus 50 scored 99% for a shared top. East/West minus 400 for three notrump making would have been an average board.

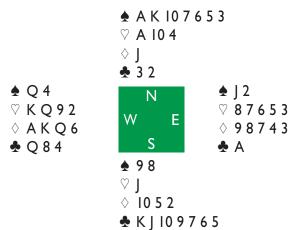
11th Rosenblum Cup Quarterfinal Stanza 2 CHAGAS v LAVAZZA

(Ana Roth, Buenos Aires, Argentina)

The LAVAZZA versus CHAGAS match was dramatic until the last board. In the end, LAVAZZA won by 6 IMPs and made their way to the semifinals. At one of the tables, the Italian team was represented by Dennis Bilde/Giorgio Duboin as North/South while for the CHAGAS team, Marcos Thoma sat West and Pablo Ravenna East.

The following board saw an excellent defence by Ravenna that managed to fool the declarer into going down in a cold contract.

Board 52. Dealer West. Neither Vul.



West	North	East	South
Thoma	Bilde	Ravenna	Duboin
♣	I♠	Double	Pass
4♡	4♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

Ravenna led the ace of clubs. After winning the first trick, East shifted to a trump to stop declarer's potential heart ruffs. Looking at dummy's nine-eight of spades, he led the two so that declarer could not develop a late entry to the table with the nine of spades. Bilde played the eight of spades, Thoma the queen, and declarer won with his trump ace.

The BBO commentators thought that it looked like minus 590 at this point. However, Bilde continued with a club and Ravenna discarded the eight of hearts. He was still thinking about denying declarer the nine of spades as an entry to the clubs in dummy. Declarer won the trick with the king of clubs. At that point, Bilde believed that Thoma had both of the remaining trumps.

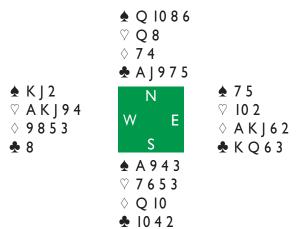
Declarer played another club and, after this play, he could no longer make the contract. When Bilde played dummy's six of clubs, Thoma played his queen, Bilde ruffed with the seven of spades and Ravenna discarded another heart. Declarer continued with the ace of hearts, ruffed a heart in dummy, and played a club. Thoma ruffed with his four of spades and Bilde threw his last heart loser. Ravenna pitched his last heart too. Thoma returned the king of hearts; Bilde ruffed with the six of spades, but Ravenna now over-ruffed and the diamond trick to come meant one off. That was fantastic defence. Bravo!

Double dummy, there is no legitimate way to beat four spades. After the ace of clubs lead and, say, a spade shift, declarer utilizes the bidding to deduce that West holds all the red high cards and draws trumps, squeeze-endplaying him.

2018 Chinese Premier League Final (Jerry Li, Beijing, China)

In the Hengzhou Jinrongjia vs. ORG match, at one table, the Hengzhou team's East/West pair were in three notrump by East. South led the three of spades to the jack and queen. North continued with the six of spades to the nine and king. Declarer played a diamond to the ace and set up his club trick with the king of clubs to North's ace. The defence cashed their spades. Declarer won the club shift and cashed the king of diamonds. When they were 2-2, he had nine tricks. Had the diamonds not broken, declarer had planned to take the heart finesse for the contract. That was plus 600 to Hengzhou.

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.



West	North	East	South
Demuy	Bessis	Kranyak	Lorenzini
_	_	I ♦	Pass
Ι♡	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3◊	Pass	3♡	Pass
4♡	Pass	Pass	Pass

In this room, Thomas Bessis executed an excellent defence. He led the seven of diamonds. Demuy won with the ace and ran the heart ten to North. Bessis ducked this card very smoothly. Demuy continued with another heart to the jack and queen. Now Bessis shifted to the eight of spades, won by Lorenzini's (South's) ace. Lorenzini

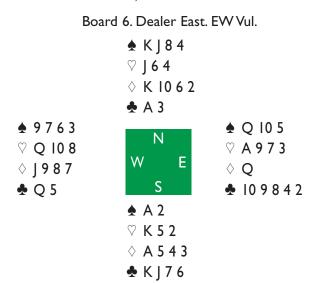
continued with spades. From Demuy's point view, it appeared that diamonds were 3-1 with the queen offside, so he needed spades and clubs to be good for him, but when Demuy chose to finesse the spade jack, the contract went down.

Bessis's defence was very beautiful: duck the heart, erase the dummy's ruffing value, then shift to spades, attacking declarer's weakness.

Well done by Bessis!

USBF Trials for USA2 (Suzi Subeck, Chicago, IL, USA)

Round Robin Match 1, Wolfson v. Lo



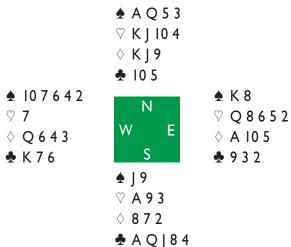
West	North	East	South
Wildavsky	Garner	Doub	Wolfson
_	_	Pass	INT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2◊
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Adam Wildavsky led the seven of spades to the four, ten and declarer's ace. Declarer played a club to the ace and a club to the jack and West's queen. Doug Doub, East, followed with the four-two of clubs, a Hawk Echo, showing an even number of spades remaining. It looked as though declarer had nine tricks on passive defence, so West switched to the ten of hearts. Declarer covered with the jack, forcing Doub's ace. He returned the three of hearts. Declarer did well to go up with the king but Wildavsky unblocked the queen to prevent declarer from ducking a spade to East's queen.

Declarer instead played a diamond to the ace, cashed the king of clubs, and led a diamond to the ten and cashed the king as Doub pitched two winning clubs. Declarer exited from dummy with a heart, which Doub ducked to Wildavsky's eight so that West could lead a spade through. Down one.

USBF Trials for USA2 Semifinals, Segment 1, Fleisher v. Kriegel (Suzi Subeck, Chicago, IL, USA)

Board 7. Dealer East. Both Vul.



West	North	East	South
Greco	Smith	Hampson	Kriegel
Platnick	Grue	Diamond	Moss
_	_	Pass	♣
Pass	I 🛇	Pass	INT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

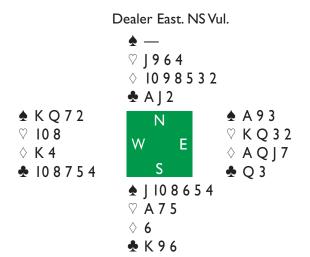
Both Wests led a fourth-best spade. Both declarers ducked in dummy and both Easts won with the king. In the Open Room, Hampson continued spades and Kriegel won with his jack. Declarer played a club toward the ten, West ducking. A club to the queen followed, Greco winning with his king. Greco played another spade to the queen in dummy. Kriegel cashed the ace of spades, played the king of hearts and the jack of hearts to the ace. He cashed the clubs and made nine tricks, plus 600.

In the Closed Room, Diamond won the opening spade lead with his king and found the critical switch... Diamond switched to diamonds! His five of diamonds rode to Platnick's queen, ducked in dummy to isolate the suit if the diamonds were 5-2 and the king of clubs was offside. (If diamonds were 4-3 with the ace-ten-fourth in East there was nothing to be done.) Platnick continued diamonds to the jack and ace, and the ten of diamonds went to the king. Moss played a spade to his jack. He tested hearts by cashing the ace and leading to the king. When the queen didn't drop, he took his high spades and finessed for the king of clubs. When Platnick won, he was able to cash his remaining diamond for down one. It was very disappointing to Moss to find the thirteenth diamond with West. Twelve IMPs to Kriegel. Well-played and well-defended.

Double-dummy, Moss could have succeeded by winning the first diamond and taking an immediate club finesse without cashing two hearts.

The Shoe Is on the Other Foot (Anant Bhagwat, Thane, Maharashtra, India)

This bewitching deal came up in the Otters Club State Level tournament in Mumbai.



West	North	East	South
_	_	♣	Pass
I ◊2	Pass	INT ³	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♡	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
1. 16+	· HCP		
2. 0-8	HCP		
3. 16-	18 balanced		

At some tables, South led the jack of spades. East won with his ace and immediately played back the nine of spades. South covered with the ten and dummy won. Now East made sure of his ninth trick by playing a heart from

dummy towards his king. Later, declarer finessed the seven of spades. The defence could take three clubs and the ace of hearts, but that was all. Nobody noticed anything amiss in the defence and they happily proceeded to the next deal.

At another table, South found the potentially effective lead of a low club. North won and, in spite of knowing declarer had four hearts, shifted to the four of hearts. When declarer played low from hand to ensure two heart tricks, it was all over bar the shouting.

At one table though, the defenders were wide awake. They were Ajay Khare and Raju Tolani, bronze medallists in the 1st Asian Games Bridge Championship. Khare knew dummy had four cards in spades, so it was pointless to lead the spade jack. He also noted that declarer had four cards in hearts. That left only the club suit, so Khare led the six of clubs. Tolani, North, won with the ace and played back the two of clubs, dropping declarer's queen.

Now Ajay Khare paused for thought. And he found the deadly shift to the seven of hearts; dummy played the eight, Tolani the nine, and declarer won with his king. When declarer cashed the ace of spades and North discarded, East had to resort to the club suit for his ninth trick. He travelled to dummy with the king of diamonds and played a club. Tolani won with his jack and played the jack of hearts. Declarer covered and Khare won. Then, because of the farsighted unblock of the seven of hearts, Khare was able to lead the five of hearts to partner's six. The four of hearts brought the three from declarer to take the contract two down.

It was a perfect defensive intra-finesse, normally considered to be a prerogative of the declarer.



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The ranking lists can be found at: http://robot.wbfmasterpoints.com/ and these give details of the titles achieved and the master point awards.

At the end of 2019 the leading three players in the 2019 overall ranking, determined on their best results achieved over a minimum of 100 tournaments will be invited to participate in the 2020 World Championships with a partner of their choice.

RESULTS

Bermuda Bowl

	Round	19			
Mato	ch	II	1Ps	\	/Ps
SWEDEN	CHILE	43	20	15.56	4.44
USA I	NORWAY	3	54	0.75	19.25
ISRAEL	INDIA	42	38	11.20	8.80
CHINA	GUADELOUPE	68	19	19.07	0.93
CHINA HONG KONG	NEW ZEALAND	6	24	5.40	14.60
NETHERLANDS	CANADA	34	25	12.55	7.45
USA 2	MOROCCO	59	17	18.33	1.67
INDONESIA	SINGAPORE	19	61	1.67	18.33
EGYPT	ITALY	1	40	2.03	17.97
ENGLAND	BANGLADESH	41	25	14.18	5.82
AUSTRALIA	ARGENTINA	38	28	12.80	7.20
RUSSIA	POLAND	22	42	5.00	15.00

Round 20					
	Match	١N	1Ps	٧	/Ps
CHILE	CHINA	14	57	1.56	18.44
INDONESIA	CHINA HONG KONG	20	28	7.71	12.29
EGYPT	RUSSIA	34	45	6.96	13.04
GUADELOUPE	USA 2	33	20	13.52	6.48
AUSTRALIA	NETHERLANDS	27	25	10.61	9.39
ITALY	POLAND	43	52	7.45	12.55
MOROCCO	ENGLAND	15	73	0.15	19.85
INDIA	NORWAY	10	45	2.55	17.45
CANADA	ARGENTINA	46	14	17.03	2.97
BANGLADESH	SWEDEN	8	46	2.15	17.85
SINGAPORE	NEW ZEALAND	33	46	6.48	13.52
USA I	ISRAEL	20	25	8.52	11.48

	Round 2				
Mato	:h	I۱	IMPs \		/Ps
BANGLADESH	MOROCCO	30	25	11.48	8.52
CHILE	GUADELOUPE	31	19	13.28	6.72
SINGAPORE	NORWAY	24	62	2.15	17.85
ARGENTINA	NEW ZEALAND	13	48	2.55	17.45
ENGLAND	SWEDEN	15	54	2.03	17.97
RUSSIA	USA I	37	37	10.00	10.00
POLAND	ISRAEL	14	41	3.74	16.26
CHINA HONG KONG	AUSTRALIA	23	41	5.40	14.60
NETHERLANDS	ITALY	40	27	13.52	6.48
CHINA	USA 2	33	6	16.26	3.74
INDONESIA	INDIA	30	54	4.26	15.74
EGYPT	CANADA	31	37	8.24	11.76

Venice Cup

Round 19							
Mato	ch	I٢	1Ps	٧	'Ps		
CHINA HONG KONG	TUNISIA	53	37	13.68	5.32		
CHINESE TAIPEI	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	51	23	16.42	3.58		
SOUTH AFRICA	PAKISTAN	20	18	10.61	9.39		
SWEDEN	USA 2	31	17	13.75	6.25		
DENMARK	CANADA	43	27	14.18	5.82		
NORWAY	USA I	33	37	8.80	11.20		
NEW ZEALAND	POLAND	15	27	6.72	13.28		
RUSSIA	NETHERLANDS	13	26	6.48	13.52		
JAPAN	ENGLAND	47	18	16.58	3.42		
SCOTLAND	FRANCE	31	18	13.52	6.48		
CHINA	AUSTRALIA	54	15	17.97	2.03		
INDIA	BRAZIL	21	21	10.00	10.00		

Round 20							
Ma	tch	۱N	1Ps	٧	/Ps		
CHINESE TAIPEI	CHINA HONG KONG	19	60	1.79	18.21		
SOUTH AFRICA	TUNISIA	34	24	12.80	7.20		
PAKISTAN	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	46	29	14.39	5.61		
SWEDEN	NEW ZEALAND	63	25	17.85	2.15		
SCOTLAND	USA 2	20	40	5.00	15.00		
POLAND	FRANCE	3	40	2.28	17.72		
DENMARK	RUSSIA	38	39	9.69	10.31		
CHINA	CANADA	19	16	10.91	9.09		
NETHERLANDS	AUSTRALIA	37	25	13.28	6.72		
NORWAY	JAPAN	50	23	16.26	3.74		
INDIA	USA I	26	52	3.91	16.09		
ENGLAND	BRAZIL	34	12	15.38	4.62		

Round 21							
Mato	Match		1Ps	٧	/Ps		
CHINA HONG KONG	SOUTH AFRICA	40	18	15.38	4.62		
PAKISTAN	CHINESE TAIPEI	14	77	0.00	20.00		
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	TUNISIA	22	31	7.45	12.55		
FRANCE	SWEDEN	27	29	9.39	10.61		
NEW ZEALAND	SCOTLAND	27	33	8.24	11.76		
USA 2	POLAND	31	21	12.80	7.20		
AUSTRALIA	DENMARK	36	43	7.97	12.03		
RUSSIA	CHINA	17	26	7.45	12.55		
CANADA	NETHERLANDS	15	17	9.39	10.61		
BRAZIL	NORWAY	19	48	3.42	16.58		
JAPAN	INDIA	40	31	12.55	7.45		
USA I	ENGLAND	43	13	16.73	3.27		

d'Orsi Trophy

Round 19 Match **IMPs VPs** USA 2 INDIA 28 14.60 5.40 **NETHERLANDS** 12 13.75 6.25 REUNION DENMARK 37 4.44 15.56 JAPAN **CHINESE TAIPEI** 24 12.03 7.47 CHINA HONG KONG TURKEY 63 0.48 19.52 **NORWAY** 37 27 12.80 7.20 **FRANCE** CANADA **INDONESIA** 39 9 16.73 3.27 **AUSTRALIA ENGLAND** 15 41 3.91 16.09 USA I **SWEDEN** 32 33 9.69 10.31 **POLAND ITALY** 37 45 7.71 12.29 **BULGARIA IRELAND** 26 5.61 14.39 CHINA **NEW ZEALAND** 26 48 3.72 14.78

	Round 2	0			
Mato	:h	I۲	1Ps	٧	'Ps
USA 2	NEW ZEALAND	86	4	20.00	0.00
NETHERLANDS	CHINESE TAIPEI	59	29	16.73	3.27
REUNION	TURKEY	54	28	16.09	3.91
DENMARK	FRANCE	19	17	10.61	9.39
UAE	INDONESIA	42	19	15.56	4.44
INDIA	ENGLAND	39	28	12.79	6.96
JAPAN	SWEDEN	23	42	5.20	14.80
CHINA HONG KONG	ITALY	34	37	9.09	10.91
NORWAY	IRELAND	53	34	14.80	5.20
CANADA	CHINA	38	69	3.12	16.88
AUSTRALIA	BULGARIA	26	22	11.20	8.80
USA I	POLAND	28	40	6.72	13.28

Round 21						
Mato	ch	۱N	1Ps	\	/Ps	
USA 2	IRELAND	15	18	9.09	10.91	
NETHERLANDS	CHINA	20	25	8.52	11.48	
REUNION	BULGARIA	20	29	7.45	12.55	
DENMARK	POLAND	19	49	3.27	16.73	
U.A.E.	USA I	- 1	55	0.48	19.52	
INDIA	AUSTRALIA	19	17	10.61	9.39	
JAPAN	CANADA	7	27	5.00	15.00	
CHINA HONG KONG	NORWAY	24	30	8.24	11.76	
ITALY	CHINESE TAIPEI	25	14	13.04	6.96	
SWEDEN	TURKEY	22	24	9.39	10.61	
ENGLAND	FRANCE	15	38	4.44	15.56	
INDONESIA	NEW ZEALAND	39	27	13.28	6.72	

Mixed

	Round	19			
	Match	11	1Ps	\	/Ps
CHINESE TAIPEI	ENGLAND	35	54	5.20	14.80
SWEDEN	DENMARK	35	36	9.69	10.31
INDONESIA	INDIA	31	26	11.48	8.52
MOROCCO	LATVIA	0	85	0.00	20.00
RUSSIA	BRAZIL	46	17	16.58	3.42
ITALY	CANADA	41	22	14.80	5.20
POLAND	ROMANIA	26	15	13.04	6.96
EGYPT	USA 2	31	19	13.28	6.72
PAKISTAN	CHINA	11	49	2.15	17.85
THAILAND	BARBADOS	83	16	20.00	0.00
AUSTRALIA	FRANCE	45	29	14.18	5.82
NEW ZEALAND	USA I	33	27	11.76	8.24

	Round 2	20			
M	latch	I٢	1Ps	\	/Ps
LATVIA	CHINESE TAIPEI	23	75	0.66	19.34
BRAZIL	ENGLAND	30	24	11.76	8.24
CANADA	SWEDEN	72	29	18.44	1.56
ROMANIA	INDONESIA	37	17	15.00	5.00
USA 2	MOROCCO	64	25	17.97	2.03
CHINA	RUSSIA	27	43	5.82	14.18
BARBADOS	ITALY	6	82	0.00	20.00
FRANCE	POLAND	39	43	8.80	11.20
NEW ZEALAND	EGYPT	22	27	8.52	11.48
AUSTRALIA	PAKISTAN	49	33	14.18	5.57
USA I	THAILAND	61	18	18.44	1.56
DENMARK	INDIA	36	49	6.48	13.52

Round 21						
	Match	I۱	1Ps	VPs		
MOROCCO	CHINESE TAIPEI	17	61	1.45	18.55	
INDONESIA	ENGLAND	23	20	10.91	9.09	
USA I	SWEDEN	20	33	6.48	13.52	
DENMARK	RUSSIA	20	26	8.24	11.76	
INDIA	ITALY	36	30	11.76	8.24	
LATVIA	POLAND	35	33	10.61	9.39	
BRAZIL	EGYPT	37	46	5.45	12.55	
CANADA	PAKISTAN	54	32	15.38	4.62	
ROMANIA	THAILAND	33	31	10.61	9.39	
USA 2	AUSTRALIA	30	32	9.39	10.61	
CHINA	NEW ZEALAND	38	16	15.38	4.62	
BARBADOS	FRANCE	18	44	3.91	16.09	















