



NEC Bridge Festival

Saturday, April 20, 2013
Bulletin Number 5

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

It's Russia vs Mixed in the NEC Cup Final

Second seed Russia (Andrey Gromov, Evgeny Gladyshev, Alexander Dubinin, Mikhail Krasnosselski, Sjoert Brink) will face third seed Mixed (Reese Milner, Hemant Lall, Sabine Auken, Roy Welland, Michael Kwiecien, Jacek Pszczola) in today's NEC Cup final. Both teams led their semi-final matches all the way but had close calls against Australian teams in the quarter-finals. (Mixed was put to the test by Down Under, barely surviving a ferocious comeback by the Aussies, and Russia eked out a 7-imp win against Australia Youth.) For anyone interested (and why should you be?), the editors have made Mixed the favorite by 15 — and Russia the favorite by 25! (Remember, there are two editors.) The sponsor has agreed to put up a prize for anyone guessing which editor is which. First place is a free session of bridge with the editor of your choice. Second place is two free sessions of bridge with the editor of *our* choice. Good luck to the two finalists and congratulations to the other qualifiers who gave us such a rousing day of playoff bridge yesterday.

Quarter-final Results

| Team | Carry | 1-16 | 17-32 | Final |
|-----------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|
| NEDUK | .5 | 65 | 18 | 83 |
| England | | 20 | 32 | 52 |
| Russia | .5 | 53 | 25 | 78 |
| Australia Youth | | 35 | 36 | 71 |
| Mixed | .5 | 40 | 43 | 83 |
| Down Under | | 35 | 38 | 73 |
| Pharon | .5 | 14 | 32 | 46 |
| USA | | 45 | 45 | 90 |

Semi-final Results

| Team | Carry | 1-16 | 17-32 | Final |
|--------|-------|------|-------|------------|
| NEDUK | .5 | 20 | 21 | 41 |
| Russia | | 46 | 17 | 63 |
| Mixed | .5 | 62 | 65 | 127 |
| USA | | 45 | 28 | 73 |

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 18th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/home/English/nec/tabid/662/Default.aspx>

Follow our featured matches on Vugraph each day at: www.bridgebase.com

NEC Cup 2013: Conditions of Contest

A 12-round Swiss of 14-board matches will qualify the top 8 teams to the Knockout phase; no playbacks.

V.P. Scale: New WBF 14-board scale (20-point scale, continuous and given to two decimal places).

Seating Rights: Blind seating 10 minutes before the start of match.

KO-Phase Seating: The winner of a coin toss has the choice of seating in either of the two 16-board segments of the quarter- or semi-finals. In the four 16-board segments of the final, the choices will alternate over segments.

Swiss Pairings: First-round Swiss matches were made by randomly pairing each team in the top half with a team from the bottom half.

Home and Visiting: 1st numbered team sits N/S in the open room, E/W in the closed room.

Tie-Breaks: At the end of the Swiss, ties will be broken by IMP quotient. If more than two teams are involved, WBF 2008 Conditions of Contest procedures will apply.

In the Knockout Phase, the team with the higher position from the Swiss will be assumed to have a ½-IMP carryover.

Systems: No HUM or Brown Sticker methods are permitted in this event. However, pairs may prepare written defenses against a two-level opening bid in a minor that shows a weak two-bid in either major, with or without the option of strong hand types. These defenses are deemed to be part of the opponents' convention cards.

Length of Matches: 2 hours will be allotted for each 14-board segment (or 2 hours and 15 minutes for each 16-board segment of the KOs). In addition, a 5-minute grace period will be allotted to each team. Overtime and slow play penalties as per WBF 2012 Conditions of Contest.

Appeals: The WBF Code of Practice will be in effect. The Chief Director will have 12C1c authority. Appeals found to be without merit may incur a penalty of up to 3 VPs.

Match Scoring: Bridgemate scoring terminals will be used. Match results should be verified against the official result sheet (posted at the end of each match); score corrections and notifications of appeals will be permitted up until the start of the next session.

KO Draw: The team finishing 1st in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 4th-8th. The team finishing 2nd will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 4th-8th group. The team finishing 3rd will then have their choice of any one of the remaining teams. In addition, before the start of the Knockout Phase and after all quarter-final draws have been determined, the team that finishes 1st in the Swiss chooses their semi-final opponent from any of the other three quarter-final matches.

Security: No player may leave the playing area during play without permission, due to security concerns arising from the Bridge Base Online Broadcast.

Smoking: Once play in a qualifying-round match or a KO-round session starts, smoking is prohibited at ALL times (including when a player leaves the playing room to go to the bathroom), until the player completes the play of all boards in the match or session. (For those wishing to smoke at other times, smoking rooms are located on the 3rd and 5th floors of the Conference Center.) Automatic penalties for violations will be assessed by the Director as follows: Qualifying Swiss — 1 VP for the 1st offense, 3 VPs for all subsequent offenses; KO — 3 imps for the 1st offense, 10 imps for all subsequent offenses.

Screen Hesitations: When a delay in the return of the tray is suspected, a player on the opposite side of the screen must be the first to call attention to it (by summoning the Director). In case of dispute the call from the wrong side will be ignored, but in situations where the wrong side calls or a late call is made and there is no dispute the Director may accept the fact of the delayed call.

Electronic Equipment: Any and all electronic equipment capable of receiving or transmitting information to/from outside the playing room (e.g., cell phones, iPads and the like) must be turned off at all times from the beginning of a match/session until the player has completed all boards in the match/session and left the playing area. The Director may authorize exceptions in emergency situations. Penalties for violations are the same as for smoking violations.

Photography/BBO VuGraph: By entering the event, players (and kibitzers) agree to authorize still and/or video photography by the JCBL and also to appear on BBO VuGraph whenever requested by the Director.

Convention Regulations for Side (Pair) Games

(An explanation for foreign players)

Unlike the NEC Cup, which is an international event, and the Yokohama Swiss Teams, in which all non-brown-sticker conventions are permitted, the Yokohama IMP Pairs and Asuka Cup are rated as Japanese regional or national events, for which JCBL regulations for domestic events apply strictly. We ask for your compliance with the regulations explained below. If you have any questions about what is allowed, please ask the JCBL staff. Please note that use of unauthorized conventions may be penalized. We thank you for your cooperation.

All side games at the NEC Bridge Festival (the Yokohama IMP Pairs and Asuka Cup) are restricted to "List C" conventions as described below. The use of the Multi-2♦ is strictly prohibited and will be subject to penalty.

LIST C (Yokohama IMP Pairs/Asuka Cup)

Opening Bids

1. 1♣ or 1♦ may be used as an all-purpose opening bid (artificial or natural) promising a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g.: Precision 1♣ and 1♦; Polish 1♣, etc.)
2. 2♣ artificial opening bid indicating one of:
 - a) a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
 - b) a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
3. 2♦ artificial opening bid showing one of:
 - a) at least 5-4 distribution in the majors with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Flannery, anti-Flannery etc.)
 - b) a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
 - c) a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
4. Opening suit bid at the two level or higher indicating the bid suit, another known suit, a minimum of 10 HCP and at least 5-4 distribution in the suits.
5. Opening notrump bid at the two level or higher indicating at least 5-4 distribution in the minors, 10 or more HCP.
6. Opening 3NT bid indicating:
 - a) any solid suit or
 - b) a broken minor suit.
7. Opening four-level bid transferring to a known suit (e.g., Namyats, etc.).
8. Strong opening at the two level or higher, asking Ace, King, Queen, singleton, void, trump quality.

Responses and Rebids

1. 1♦ as a forcing, artificial response to 1♣.
2. 1NT response to a major-suit opening bid, forcing for one round; may not guarantee game invitational or better values.
3. Conventional responses which guarantee game forcing or better values. May not be part of a relay system.
4. 2♣ or 2♦ response to 3rd- or 4th-seat major-suit opener asking the quality of the opening bid.
5. Single or higher jump shifts (including into notrump) to indicate a raise or to force to game.
6. All responses to:
 - a) artificial strong opening bids with 15 HCP or more.
 - b) opening bids of 2♣ or higher (weak 2s must guarantee 10 opening points: opening points=HCP + number of cards in longest suit).

7. All constructive calls starting with the opening bidder's second call.
8. Calls that ask for aces, kings, queens, singletons, voids, trump quality and responses thereto.
9. All calls after a natural notrump (including those that have two non-consecutive ranges, neither of which exceeds 3 HCP). No conventional responses are allowed over natural notrump bids with a lower limit of fewer than 10 HCP or with a range of greater than 5 HCP.

Competitive Bids

1. Any conventional balancing calls.
2. Conventional doubles and redoubles and responses (including free bids) thereto.
3. Notrump overcall for either:
 - a) two-suited takeout showing at least 5-4 distribution and at least one known suit.
(At the 4 level or higher there is no requirement to have a known suit.)
 - b) three-suited takeout (as with a takeout double, at least 3 cards in each of the 3 suits).
4. Jump overcalls into a suit to indicate at least 5-4 distribution in two known suits, and responses thereto.
5. Cuebid of an opponent's suit and responses thereto, except that a cuebid that could be weak, directly over an opening bid, must show at least one known suit.
6. Comic 1NT overcall.
7. Defense to:
 - a) conventional calls (including takeout doubles).
 - b) natural notrump opening bids and overcalls.
 - c) opening bids of 2♣ or higher.
8. Nos. 5 through 9 under "Responses and Rebids" above apply to both pairs.
9. Transfer overcall to show a specified suit at the four level.

Carding

1. All leads and signaling methods are approved except for: a) odd-even signals, b) encrypted signals, c) dual-message carding strategies, except on each defender's first discard, d) any method when the pair using it are deemed to be playing it in a manner which is not compatible with the maintenance of proper tempo.

LIST D (NEC Cup/Yokohama Swiss Teams)

Category 3 of WBF Systems Policy applies

Yokohama IMP Pairs — 48 pairs

| Rank | Names | | Score |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------|---------|
| 1 | Vladislav Isporski | Valio Kovachev | 2708.00 |
| 2 | Kyoko Ohno | Akihiko Yamada | 1796.00 |
| 3 | Kyoko Toyofuku | Masayuki Ino | 1772.00 |
| 4 | Michael Nowosadzki | Dominik Fillipowicz | 1645.00 |
| 5 | Sakiko Naito | Ayako Miyakuni | 1538.00 |
| 6 | Takumi Seshimo | Yuki Harada | 1273.00 |
| 7 | Bruce Neill | Michael Ware | 1257.00 |
| 8 | Arun Jain | Manas Mukherji | 1255.00 |
| 9 | Kyoko Shimamura | Natsuko Nishida | 1203.00 |
| 10-11 | Shunsuke Morimura | Tadashi Imakura | 1198.00 |
| 10-11 | Debrata Majumdar | Sumit Mukherji | 1198.00 |
| 12 | Neville Francis | Magnus Moren | 1135.00 |
| 13 | Kumiko Sasahira | Tadashi Teramoto | 996.00 |
| 14 | Nophanai Niyomchoke | Arnond Rotrugsa | 926.00 |
| 15 | Makoto Hirata | Tadashi Yoshida | 869.00 |
| 16 | Subir Majumdar | Noriko Domichi | 814.00 |
| 17 | Sue Grenside | Cristo Hristov | 754.00 |



Vladislav Isporski

Beginners Cup (under 20 MP) — 22 pairs

| Rank | Names | | Score |
|------|-----------------|--------------------|-------|
| NS1 | Kazuko Kimura | Shoko Wakahara | 242 |
| NS2 | Kimiko Moriwaki | Suzue Senga | 217 |
| NS3 | Hiroshi Inoue | Hisae Miyamori | 166 |
| NS4 | Yoshio Tani | Shigeko Goto | 90 |
| EW1 | Hisako Otsuka | Tomoko Takao | 453 |
| EW2 | Hiroki Tsuboi | Shigeo Wakahara | 335 |
| EW3 | Tomiko Sugawara | Masako Katsuragawa | 239 |
| EW4 | Miyoko Kojima | Yasuhiko Terasawa | 185 |



Hisako Otsuka—Tomoko Takao

Beginners Cup (under 5 MP) — 25 pairs

| Rank | Names | | Score |
|------|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| NS1 | Michiko Wakiya | Junko Terabayashi | 714 |
| NS2 | Mitsuko Aoki | Setsuko Uuchi | 302 |
| NS3 | Takaaki Ishii | Koichi Fukuhara | 241 |
| NS4 | Mayumi Nanashima | Akiko Saruwatari | 232 |
| NS5 | Kimio Nagasaki | Takao Watanabe | 219 |
| EW1 | Reiko Takeuchi | Ryoko Okada | 592 |
| EW2 | Harumi Oomura | Hiroko Isomura | 411 |
| EW3 | Tokiko Fujita | Masumi Shinohara | 236 |
| EW4 | Hisaya Hattori | Kazuko Miyazaki | 89 |
| EW5 | Tomoko Ishihara | Yachiyo Nakazawa | 74 |



Michiko Wakiya—Junko Terabayashi

Debutante Cup — 13 pairs

| Rank | Names | | Score |
|------|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | Masaru Tsuchiura | Yoshiko Tsuchiura | 51.43 |
| 2 | Yumiko Musumi | Kumie Yoshikawa | 45.14 |
| 3 | Misako Takii | Kazuko Takeda | 44.57 |
| 4 | Mieko Oshima | Yukari Hosokawa | 44.00 |
| 5 | Machiko Okiyama | Kazuko Morita | 42.50 |



Yoshiko & Masaru Tsuchiura

NEC Quarter-finals (1st half): England vs NEDUK

by Barry Rigal



Jansma



B Senior



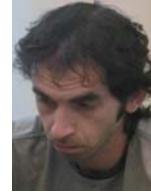
van P



Trendafilov



Gold



Bakhshi



N Senior

Penfold

The quarter-final draw had been somewhat dictated by the winners of the Swiss. NEDUK had picked their opponents from the 4th through 8th finishers, and then had selected from which bracket their semi-final opponents would come, assuming they got that far.

Showing little brotherly love, Gold-Bakhshi had picked their English *compañades* and if they survived that they would take on the winner of Russia-Australian Youth.

With the bridge starting at 9AM it would be nice to find a few deals to help the players wake up. And so it proved. On the first deal E/W started out with a 3NT contract that had 10 to 12 tricks, depending on how side-suits broke (NEDUK took an overtrick imp). On the second deal the lie of the cards meant there appeared to be no imps at stake either.

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| Bd: 2 | North |
| Dlr: East | ♠ 954 |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ J72 |
| | ♦ J1054 |
| | ♣ AJ3 |

| | |
|---------|---------|
| West | East |
| ♠ A108 | ♠ QJ762 |
| ♥ K1094 | ♥ AQ863 |
| ♦ 73 | ♦ K6 |
| ♣ KQ107 | ♣ 4 |
| South | |
| ♠ K3 | |
| ♥ 5 | |
| ♦ AQ982 | |
| ♣ 98652 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| 2NT | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| 2NT | Pass | 3♥ | Pass |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | |

4♥ is clearly superior to 4♠ but with the spades breaking 3-2 there was no defense to either game. Two of our pairs played spades (Del'Monte-Cheek, also missing the heart fit) but went unpunished today. Mind you, Del'Monte might riposte that 4♥ would probably go down on a low spade lead by South. Declarer would rise with the ace, draw trumps, then play for either the ♣A to be with South or for the diamond finesse to be on.

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Bd: 3 | North |
| Dlr: South | ♠ 75 |
| Vul: E/W | ♥ J7542 |
| | ♦ K85 |
| | ♣ KQ2 |
| West | East |
| ♠ J9 | ♠ Q8432 |
| ♥ Q93 | ♥ AK8 |
| ♦ AQ7643 | ♦ J2 |
| ♣ A10 | ♣ J94 |
| South | |
| ♠ AK106 | |
| ♥ 106 | |
| ♦ 109 | |
| ♣ 87653 | |

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------|----------|---------|
| Open/Closed Rooms | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2NT | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

Both pairs led a club, Bakhshi the five, Penfold the seven, and North won cheaply and continued the suit. Declarer won in dummy, perforce (Bakhshi playing the eight, Penfold the three), and led a low diamond to the jack and a diamond back to North. Brian (we shall refer to the Seniors by their first names) shifted immediately to a heart, playing his partner for the ♠A and ♥K, and declarer claimed 600. Gold unblocked clubs as partner played the highest missing spot, and shifted to spades for three down. I think Gold's defense was right since even on

Brian's scenario he could shift to hearts after winning the ♣K and seeing partner's suit-preference signal. But certainly Bakhshi's signal at trick two had made Gold's life far easier.

It was a lot easier in one of our matches where West opened a "strong" notrump and right-sided the game. But in Mixed-Down Under, Newell-Reid reached 2♦ by East down a trick while Lall played 3NT from East, making after a top spade lead. Pharon picked up a 10-imp swing by playing 3NT in one room and defending 2♦ in the other. It was 16-0 to Mixed while NEDUK was up 15-0, and there was more to come.

Bd: 4
Dlr: West
Vul: Both

| | |
|--------|--------|
| North | ♦ K8 |
| ♥ A852 | ♦ AJ42 |
| ♦ 1075 | ♣ 1075 |

| | |
|---------|-----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ J6 | ♠ AQ10972 |
| ♥ KQ764 | ♥ J109 |
| ♦ 10975 | ♦ 6 |
| ♣ Q2 | ♣ AJ3 |
| South | |
| ♠ 543 | |
| ♥ 3 | |
| ♦ KQ83 | |
| ♣ K9864 | |

Open Room

| | | | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Pass | Pass | 1♦ | Pass |
| 1NT | Pass | 2♦ | All Pass |

Closed Room

| | | | |
|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| Pass | 1♣ | 1♦ | 2♣ |
| Dbl | Pass | 3♠ | All Pass |

Penfold led her singleton heart against 2♦. Declarer went up with the queen and dropped the ten from hand as Brian won his ace. Back came a diamond and a second diamond, ruffed by declarer, who played ace and another spade. The defenders had one heart ruff and a club to come, but that was only five tricks. And yes, after a heart ruff at trick two South can lead a diamond to her partner for a second heart ruff, then exit with a diamond. But now if declarer reads the position he can play the ♠9 and force North either to win and give dummy an entry or duck and lose his trump trick.

The defense in the Closed Room was broadly similar, but Bakhshi had started by leading diamonds so the possibility for two ruffs had gone by the board. At trick three Nevena Senior led a heart to the king and ace and a second diamond came back. Nevena ruffed and had to lead trumps from hand, and now the defense took the heart ruff and exited in diamonds so there was still a club to lose at the end. Down one; 20-0 NEDUK.

In Russia-Australia Youth Brink overcalled 1♣ with 2♣ (intermediate) and played there, while Dubinin could show the minors as South when his partner

opened 1NT and Whibley bid spades. That got the Russians to 3♦, over which Milne doubled for takeout as West, getting his partner to 3♥. The defenders accurately led diamonds. Whibley ruffed and it would appear could have succeeded now by playing a club from hand. He chose instead to lead the jack, then ten of hearts, both ducked, and when the defenders got in they had three diamonds, a heart, and a black king for down one.

All of our tables made ten tricks in a decent 4♦ contract that appeared to have little potential for swing, except that the Hackett twins for Pharon and Gladys-Brink for Pharon both missed game after a light opening bid and raise by their opponents. Then:

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| Bd: 6 | North |
| Dlr: East | ♦ K5 |
| Vul: E/W | ♥ K1052 |
| | ♦ AKQ106 |
| | ♣ KQ |
| West | East |
| ♠ AQ10 | ♠ 87632 |
| ♥ A63 | ♥ Q4 |
| ♦ 42 | ♦ J83 |
| ♣ J9854 | ♣ A62 |
| South | |
| ♠ J94 | |
| ♥ J987 | |
| ♦ 975 | |
| ♣ 1073 | |

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|---------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Pass | 2NT | All Pass | Pass |

Closed Room

| | | | |
|----------|-------|----------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| 1♣ | Dbl | 1♦ | Pass |
| Pass | Dbl | Pass | 2♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

Both pairs on NEDUK did well here, Jansma by not opening in third seat on a bad suit, Gold by pulling in a notch or two facing a partner who could not act at either his first or second turn and could only bid 2♥ at his third. The defenders arranged a diamond ruff against 2♥ since declarer could not get to hand for the trump finesse, but that was still +110 since eventually declarer could pitch spades on the good diamonds.

By contrast, in 2NT all Brian could do was win and run diamonds. East pitched a club and a heart, won the ♠A to unblock spades, and van Prooijen got out with a low club, forcing Brian to win and concede the rest, for down one. 4 imps to NEDUK, up 24-0.

No one else generated a real swing here. Each N/S pair stopped safely low except in Pharon-USA, where both N/S pairs went down, one in 4♥ and the other in 2NT.

Bd: 7
Dlr: South
Vul: Both

| | |
|---------|--|
| North | |
| ♠ 4 | |
| ♥ AK42 | |
| ♦ K1092 | |
| ♣ Q532 | |

| | |
|----------|--------|
| West | East |
| ♠ KQ1092 | ♠ A875 |
| ♥ 95 | ♥ 863 |
| ♦ A54 | ♦ 876 |
| ♣ J96 | ♣ A104 |

South

| |
|---------|
| ♠ J63 |
| ♥ QJ107 |
| ♦ QJ3 |
| ♣ K87 |

Open Room

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 2♥ | 2♠ | 3♥ |
| All Pass | | | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 2♥ | 2♠ | 3♥ |
| Pass | 4♥ | All Pass | |

Gold's raise of 3♥ to 4♥ was based on his singleton spade plus a general ebullience, coupled with the feeling of having a following wind thus far this set. While 3♥ was easy to play, Penfold taking one spade ruff in dummy and losing two spades and a trick in each minor, 4♥ on a top spade lead and a trump shift was dicier. Bakhshi won the heart switch in dummy. He led a diamond to the queen and ace, won the trump return, crossed to the ♣K, ruffed a spade, came back to the ♦J, drew trumps, and there was still an entry to dummy in diamonds for the discard of the club loser. Note that even after the spade lead, the defense has control if West ducks the ♦A; no matter what, declarer cannot unscramble his tricks.

Newell-Reid also defended 4♥ after E/W had bid to 3♠ and bullied Kwiecien (South) into 4♥. Reid led a top spade and meanly shifted to the ♣J, ducked to the king. Declarer could do little except run this to hand, ruff two spades, one low and one high, while coming back to hand with a heart, then lead a diamond to the queen. Reid won and played...a fourth spade, letting declarer ruff, draw trumps, then run the diamonds. That made it 31-1 to Mixed, while NEDUK led 34-0. And they weren't done yet.



"Hmm, Korean barbecue or Chinese?"

Bd: 8
Dlr: West
Vul: None

| | |
|---------|--|
| North | |
| ♠ KJ832 | |
| ♥ A876 | |
| ♦ 94 | |
| ♣ 87 | |

| | |
|--------|----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ Q765 | ♠ 9 |
| ♥ K95 | ♥ QJ10 |
| ♦ 865 | ♦ AJ1072 |
| ♣ QJ10 | ♣ 6432 |

South

| |
|--------|
| ♠ A104 |
| ♥ 432 |
| ♦ KQ3 |
| ♣ AK95 |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|------------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1♣ |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 1NT(15-17) |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 4♠ | All Pass | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| Pass | Pass | 1♦ | 1NT |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3NT |
| All Pass | | | |

Credit Bakhshi with a very good view to sit for 3NT here. In favor of his decision was his three small hearts and slow positional diamond stoppers, but it is still easier to do with the sight of all 52 cards than at the table. The defenders led diamonds. Bakhshi won the first, led the ♠A and passed the ♠10, making +430 painlessly. Problem, what problem?

Brian played 4♠ on an uninformative auction. The defenders led and continued hearts, forcing him to find the ♠Q. The percentages make it clear what to do and for once they would have worked. But Brian knew his side rated to be quite a lot down in the match so he took the anti-percentage line (a spade to the ace and a spade up) and doubtless muttered something impolite under his breath as he put another 10 imps in the out-column. It was 44-0 and both teams were full value for their scores thus far.

The next deal looked like a quiet 4♥ with 11 top tricks (more if the defenders didn't cash their two club winners) but Australia Youth generated their own "noise" on the board.

Bd: 9
Dlr: North
Vul: E/W

| | |
|----------|--|
| North | |
| ♠ AK10 | |
| ♥ AJ1092 | |
| ♦ K62 | |
| ♣ J10 | |

| | |
|---------|--------|
| West | East |
| ♠ QJ642 | ♠ 9753 |
| ♥ 8653 | ♥ 7 |
| ♦ --- | ♦ J854 |
| ♣ AQ54 | ♣ K973 |

South

| |
|-----------|
| ♠ 8 |
| ♥ KQ4 |
| ♦ AQ10973 |
| ♣ 862 |

Howard-Hollands bid it 1NT-2NT(♦)-3♣-3♦(SPL)-(Dbl)-4♦-4♥-4NT-5♣-(Dbl)-Pass-5♦-6♦. West now found himself on lead to 6♦ presumably knowing North had no club control and led...a trump. Declarer took his 13 top tricks and Australia Youth had the lead back at 19-17.

Next, England finally got on the scoreboard.

Bd: 10 North
Dlr: East ♠ KQ842
Vul: Both ♥ 73
 ♦ K10
 ♣ AQ87

| | |
|----------|--------|
| West | East |
| ♠ 106 | ♠ J975 |
| ♥ QJ5 | ♥ AK9 |
| ♦ 94 | ♦ J732 |
| ♣ KJ9543 | ♣ 102 |
| South | |
| ♠ A3 | |
| ♥ 108642 | |
| ♦ AQ865 | |
| ♣ 6 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|---------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | 2♦ |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 2♣(♥) |
| All Pass | | | |

3NT on a low spade lead was painless enough. Brian needed to win in hand (temporarily blocking spades) and clear diamonds. With hearts 3-3 and the club finesse working he could not be prevented from coming to nine tricks. One could follow the same sort of approach in 3♦, too, but on a club lead Bakhshi elected to go up with the ace and try to cash some spade winners. West could ruff in and play trumps, leaving declarer with two spade tricks, five trumps, and a club but no ninth trick. That made it 44-12.

Australia Youth wrapped up the same 10-imp swing by opening the South hand, to lead 29-10.

Bd: 11 North
Dlr: South ♠ AJ106
Vul: None ♥ 643
 ♦ 43
 ♣ Q653

| | |
|---------|--------|
| West | East |
| ♠ K92 | ♠ 8753 |
| ♥ QJ7 | ♥ AK95 |
| ♦ KQ986 | ♦ J5 |
| ♣ 108 | ♣ KJ7 |
| South | |
| ♠ Q4 | |
| ♥ 1082 | |
| ♦ A1072 | |
| ♣ A942 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ |
| All Pass | | | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| 1♣(2+) | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | All Pass |

The 11-count openings found by the England team hadn't been working well so far this match and Board 11 was no exception. Trendafilov won the club lead cheaply in hand and knocked out the ♦A, South winning to return the suit. Should Trendafilov have finessed on the second round? If he believed the ♦2 return yes, he should. He didn't though and Bakhshi got in with the fourth diamond to follow his partner's instructions and shift to the ♠Q; -150. In the other room Brian's 1♠ opening stole the pot for Penfold in 2♣, where there were three hearts, one diamond and two clubs to lose. Down 50, and 49-12 for NEDUK.

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| Bd: 12 | North |
| Dlr: West | ♠ QJ73 |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ K |
| | ♦ 4 |
| | ♣ KQ98732 |
| West | East |
| ♠ 4 | ♠ AK1085 |
| ♥ AQJ10854 | ♥ 963 |
| ♦ A1086 | ♦ J72 |
| ♣ A | ♣ 106 |
| South | |
| ♠ 962 | |
| ♥ 72 | |
| ♦ KQ953 | |
| ♣ J54 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|---------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| 1♥ | 3♣ | Pass | Pass |
| 4♥ | 4♠ | Dbl | 5♣ |
| Dbl | All Pass | | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| 1♥ | 2♣ | 2♥ | 3♣ |
| 4♣ | Pass | 4♠ | Pass |
| 4NT | Pass | 5♦ | Dbl |
| 5♥ | All Pass | | |

No doubt in retrospect E/W for England were right to stay out of the poor slam. And even had they bid and made it they might have been displeased to lose imps, anyway. 5♥ made 480; Senior's imaginative foray at the four level (which would have worked had the South and East hands been switched) worked less well on the actual lie of the cards. Declarer lost the obvious six top tricks, three spades and one in each of the side-suits, for -1100 and 12 imps to NEDUK, up 61-12.

This board had more than its fair share of disasters to record. Justin Hackett declared 6♦ as West and did not guess trumps; 11 imps to USA. Justin Howard, as North, followed Brian Senior's approach of overcalling in clubs, then bidding spades (he had the "excuse" that Brink as East had raised hearts so he knew his side had a fit). Howards let his partner play 4♠ expecting a good 5-6 opposite for this auction (wouldn't you?). And after a heart lead and trump shift 4♠ was duly made — by the defense. 2000 was the biggest penalty of the tournament and Russia now led 34-31.

Bd: 13 North
Dlr: North ♠ AQ63
Vul: Both ♥ AQ5
 ♦ J5
 ♣ Q1086

| | |
|---------|----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ J10 | ♠ 8542 |
| ♥ 987 | ♥ K104 |
| ♦ Q9732 | ♦ A10864 |
| ♣ 742 | ♣ A |
| South | |
| ♠ K97 | |
| ♥ J632 | |
| ♦ K | |
| ♣ KJ953 | |

Open Room

| | | | |
|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| | 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Closed Room

| | | | |
|----------|-------|----------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| | 1NT | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Neither pair could avoid the completely hopeless 3NT here; 4♠ and 5♣, by contrast, each have measurable play and were each attempted in Mixed-Down Under, but without success in each case. Both Easts led a low diamond and ran the suit when in with the ♣A. No swing. Still 49-12, NEDUK.

Bd: 14 North
Dlr: East ♠ K72
Vul: None ♥ AK976
 ♦ J10
 ♣ Q73

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ QJ6 | ♠ A109843 |
| ♥ 8 | ♥ J2 |
| ♦ Q87653 | ♦ 4 |
| ♣ AJ8 | ♣ K654 |
| South | |
| ♠ 5 | |
| ♥ Q10543 | |
| ♦ AK92 | |
| ♣ 1092 | |

Open/Closed Rooms

| | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| | | 2♦ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2♠ | Pass |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 4♦ |
| 4♠ | Pass | Pass | Dbl |
| All Pass | | | |

It is easy enough for E/W to reach 4♠ in a hurry and for N/S to double with their excess of high cards. Both tables in our featured match played 4♠ from the East seat and both Souths led a top diamond and shifted to trumps. With both black suits behaving declarer had 10 tricks comfortably via the heart ruff; no swing.

Howard-Hollands found the save in 5♥x for -300 and 3 imps. It was 36-35, with two deals left in the half.

Bd: 15 North
Dlr: South ♠ Q982
Vul: N/S ♥ K10
 ♦ 109
 ♣ KJ1086

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| West | East |
| ♠ J76543 | ♠ AK10 |
| ♥ A96 | ♥ Q843 |
| ♦ K3 | ♦ Q2 |
| ♣ Q5 | ♣ A742 |
| South | |
| ♠ --- | |
| ♥ J752 | |
| ♦ AJ87654 | |
| ♣ 93 | |

Open Room

| | | | |
|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| | | 3♦ | |

All Pass
Closed Room

| | | | |
|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| | | Pass | |
| Pass | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 4♥ | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |

4♠ by West is not so easy to defeat on the lead of the ♦10. If declarer goes up with the ♦Q to simulate ♦K9x you might well continue the suit. Now declarer can win in hand, play a spade to the king, a heart to the ace (it doesn't help North to unblock since declarer's heart intermediates are just too good) and a second heart. North wins and exits in spades. Declarer finesse, cashes the ♠K and ruffs out the hearts, endplaying North to lead away from the clubs sooner or later. But 4♠ by East on a heart lead had virtually no chance when trumps did not behave. South was always going to be able to take his partner off any endplay, sooner or later. And when 3♦ went down on a heart misguess NEDUK had a somewhat sweaty 4-imp pick up to lead 65-20.

Both tables in Australia Youth-Russia played 4♠ from the West seat after South had passed and then

backed in with a diamond overcall. Both Norths led a diamond. Hollands won and continued the suit. Gladysch won in hand, took an immediate spade finesse, then endplayed North to lead clubs. Dubinin, after much thought, won the first diamond and shifted to clubs. Well done! That made it 46-35, Russia. All the other 4♠ bidders went down.

Bd: 16 North
Dlr: West ♠ AJ987
Vul: E/W ♥ ---
 ♦ QJ765
 ♣ AJ2

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ 4 | ♠ Q10 |
| ♥ AK84 | ♥ QJ10963 |
| ♦ K43 | ♦ 10 |
| ♣ Q10654 | ♣ K983 |
| South | |
| ♠ K6532 | |
| ♥ 752 | |
| ♦ A982 | |
| ♣ 7 | |

Dlr: West North
Vul: Both ♠ KQJ3
 ♥ K543
 ♦ KQ7
 ♣ A2

West East
♠ A10975 ♠ 8642
♥ 2 ♥ 10987
♦ A43 ♦ 1098
♣ 10985 ♣ 43

South

On Board 4 from Match 7 of the NEC Cup qualifying Swiss, 6♥ by South is unbeatable on any lead. The key is for declarer to attack diamonds in a way that may not be immediately obvious. Say the opening lead is a club. Declarer wins the ace, plays two high trumps from his hand discovering the four-one split, and must then play diamonds. However, instead of playing a diamond to the king and then the queen on the first two rounds, declarer must retain an honor in dummy by either leading low to the king and then *low* to the jack, or by leading the ♦J initially.

| Open Room | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Jansma | B Senior | van P'en | Penfold |
| 1♣ | 1♠ | 2♦(♥) | 4♠ |
| 5♥ | 5♣ | 6♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Dbl | All Pass | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Trend'ov | Gold | N Senior | Bakhshi |
| 1♣ | 1♠ | 2♥ | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

Against 6♥x the defenders technically had 1100 via the club ruffs, but nobody would find that, would they? B Senior led the ♠A and eventually the defenders scored 800 via two clubs and two aces, worth 8 imps against the 480 from the other room. It was 65-20 at the break for NEDUK..

When Milne as West doubled 5♣ in the pass-out seat on an auction (essentially the same start as in the Open Room above) that suggests his side was in a forcing pass position, he conceded 750 and Russia had 7 imps to lead 53-35.

Textbook Play Revisited

by Yasuhiro Shimizu

Say West ducks the first diamond and wins the second. He must then play the ♠A. Declarer ruffs low, cashes the high trump in his hand, crosses to the ♦Q and draws the last trump with dummy's king.

Suppose, instead, West ducks the second diamond leaving declarer in hand with the jack. Declarer must then abandon diamonds and play on clubs, pitching dummy's last diamond on the third round. Eventually East will ruff in and either play a diamond or a spade. If a diamond, declarer ruffs in dummy, cashes the remaining high trump there, ruffs a spade back to hand and claims (his remaining clubs and thirteenth diamond being good). If East leads a spade after ruffing the club, declarer ruffs in hand, ruffs the third diamond *high* in dummy, then plays dummy's low trump to his hand which is now good.

Indeed, even had declarer won the opening club lead in hand he could still succeed by playing along lines similar to the above (though in this case he can play his three combined diamond honors in any order). This is a good example of the sort of foresighted technique often seen in bridge textbooks.

(Analysis suggested by Nobuyuki Hayashi, my teammate.)

NEC Quarter-finals (2nd half): Mixed vs Down Under

by Rich Colker



Nunn



Pszczola



Kwiecien



Hans



Welland



Newell



Reid



Auken

We switch our coverage of the NEC Cup quarter-finals to the match between Mixed and Down Under with Mixed leading 40-35 after the first 16 deals.

| | |
|------------|------------------------------|
| Bd: 17 | North |
| Dlr: North | ♠ 5 |
| Vul: None | ♥ AQ109 ♦ A10653 ♣ Q75 |
| West | East |
| ♠ KQ932 | ♠ A1074 |
| ♥ 82 | ♥ KJ765 |
| ♦ K987 | ♦ QJ4 |
| ♣ 103 | ♣ 6 |
| South | |
| ♠ J86 | |
| ♥ 43 | |
| ♦ 2 | |
| ♣ AKJ9842 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|------|----------|------|----------|
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| | 1♦ | 1♥ | 2♦(♣) |

Pass 3♣ All Pass

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| | 1♦(1) | Pass | 1NT(♣) |
| Pass | 2NT(2) | Dbl | 3NT |

4♣ Pass Pass 5♣
All Pass
(1) 4+ hearts, could have a longer suit
(2) Club raise

Both N/S pairs arrived in 3♣, albeit via somewhat different routes and declared from different sides. Pszczola (a.k.a. "Pepsi") became declarer in 3♣ when Kwiecien (a.k.a. "Quicken") bid 2♦ showing clubs. Hans led the ♦J (Rusinow) to the ace and Pepsi led a spade, in anticipation of ruffing dummy's spade losers in hand. Nunn won the queen and switched to the ♥8. Pepsi won the ace and claimed 11 tricks (seven clubs, two spade ruffs, and the two red-suit aces) for +150.

In the Closed Room Newell-Reid's particular brand of germ warfare may present some interpretive challenges to your editors, but we will soldier through regardless. Reid's 3NT bid may have been an attempt to play there (subject to Newell's approval) with good clubs opposite a fit. Newell might have doubled 4♣ with some length there, but his pass of 4♣ signaled his willing for Reid bid on — and so he did. Well judged. Welland got off to the only lead to challenge declarer — a trump — but Reid was up to the task. He won in hand with an intermediate spot, led a diamond to the ace, ruffed a diamond, led the ♣J to the queen, ruffed another diamond, and exited with a spade, claiming 11 tricks (he could now use the ♥A and a spade ruff to set up and enjoy the fifth diamond for a spade discard). Plus 400 was 6 imps to Down Under, who took over the lead at 41-40.

Of the other six pairs playing the deal van Prooijen-Jansma missed game while Grue-Lall bid the hand to 6♣, which only went down because the heart finesse lost. Unlucky...or something.

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| Bd: 18 | North |
| Dlr: East | ♠ QJ4 |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ 82 ♦ 96432 ♣ K73 |
| West | East |
| ♠ K752 | ♠ 63 |
| ♥ 73 | ♥ KJ1065 |
| ♦ KJ7 | ♦ Q5 |
| ♣ 10542 | ♣ AJ98 |
| South | |
| ♠ A1098 | |
| ♥ AQ94 | |
| ♦ A108 | |
| ♣ Q6 | |

Open/Closed Rooms

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|----------|-------|----------|
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |

1♥
All Pass

Both rooms played 1♥ on identical auctions. Both declarers received a heart lead to the king and ace and went after spades, leading the eight from hand and ducking when West followed low. In the Closed Room a second spade went to the jack and now Reid ducked a diamond to Welland, who switched to a low club. Reid rode this to his queen, cashed the ♠A, ♦A and ♥Q, then exited in hearts endplaying Auken for a club trick in the end; +120. In the Open Room Nunn rose with the king on the second spade and found the ♣10 shift. Quicken won the queen, cashed his spades (Hans pitching two hearts), then played a heart to the eight and ten. Hans exited with the ♦Q to the ace and now Quicken claimed nine tricks for a push. Still 41-40, Down Under.

Bd: 19
Dlr: South
Vul: E/W

| | |
|--------|-----------|
| West | North |
| ♠ QJ87 | ♠ K542 |
| ♥ 86 | ♥ AJ10532 |
| ♦ AK10 | ♦ Q3 |
| ♣ J872 | ♣ 3 |

| | |
|--------|----------|
| East | South |
| ♠ 93 | ♠ A106 |
| ♥ KQ74 | ♥ 9 |
| ♦ 8542 | ♦ J976 |
| ♣ K96 | ♣ AQ1054 |

Open Room

| | | | |
|------|----------|----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| Pass | 1♥ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 3♥ | All Pass | |

Closed Room

| | | | |
|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♣ |
| Dbl | 2♠ | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

(1) Polish (clubs or minimum balanced)

Reid's 1♠ opening in the Closed Room may look odd but in fact showed four-plus diamonds, no major, and possibly longer clubs. Reid then accepted Newell's transfer to hearts and that was that. Reid won the ♠Q lead with the ace and led a diamond up. Welland rose king and switched to a trump, ducked to the queen. Auken returned the ♠9, ducked to the king, and Reid tried the ♥A followed by the ♦Q. Welland won, cashed two spades, Auken pitching diamonds, and led a diamond. Reid ruffed with the ♥J and now Auken held the ♥K7 over dummy's ♥1053 to take two of the last four tricks for down two, -100.

The Polish auction in the Open Room looks pretty straightforward. Pepsi ducked the ♠9 lead to his king, played a club to the queen, pitched a diamond loser on the ♣A, ruffed a club to hand, and got out with the ♦Q. Nunn won and tracked the ♠Q. Pepsi won the ace, ruffed a diamond, and exited with a spade to the ten and jack. When Nunn played a heart Pepsi rose with the ace and led back the ♥J, claiming nine tricks for +140. That was 6 imps back to Mixed, who were

back in the lead, 46-41.

This board was undramatic everywhere except in our other VuGraph match where both N/S pairs were about to stop in 2♥ when West thought it might be the right moment to balance with a double — not tonight Josephine. North informed him of his error, and both Easts ran, Brink to 3♦, doubled and down 800, Whibley to 2NT, doubled and down a mere 500, for a 7 imp pick-up. A triumph? It was 53-47 now for Russia.

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| Bd: 20 | North |
| Dlr: West | ♠ AQ105 |
| Vul: Both | ♥ Q87 |
| | ♦ K2 |
| | ♣ K542 |
| West | East |
| ♠ 96 | ♠ K7432 |
| ♥ J93 | ♥ K104 |
| ♦ 109 | ♦ Q873 |
| ♣ AQ9873 | ♣ 6 |
| South | South |
| ♠ J8 | ♠ J8 |
| ♥ A652 | ♥ A652 |
| ♦ AJ654 | ♦ AJ654 |
| ♣ J10 | ♣ J10 |

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| Pass | 1♣(1) | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

(1) Polish (clubs or minimum balanced)

| | | | |
|-------------|--------|----------|-------|
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♣ |
| Dbl | 2♠ | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Against 3NT in the Open Room Nunn led the ♣8. Quicken won in hand and passed the ♠J to the king. Hans returned a spade. Quicken cashed dummy's remaining spades pitching two hearts from hand (Nunn pitching clubs). Next came the ♦K, the ♦2 to the jack, the ♦A and a diamond to Hans, who cashed his fifth spade and was endplayed to lead a heart. Needing two of the last three tricks Quicken could not risk ducking: if Nunn held the ♥K along with the known ♣A the contract would be down. So he just claimed his nine tricks; +600.

Auken led the ♣6, covered with the ten and queen and ducked. Welland switched to the ♥9: Q, K, A, and now Reid took the spade finesse, ducked, and repeated it. Auken won the king, returned a spade to weaken declarer's communications, and Newell now cashed the ♦K, ♠A, and led a diamond to the jack. But when the ♦A failed to bring home that suit all he could do was play a club. Welland won the ace, then a heart to Auken's ten, and the ♦Q and ♥J took the last two tricks for down two, -200, and 13 imps to Mixed, leading now 59-41.

USA brought home 3NT against Pharon in one room,

winning the first club and endplaying East to lead the majors for him while Justin Hackett went down on the same lead in the other room. USA led 61-25 now. The board was flat in our other two matches.

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Bd: 21 | North |
| Dlr: North | ♠ KQ108 |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ AK3 |
| | ♦ 986 |
| | ♣ 642 |
| West | East |
| ♠ A4 | ♠ J963 |
| ♥ Q10982 | ♥ 75 |
| ♦ AKQ | ♦ J1053 |
| ♣ AK10 | ♣ Q87 |
| South | |
| ♠ 752 | |
| ♥ J64 | |
| ♦ 742 | |
| ♣ J953 | |

Both rooms reached 3NT from the West seat. Pepsi led a club against Nunn, who set up hearts while the defense continued the club attack. At the end the defense took three hearts and a club to hold him to 400. In the Closed Room Newell led the ♠Q. Welland won, unblocked diamonds, and led a spade to the jack when Newell ducked, eventually taking two spades and seven minor-suit tricks for the same 400; no swing.

We only think this board is worth including because of what happened to Gromov, who opened the North hand a weak notrump, and a couple of wriggles later found himself with the indignity of playing 2♦x, down 1400 (which feels about right, doesn't it?). 14 imps to Australia Youth meant they led 25-0 on the set, and 61-53 overall.

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| Bd: 23 | North |
| Dlr: South | ♠ J63 |
| Vul: Both | ♥ A4 |
| | ♦ K6 |
| | ♣ 1097432 |
| West | East |
| ♠ Q95 | ♠ K842 |
| ♥ J9872 | ♥ 105 |
| ♦ J932 | ♦ 108 |
| ♣ K | ♣ AQJ86 |
| South | |
| ♠ A107 | |
| ♥ KQ63 | |
| ♦ AQ754 | |
| ♣ 5 | |

| Open Room | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| Pass | 1NT | All Pass | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 3♦ | All Pass | 1♣(14+) |

In the Open Room Hans led the ♠2 against 1NT, 7, 9, J, which gave Pepsi his eighth top trick. With the club blockage it was a simple matter for him to set up dummy's fifth diamond and claim +150.

Newell's 3♦ contract in the other room was quite another matter. Auken led the ♥10 to the king and Reid led a club, preparing to score some small trumps with club ruffs. But as Robert Burns once said, "The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men..." Welland won the king, switched back to hearts, and Newell won perforce and led a spade to the ten and queen. Back came a third heart and when Newell pitched Auken scored a ruff with the ♦8. Now a club was ruffed and over-ruffed and back came another heart. Newell ruffed with the ♦K and cashed the ♦AQ, but Welland still had the ♦J to come and Newell ended down two, -200, for another 8 imps to Mixed, whose lead had grown to 27 at 68-41.

Not everybody thought this was a partscore deal. N Senior-Trendafilov reached 3NT by North on a low spade lead. With clubs blocked there were eight top tricks, nine at double dummy since declarer wins the spade return at trick two and plays a club. N Senior collected her 600 and England trailed 70-37. Still time for a comeback.

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| Bd: 24 | North |
| Dlr: West | ♠ KQ83 |
| Vul: None | ♥ K9 |
| | ♦ K10954 |
| | ♣ 42 |
| West | East |
| ♠ 42 | ♠ AJ975 |
| ♥ QJ6 | ♥ A1084 |
| ♦ AQJ86 | ♦ 7 |
| ♣ A85 | ♣ J109 |
| South | |
| ♠ 106 | |
| ♥ 7532 | |
| ♦ 32 | |
| ♣ KQ763 | |

| Open Room | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| 1NT | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2♠ | All Pass |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| 1NT | 2♣(1) | All Pass | |
| (1) Spades and a minor, possible canapé | | | |

Confucius say, "Two sides bid same suit, one side crazy." Which may not come close to describing it. Quicken led the ♦2 (Polish style: low from a doubleton). Hans rose ace and led a low spade, inserting the nine when Pepsi followed low smoothly. Quicken won the ten and switched to the ♣K. Hans won the ace, played ♠A, ♠J, getting the bad news as Pepsi won, cashed his last spade, and exited with a club to the queen. Quicken played a diamond to the queen and king. Hans ruffed, gave up a heart, and claimed eight tricks for +110.

Reid's pass of **2♦** in the Closed Room is reasonable — even if not successful — since either of Newell's suits could have been longer and clubs did not figure to be his minor. You may want to send any young children out of the room if you are reading this at home since the following gets pretty bloody (though once Welland had wimped out of reopening with a double it was only costing declarer 50 points a time). Auken led the ♦7 and Welland momentarily fell from grace by inserting the jack. Newell won, led back the ♦10 to the queen, Auken pitching the ♣J, and Welland switched to a trump. Auken took the king with the ace, continued with the jack, pinning dummy's ten, and when this held switched to the ♣10 to the king and ace. Next came the ♠J to the king and ace, a heart back to the queen, the ♦A and a third heart. Newell ruffed and could take his ♠Q, but that was it. Newell managed to take three tricks, two trumps and a diamond, for down five, -250. That was 4 more imps to Mixed, leading now 72-41.

If -250 looks like a bad result for N/S bear in mind that the other six results were all worse. In Pharon-USA both E/W pairs made a non-vulnerable game, as did B Senior-Penfold, while the other three N/S pairs all went for at least 500. Russia collected 800 from 2♦ while Australia Youth managed only 500, so the lead had changed here again.

Now shake it off 'cause we ain't done yet.

Bd: 25 North
Dlr: North ♠ AJ1087
Vul: E/W ♥ 532
 ♦ 10832
 ♣ 10

| | |
|---------|---------|
| West | East |
| ♠ Q94 | ♠ K3 |
| ♥ AK96 | ♥ J7 |
| ♦ J6 | ♦ AK95 |
| ♣ QJ85 | ♣ 76432 |
| South | |
| ♠ 652 | |
| ♥ Q1084 | |
| ♦ Q74 | |
| ♣ AK9 | |

Open Room

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1♣(1) |
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 1NT | 2♦ | 3NT | All Pass |

 (1) Polish (clubs or minimum balanced)
 Closed Room

| | | | |
|---------|--------|----------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| 2♦ | | All Pass | |

The Poles' auction in the Open Room failed to deter the Aussies from reaching 3NT, but they still had to make it. Pepsi led the ♠J, ducked, followed by a low spade setting up three more spades for the defense when they came in — as they surely would — with the top clubs. Mercifully it happened sooner rather than later when Nunn called for a club and the

defense cashed their spades for down two, -200.

In the Closed Room **2♦** was no gem of a contract either, but it did have the virtue of not being doubled and N/S were non-vulnerable. Auken started with the ♦A, couldn't read Welland's six, and switched to a club. Newell won the ace, cashed the king (pitching a heart), ruffed the third club, and played a second diamond. Auken won, gave Welland a ruff, and he now cashed his two top hearts and continued with a third heart. Newell pitched the ♦10 as Auken ruffed and the defense still had a trump to come for down two, -100. That was 7 more imps to Mixed, running away from the Aussies at 79-41.

On Board 26 both E/W pairs bid and made 4♥. Then on Board 27 both N/S pairs bid 3NT and went down one on a club lead (and indeed so did everyone else except Dubinin who received a more favorable lead; the Russian lead had ballooned to 72-61.)

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| Bd: 28 | North |
| Dlr: West | ♠ J8642 |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ Q8432 |
| | ♦ --- |
| | ♣ K97 |
| West | |
| ♠ Q75 | East |
| ♥ A10 | ♠ 10 |
| ♦ A106532 | ♥ J9 |
| ♣ AQ | ♦ KQJ9874 |
| | ♣ J104 |
| South | |
| ♠ AK93 | |
| ♥ K765 | |
| ♦ --- | |
| ♣ 86532 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|-------|----------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| 1♦ | Pass | 2♦ | Dbl |
| 2NT | 4♦ | 5♦ | Pass |
| Pass | 5♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Dbl | All Pass | | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| 1♣(?) | Pass | 2♣(♦) | Dbl |
| 3NT | 4♦ | 4NT | All Pass |

Pepsi's 5♥ contract was no bargain, especially since 5♦ had no play on the marked heart lead — and it could have been a lot worse! Hans led the ♠10. Pepsi won the ace and played a trump. Nunn won and played ♣A, ♣Q to the king. Pepsi drew trumps, then played king and a spade to Nunn who had nothing but diamonds left for a ruff and discard. Away went declarer's last club and he escaped for down one, -200.

Welland opened 1♣, planning to rebid notrump showing 17-19 hcp (his 1NT opening was 14-16 and he judged he was a bit too good for that). Auken bid 4NT expecting 17-19 opposite for the 3NT bid. Newell led a spade to the king and Reid switched to a heart, ducked to the queen, followed by a second heart. Auken cashed her diamonds but when the

club finesse lost she was down one, -50; 6 imps to Down Under, now trailing 79-47. This was their first pickup since Board 17, but it wasn't their last.

Meanwhile, Australia Youth found their way to 3NT (as one normally does when holding 13 diamonds) while defeating 6♦ in the other room. 72-71 now for Russia, who would have to wait a while if they expected their opponents to concede.

Bd: 29 North
Dlr: North ♠ Q83
Vul: Both ♥ J10972
 ♦ KQ2
 ♣ 43

| | |
|----------|---------|
| West | East |
| ♠ KJ972 | ♠ A4 |
| ♥ 3 | ♥ AK654 |
| ♦ A10654 | ♦ 7 |
| ♣ 95 | ♣ KQJ87 |
| South | |
| ♠ 1065 | |
| ♥ Q8 | |
| ♦ J983 | |
| ♣ A1062 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|--------|----------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 4♣ | All Pass |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT(♣) | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 3♣ | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

Looking at just the E/W hands 4♠ looks like a fair contract. Pepsi led the ♦K to the ace and Nunn advanced a club, ducked. Next the ♥AK provided a pitch for Nunn's second club and now the ♣Q was covered and ruffed. Next came a diamond ruff, a heart ruff, another diamond ruff with the ♠A, and another heart ruff. Nunn exited with a diamond as Quicken ruffed. A trump return now would have held declarer to ten tricks but when Quicken tabled the ♣10 Nunn pitched his last diamond and Pepsi had to ruff and be endplayed for the last two tricks; +650.

Auken's 3♣ bid showed five-five in the rounded suits and extras, hence Welland's 3NT bid. Reid led the ♦8. Auken flew with the ace to play on clubs. Reid ducked the first round, won the next, and continued diamonds. Newell won, cashed his other diamond, and got out with the ♥J to the ace. Auken cashed the ♣J, got the bad news in that suit, then cashed her other top heart and was forced to rely on the spades coming in. She played ace and a spade to the jack and when Newell won he could cash two good hearts but then had to concede the death trick to dummy's ♠K. Still, that was down two, +200 for N/S, and another 13 imps to fuel Down Under's comeback which, at 79-60 with three boards to go, did not seem as improbable as it once did.

Bd: 30 North
Dlr: East ♠ J7
Vul: None ♥ Q94
 ♦ AQ87654
 ♣ 7

| | |
|---------|--------|
| West | East |
| ♠ K532 | ♠ AQ84 |
| ♥ J105 | ♥ A762 |
| ♦ KJ2 | ♦ 9 |
| ♣ J105 | ♣ 8432 |
| South | |
| ♠ 1096 | |
| ♥ K83 | |
| ♦ 103 | |
| ♣ AKQ96 | |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Nunn | Pszczola | Hans | Kwiecien |
| | Pass | 1♦ | 1♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | 2♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Dbl | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 3♦ | All Pass | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Welland | Newell | Auken | Reid |
| | 1♣ | Pass | |
| 1♥(♠) | 3♦ | 3♣ | Pass |
| 3NT | Pass | 4♣ | All Pass |

In the Open Room the Poles had a sensible auction to 3♦. Hans underled his ♥A to the queen. Pepsi now cashed the ♦A, led a club over, cashed the other top clubs pitching spades, and when the ♣J10 came down played the good ♣9. Nunn ruffed with the ♦J, Pepsi over-ruffed, and claimed 10 tricks for +130.

If you open shapely 10-counts, perhaps you should not be bidding so freely at the three level without encouragement from partner. Had Auken passed 3♦ Welland would probably not have balanced (and if he did, Auken could then bid 3♣ knowing that she did nothing to suggest she had an ace more than she did). As it was, even 3♣ was too high and 4♣ didn't hadn't a ghost of a chance. Reid led out his top clubs and continued with a fourth, ruffed and over-ruffed. Newell led back the ♥9 to the king and now came the ♦10, J, Q, 9, followed by the ♦A. Auken ruffed, drew trumps, cashed the ♦K and took the heart finesse for down three, -150, and 1 more imp to the Aussies, inching ever so slightly closer at 79-61.

Two deals to go for the NEC Cup semi-finals.

Bd: 31 North
Dlr: South ♠ AK642
Vul: N/S ♥ AK974
 ♦ 54
 ♣ K

| | |
|----------|----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ 108 | ♠ QJ95 |
| ♥ QJ86 | ♥ 1032 |
| ♦ A1093 | ♦ 8 |
| ♣ 542 | ♣ J10963 |
| South | |
| ♠ 73 | |
| ♥ 5 | |
| ♦ KQJ762 | |
| ♣ AQ87 | |

| Open Room | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| West Nunn | North Pszczola | East Hans | South Kwiecien |
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3♦ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 4♦ | Pass | 5♣ |
| Pass | 6♦ | All Pass | |

| Closed Room | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| West Welland | North Newell | East Auken | South Reid |
| Pass | 1NT(R) | Pass | 1♠(1) |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | 3♥(2) |

(1) 4+ diamonds, no major, could have longer clubs
 (2) Presumably showing this 6-4 pattern

The Poles' 6♦ contract in the Open Room was more than reasonable, needing only a three-two trump break or a singleton ace onside. Unfortunately, it was not to be and Quicken was soon down one, -100.

Newell-Reid did not even sniff at the diamond slam once their relay auction revealed the "misfit." Against 3NT Auken led the ♠J (Rusinow). Newell won, played a diamond to the king, ducked, and a second diamond. Welland won returned the ♥J, ducked, then the ♥Q (?) to the king. Newell then cashed the ♥A and when the ♥10 fell he cashed two more tricks there, then overtook the ♣K and cashed out for +630. That was 12 more imps to Down Under, who had pulled to within 6 imps of Mixed at 79-73. One deal to go. Could they really do it?

None of our other three matches produced a swing here. Pharon-USA were both down in 6♦x, the other four tables stopped in game. With one deal to go USA and NEDUK were safe, and Russia had a 2-imp lead over Australia Youth — and still no concession was forthcoming.

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| Bd: 32 | North |
| Dlr: West | ♠ AK10843 |
| Vul: E/W | ♥ 653 |
| | ♦ 54 |
| | ♣ J3 |
| West | East |
| ♠ QJ2 | ♠ 976 |
| ♥ J109 | ♥ A7 |
| ♦ KQJ732 | ♦ 1098 |
| ♣ 2 | ♣ A10954 |
| South | |
| ♠ 5 | |
| ♥ KQ842 | |
| ♦ A6 | |
| ♣ KQ876 | |

| Open Room | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| West Nunn | North Pszczola | East Hans | South Kwiecien |
| 1♦ | 2♠ | 3♦ | All Pass |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West Welland | North Newell | East Auken | South Reid |
| 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♥(♣) | Dbl |
| 3♦ | 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ |

With 3♠ cold (trumps being three-three) the Aussies did well to buy the hand at 3♦. Pepsi led three rounds of spades, Quicken ruffing the third, and he exited with the ♥K (double dummy cashing the ♦A and getting out with a low club would have been better). Nunn won the ace and claimed eight tricks, -100, losing just two spades and a heart.

If the Aussies were to succeed in their comeback they needed to make a game here. In the best of all possible worlds Newell could hope to lose just one trump and one club, but even two trumps (one in the form of a club ruff, perhaps) and one club would be acceptable. Auken led the ♦10 against 4♥ and Newell with the rose ace, pitched dummy's diamond loser on the second top spade, and led a trump to the king. Now, if the ace was doubleton and the clubs three-three he was home free. To increase his chances Newell tried to cross to hand with the ♣J to lead a second trump up in case the ♥A was onside third. Auken won the ace and returned a spade, forcing dummy to ruff. Newell tried the ♣K and Welland ruffed and played the ♦K, forcing dummy a second time. But with the spade suit set up and the remaining trumps one-one, a low heart would now have sealed the deal since he could ruff any return in either hand and claim. Instead, he played Auken to have started with ace-third of trumps and led the ♣K, planning to ruff the next club and play good spades through Auken to make his game. Alas, Welland ruffed with his last trump and the contract was down one, -50, and 4 imps to Mixed.

The Aussies had kept the match close in the first half, lost some ground early in the second half, but then staged a dramatic comeback, only to fall short at the end. Mixed won 83-73 and would take on the USA team in one of the semi-finals.

Who would NEDUK face, though? Gromov-Dubinin had played 2♠ for 140, while Howard as North overcalled a weak 2♦ opening with 2♠. Over Brinks 3♦ raise Hollands bid 3♥ and heard his partner raise to four — come on Aussie, come on! Deaf to a nation's pleas, Holland tried for slam and finished in 5♥, down a trick. 5 imps to Russia, who won 78-71.

NEC Semi-finals (1st half): Mixed vs USA

by Barry Rigal



Cheek



Pszczola



Del'Monte



Millner



Grue



H Lall



Kwiecien



J Lall

For Team Mixed Hemant Lall (hereinafter Hemant to distinguish him from his son Justin) and Milner play standard, Pszczola-Kwiecien play a variety of Polish club. For USA two very aggressive strong clubs with something like a 14-16 notrump that includes most 13 counts.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bd: 1 | North |
| Dlr: North | ♠ 108 |
| Vul: None | ♥ A52 ♦ A65 ♣ KQ973 |
| West | East |
| ♠ J4 ♥ KJ986 ♦ J4 ♣ A542 | ♠ Q93 ♥ 7 ♦ K109732 ♣ J106 |
| South | |
| ♠ AK7652 ♥ Q1043 ♦ Q8 ♣ 8 | |

| Open Room | | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|----------|--|
| West | North | East | South | |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte | Kwiecien | |
| | 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♥(♠) | |
| 2♥ | Pass | Pass | 2♠ | |
| All Pass | | | | |
| Closed Room | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J. Lall | |
| | 1NT | Pass | 2♣ | |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 4♥(♠) | |
| Pass | 4♣ | All Pass | | |

Grue's "strong" notrump got his side to 4♣ the right way up via Stayman to give Hemant a natural but fatal club lead. Milner took the ♣A to play a low diamond and Grue rose with the ace, cashed two top spades, then came to hand and played off his club winners, pitching a diamond and heart from dummy. Had the ♦10 not fallen he would have played on hearts but when that card appeared he could lead a club winner and concede just one heart and one spade trick for +420.

Kwiecien had bid to the limit of the hand when declared by South. The defenders led diamonds, shifted to hearts, and took one trick in every suit. But +140 meant 7 imps to USA.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bd: 2 | North |
| Dlr: East | ♠ A9653 |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ 109 ♦ AQ3 ♣ 632 |
| West | East |
| ♠ 74 ♥ AKJ8762 ♦ 972 ♣ A | ♠ K1082 ♥ Q543 ♦ 106 ♣ KQ4 |
| South | |
| ♠ QJ ♥ --- ♦ KJ854 ♣ J109875 | |

| Open Room | West | North | East | South |
|-------------|----------|---------|---------|-------|
| Cheek | Pszczola | | | |
| | | | | |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | | |
| Closed Room | West | North | East | South |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J. Lall | |
| | | | | |
| 4♥ | All Pass | | | |

Both Wests reached 4♥ very promptly, and Pszczola intelligently led ace and another spade in an attempt to beat the contract out of hand. Partner refused to deliver a singleton spade, so this defense cost an overtrick imp against the +450 from the other room where Grue led a low club. I know not much was riding on the lead, but is the reader surprised by Grue's passive choice here? Just sayin'. 8-0, USA.

What appeared to be the dullest of spade games turned out to be anything but and yes, 6♣ might be the best spot if you just looked at the E/W cards.

Bd: 3
Dlr: South
Vul: E/W

| | |
|-------|---------|
| North | ♠ QJ87 |
| | ♥ 10932 |
| | ♦ Q1094 |
| ♣ 3 | |

| | |
|----------|---------|
| West | East |
| ♠ 109653 | ♠ AK4 |
| ♥ A | ♥ J8754 |
| ♦ A73 | ♦ 2 |
| ♣ AK105 | ♣ Q872 |

South

| |
|---------|
| ♠ 2 |
| ♥ KQ6 |
| ♦ KJ865 |
| ♣ J964 |

Open Room

| | | | |
|-------|----------|-----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte | Kwiecien |

| | | | |
|----|------|-----|----------|
| 1♠ | Pass | 1NT | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |

Closed Room

| | | | |
|--------|-------|---------|--------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J.Lall |

| | | | |
|----|------|----|----------|
| 1♠ | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |

Milner won the heart lead, cashed the two top spades, played ♦A and ruffed a diamond, then led a club to the ace and a club up, holding his losers to two spades and a diamond. Cheek won the diamond lead, cashed the ♥A, and then went to dummy with a trump instead of ruffing his diamond, perhaps trying to pick up ♥KQx for the overtrick. When he ruffed a heart, cashed the second top trump and got the bad news, he needed to ruff a diamond in dummy and had to come back to hand with a club. Now he ruffed a diamond and again had to guess what to do. He chose to play a club to the king and the 4-1 split left him a trick short. Mixed wouldn't have expected to gain imps here but they wouldn't turn them away. They led 12-8.

Bd: 4
Dlr: West
Vul: Both

| | |
|-------|---------|
| North | ♠ K4 |
| | ♥ 10985 |
| | ♦ A1043 |
| ♣ AJ2 | |

| | |
|---------|--------|
| West | East |
| ♠ Q109 | ♠ 652 |
| ♥ AK762 | ♥ J3 |
| ♦ 65 | ♦ Q872 |
| ♣ 1096 | ♣ KQ75 |

South

| |
|---------|
| ♠ AJ873 |
| ♥ Q4 |
| ♦ KJ9 |
| ♣ 843 |

Open Room

| | | | |
|-------|----------|-----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte | Kwiecien |

| | | | |
|------|--------|------|-----|
| Pass | 1♣(2+) | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2NT |

All Pass

Closed Room

| | | | |
|--------|-------|---------|--------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J.Lall |

| | | | |
|------|-----|----------|----|
| Pass | 1♦ | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 2NT | All Pass | |

Both Souths treated their hand as an invitation with five spades and ended in 2NT, Kwiecien taking the auction as far as 2NT while Justin could offer to stop in 2♠. Del'Monte led a diamond. Pszczola put in the jack to try to force a cover, then went after spades. Cheek won the ♠Q, cashed his two top hearts, then switched to clubs and Pszczola had the rest when spades broke. Hemant led a low club and Grue scooped in the nine with the jack to play spades. Milner won the ♠Q and cashed one top heart, then went back to clubs. Grue ducked, won the next, and might have led a diamond to the jack in safety. Instead he played a diamond to the king and cashed out the spades for eight tricks but could take no more than that. It was 14-8 to Mixed now.

Bd: 5
Dlr: North
Vul: N/S

| | |
|---------|--------|
| North | ♠ A96 |
| | ♥ Q |
| | ♦ AKJ9 |
| ♣ AK653 | |

| | |
|----------|----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ Q10873 | ♠ J5 |
| ♥ 98 | ♥ AK7432 |
| ♦ Q1063 | ♦ 875 |
| ♣ 97 | ♣ Q4 |

South

| |
|---------|
| ♠ K42 |
| ♥ J1065 |
| ♦ 42 |
| ♣ J1082 |

Open Room

| | | | |
|-------|----------|-----------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte | Kwiecien |

| | | | |
|------|-----|----------|-----|
| 1♣ | 1♥ | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | Dbl | | |
| Pass | 3NT | All Pass | |

Closed Room

| | | | |
|--------|-------|---------|--------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J.Lall |

| | | | |
|------|-----|----------|----|
| 1♣ | 2♦ | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | Dbl | | |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | 4♠ |
| Pass | 6♣ | All Pass | |

In 3NT, after a heart lead and spade shift, Kwiecien guessed clubs and set up a heart trick for +630. No drama there. But Grue found a way to reach 6♣ (Justin's 3♣ bid after his initial 0-7 pass showed values). Hemant led a top heart and shifted to a low spade from his doubleton jack, won by declarer in hand. The slam needs considerably more than the clubs to come in. If you play for 2-2 clubs you can head for home by simply taking the diamond finesse. If, as Grue did, you cash the ♣A, then go to dummy to take a club finesse, West might cover (OK "might" is an overbid) from Qxx and beat you by force. Better may be to take a first-round club finesse or to

win the ♠K to take a diamond finesse and now cash one trump, the ♦AK pitching a spade, ruff a spade, finesse in trumps, and eventually ruff your fourth diamond in dummy if necessary. Whatever the case, Grue's line was not unreasonable but swung 12 out instead of 12 in. That made the score 26-8 for Mixed.

Bd: 6 North
Dlr: East ♠ A76
Vul: E/W ♥ 73
 ♦ AQ1087
 ♣ 1032

| | |
|----------|---------|
| West | East |
| ♠ Q10542 | ♠ KJ |
| ♥ AQ1084 | ♥ J92 |
| ♦ 62 | ♦ 943 |
| ♣ J | ♣ AK876 |
| South | |
| ♠ 983 | |
| ♥ K65 | |
| ♦ KJ5 | |
| ♣ Q954 | |

Open Room
West North East South
Cheek Pszczola Del'Monte Kwiecien
1♦ Pass

2♦(1) All Pass
Closed Room
West North East South
Milner Grue H. Lall J.Lall
1♣ Pass

1♠ 2♦ Pass 2NT
3♥ Pass 4♥ All Pass

The bad luck for USA continued as Cheek treated his hand as not worth an invitation facing a typically 11-13 Precision diamond. You can see why an argument could be made for doing more, but since game is clearly no better than the heart finesse we would not be having this discussion if the ♦K was wrong. As it was declarer wrapped up 11 tricks on the normal defense of a club lead. In the other room Hemant judged well to raise 3♥ to 4♦, deeming that Milner's 3♦ bid on what was clearly relatively limited values (though against this N/S who could tell?) rated to be on 5-5. There might be a case for using 4♦ by a limited opener here as choice of games but that may not be available to this partnership. Regardless, 4♦ making 650 was worth 10 more imps to Mixed, steaming along at 36-8.

After an overtrick imp got USA back into the habit of scoring imps they found a good sacrifice here.

Bd: 8 North
Dlr: West ♠ J53
Vul: None ♥ AQ
 ♦ 982
 ♣ AKJ32

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ KQ96 | ♠ 10842 |
| ♥ K87652 | ♥ J94 |
| ♦ K6 | ♦ AJ1043 |
| ♣ 4 | ♣ 5 |
| South | |
| ♠ A7 | |
| ♥ 103 | |
| ♦ Q75 | |
| ♣ Q109876 | |

| | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Open Room | | South |
| West | North | East |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte |
| 1♥ | 1NT | 2♦ |
| 4♦ | Dbl. | All Pass |
| Closed Room | | |
| West | North | East |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall |
| 1♥ | 1NT | 2♦ |
| All Pass | | 3NT |

3NT on a heart lead saw Grue take his nine tricks and give up. But 4♦x looked to be an excellent save when dummy came down. The defenders meanly cashed a club winner and shifted to spades, then got in with a trump and took the spade ruff for down two. Still 3 imps to USA, down 36-12.

It was too good to last.

Bd: 9 North
Dlr: North ♠ 109874
Vul: E/W ♥ 2
 ♦ K8
 ♣ A9873

| | |
|----------|----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ AK2 | ♠ --- |
| ♥ A84 | ♥ J7653 |
| ♦ A6 | ♦ QJ1097 |
| ♣ K10542 | ♣ QJ6 |
| South | |
| ♠ QJ653 | |
| ♥ KQ109 | |
| ♦ 5432 | |
| ♣ --- | |

| | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Open Room | | South |
| West | North | East |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte |
| | 2♠(♠+m) | Pass |
| Dbl | Pass | 4NT |
| 5♣ | Pass | 5♦ |
| 5♥ | Pass | Pass |
| All Pass | | Dbl |
| Closed Room | | |
| West | North | East |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall |
| 2♠ | Pass | 4♠ |
| Dbl | Pass | 4NT |
| 5♣ | Pass | 5♦ |
| Dbl | All Pass | 5♠ |

Those who live by the sword.... The junior editor thinks we should be tolerant about preempts. The senior editor has not been allowed to see the 52-card diagram out of concerns that he might have an apoplectic fit. Regardless of how you feel, it is clear that Lall might have judged the deal better but that his partner didn't help him do the right thing. It may be OK to open a weak-two as North but you should surely double 5♣ if you do. As if to protest these actions, when I reached these bids and started to write about them BBO promptly crashed, destroying every single record of the set and making it virtually impossible to reconstruct anything of the rest of the set. As you will understand, the only good thing that

can be said about this is that it is a good job it wasn't Rich who was due to be writing about this set or we might well have needed an alienist.

At this point the running score was 51-12 for Mixed, and over the next three deals USA picked up a partscore to trail 51-16.

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Bd: 13 | North |
| Dlr: North | ♠ J2 |
| Vul: Both | ♥ Q8763 |
| | ♦ A32 |
| | ♣ AK10 |
| West | East |
| ♠ 1073 | ♠ KQ986 |
| ♥ J9 | ♥ K1052 |
| ♦ 1098 | ♦ KQJ |
| ♣ 98654 | ♣ J |
| South | |
| ♠ A54 | |
| ♥ A4 | |
| ♦ 7654 | |
| ♣ Q732 | |

| Open Room | | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|----------|--|
| West | North | East | South | |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte | Kwiecien | |
| | 1♥ | 1♠ | Dbl | |
| Pass | 2♣ | All Pass | | |
| Closed Room | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J. Lall | |
| | 1NT | Dbl(1) | Rdbl | |
| Pass | Pass | 2♥ | Pass | |
| Pass | Dbl | Pass | Pass | |
| 2♠ | Pass | Pass | Dbl | |
| All Pass | | | | |

(1) One minor or both majors

Against 2♠x the defenders led the ♠J. Milner won the trump in dummy to advance a low heart to the jack and queen. Back came a second spade and Lall won and shifted to a club. Declarer ruffed the next club, set up hearts, ruffed the third club, knocked out the ♦A, and now North did not have a fourth club to lead. Declarer finished with four spades, two hearts, and two diamonds for +670.

This was a flat board in NEDUK-Russia in 3NT down 300 after North opened a strong notrump.

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| Bd: 14 | North |
| Dlr: East | ♠ J876 |
| Vul: None | ♥ 109653 |
| | ♦ 98 |
| | ♣ 106 |
| West | East |
| ♠ AKQ104 | ♠ 2 |
| ♥ 874 | ♥ --- |
| ♦ QJ | ♦ AK1065432 |
| ♣ K95 | ♣ AQJ8 |
| South | |
| ♠ 953 | |
| ♥ AKQJ2 | |
| ♦ 7 | |
| ♣ 7432 | |

Not the world's easiest grand slam to bid and when Gladysch opened the East cards 5♦ he had given up any attempt to do so. Van Prooijen-Jansma got a

little closer but suffered from lack of agreements. After a 1♦ opening Dubinin overcalled 1♥ and Jansma doubled to show 4 or 5 spades. After the jump to 4♥ van Prooijen's 4NT was meant to show the minors but Jansma's response looks like he read it as keycard and van Prooijen could do little but bid 6♦, over which Jansma reluctantly passed.

Cheek Del'Monte reached the grand after a strong club, Milner-Hemant did not, so it was 62-27, Mixed.

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Bd: 15 | North |
| Dlr: South | ♠ A1062 |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ A53 |
| | ♦ Q985 |
| | ♣ A6 |
| West | East |
| ♠ QJ9753 | ♠ 8 |
| ♥ Q7 | ♥ 862 |
| ♦ 763 | ♦ AJ104 |
| ♣ J2 | ♣ K9754 |
| South | |
| ♠ K4 | |
| ♥ KJ1094 | |
| ♦ K2 | |
| ♣ Q1083 | |

| Open Room | | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|----------|----|
| West | North | East | South | |
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte | Kwiecien | |
| | 1♥ | | | |
| 2♣ | 3♠ | Pass | | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | | |
| Closed Room | | | | |
| West | North | East | South | |
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J. Lall | |
| | 1NT | Dbl(1) | Rdbl | |
| Pass | Pass | 2♥ | Pass | |
| Pass | Dbl | Pass | Pass | |
| 2♠ | Pass | Pass | Dbl | |
| All Pass | | | | |

On the lead of the ♠Q Justin won in hand and passed the ♣Q, which worked perfectly since on the club return he knew to play trumps from the top to avoid the ruffs. In the other room Cheek led a top spade and declarer played ♥A and a heart to the ♥J and managed to lose both the ♥Q and a spade ruff to go down in the game. 13 more imps to USA, now down 62-40.

Russia generated the same swing when both Souths led a spade honor against 4♥. Dubinin took about ten minutes to run the ♥J from hand, while Bakhshi misguessed trumps and lost the ruff as well. That made it 41-20 to Russia.

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| Bd: 16 | North |
| Dlr: West | ♠ 1083 |
| Vul: E/W | ♥ J10874 |
| | ♦ Q32 |
| | ♣ 98 |
| West | East |
| ♠ K62 | ♠ Q75 |
| ♥ AK93 | ♥ Q65 |
| ♦ 105 | ♦ A8764 |
| ♣ J742 | ♣ 103 |
| South | |
| ♠ AJ94 | |
| ♥ 2 | |
| ♦ KJ9 | |
| ♣ AKQ65 | |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Cheek | Pszczola | Del'Monte | Kwiecien |
| 1♦ | Pass | 1NT | Dbl |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 3♣ |
| All Pass | | | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|--------|-------|---------|----------|
| Milner | Grue | H. Lall | J. Lall |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1NT | All Pass |

I'm sure the more you play with Joe Grue the more you get accustomed to having the best hand at the table and hearing the other three players show values in front of you. Justin passed 1NT in disinterested fashion and led a low club. He was

disappointed with trick one, but happy when declarer had no more than six tricks, whatever he did thereafter. Since 3♣ could take only seven tricks USA had closed the set on a fine run and trailed by only 62-45 with 16 to go.

Russia also picked up a partscore swing when E/W bid 1♣-1♦; 1♦-1NT and Gold doubled and heard partner retreat to 2♦ (North was expecting the penalty double to be based on diamonds not clubs, of course). The 3-3 fit played as well as these contracts generally do; in the other room Dubinin-Gromov had bid to 2♠, which came home with eight tricks after the lead of the ♦A. It was 46-20, Russia, at the break.

Yeh Bros Cup フローターチーム/ペア募集

Yeh Bros Cup スイスチーム/オープンペアのフローターを以下の通り募集します。

記

1. 募集数・日時

スイスチーム：1チーム

4月24日・25日 午前9時30分-午後6時40分

オープンペア：8ペア

4月25日 午後4時時20分-午後7時50分 オープンペア予選

26日 午前9時30分-午後5時30分 オープンペア準決勝・決勝

2. 申込：4月23日（火）正午までに、Yeh Bros Cup 大会事務局へ（045-228-6466）

☆フローターをお願いするチーム・ペアを前日までに決定して連絡します。

☆開始時の状況により、ご参加いただけないことがありますのでご了承ください。

☆フローターは参加料無料で、入賞した場合は賞金を授与します。

以上

Team Rosters: 18th NEC Cup

| # | Team Name | Members |
|---|---|---------|
| 1 | NEDUK: David Bakhshi, David Gold, Jan Jansma, Ricco van Prooijen | |
| 2 | Russia: Andrey Gromov, Evgeny Gladyshev, Alexander Dubinin, Mikhail Krasnosselski, Sebastiaan Drijver, Sjoert Brink | |
| 3 | Mixed: Reese Milner, Hemant Lall, Sabine Auken, Roy Welland, Michael Kwiecien, Jacek Pszczola | |
| 4 | Pharon: Paul Hackett, Tom Hanlon, Jason Hackett, Justin Hackett | |
| 5 | USA: Curtis Cheek, Joe Grue, Justin Lall, Ishmael Del'Monte | |
| 6 | Down Under: Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Peter Gill, Martin Reid, Peter Newell | |
| 7 | Australia Youth: Justin Howard, Peter Hollands, Michael Whibley, Liam Milne | |
| 8 | England: Sandra Penfold, Brian Senior, Nevena Senior, Roumen Trendafilov | |

NEC Semi-finals (2nd half): Russia vs NEDUK

by Barry Rigal



Krasnosselski



van P



Jansma



Brink



Bakhshi



Gromov



Gold

Russia went in with a 25 imp lead, and the set started very quietly.

Bd: 17
 Dlr: North
 Vul: None

East
♠ 64
♥ 62
♦ AJ7532
♣ KJ7

South
♠ Q532
♥ Q103
♦ 1094
♣ A82

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>Kras'ki</i> | <i>van Pr'en</i> | <i>Brink</i> | <i>Jansma</i> |
| | Pass | 2♦ | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| <i>Bakhshi</i> | <i>Gromov</i> | <i>Gold</i> | <i>Dubinin</i> |
| | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♦ | Pass |
| 1NT | Pass | 3♦ | Pass |
| 3NT | All Pass | | |

Both pairs pushed to 3NT (in the Open Room it may have been a two-way shot even though North was a passed hand). Both Norths led a heart and declarer had only seven tricks, though on the run of the diamonds both pairs emerged with eight winners.

The board was also flat in Mixed-USA, but both N/S pairs bought the hand in spade partscores for 140.

Bd: 18
Dlr: East
Vul: N/S

West
♠ AK10
♥ A76
♦ J1043
♣ 862

North
♠ J3
♥ Q10853
♦ Q8
♣ AQJ10

East
♠ 92
♥ 942
♦ K752
♣ K974

South
♠ Q87654
♥ KJ
♦ A96
♣ 53

| Open Room | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| West <i>Kras'ki</i> | North <i>van Pr'en</i> | East <i>Brink</i> | South <i>Jansma</i> |
| 1♦ | 1♥ | 3♦ | Pass |
| All Pass | | | 3♠ |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West <i>Bakhshi</i> | North <i>Gromov</i> | East <i>Gold</i> | South <i>Dubinin</i> |
| 1♣ | 1♥ | Pass | Pass |
| All Pass | | 1♠(not ♣) | 2♠ |

Both Souths passed but then committed to spades, Jansma at an inconveniently high level. However, on the lead of the ♦J he could cover and drive out the king, then play on spades, and when West failed to shift to clubs (somewhat culpably) but played hearts instead, declarer could hold his losers to two trumps and one trick in each red suit. A hard earned imp for NEDUK, making it 46-22. Kwiecien-Pszczola did defeat 3♠ while Cheek-Del'Monte did not. The Mixed lead was up to 23 at 68-45.

Both N/S pairs then bid an excellent slam (spades 3-2 or a doubleton ♦Q missing six) missed by Lall-Grue, and all four N/S pairs scored up a normal game.

Bd: 21
Dlr: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ AK
♥ 752
♦ 1075
♣ 87432

West
♠ QJ105
♥ AQ98
♦ AK984
♣ ---

South
♠ 742
♥ K106
♦ J2
♣ KQJ105

East
♠ 9863
♥ J43
♦ Q63
♣ A96

limit.

Welland-Auken stopped in 3♠, Grue-Lall bid game. Another five nails in the coffin.

Bd: 23
Dlr: South
Vul: Both
North
♠ AK964
♥ K7
♦ J974
♣ K7

West
♠ Q10872
♥ 98654
♦ K
♣ 104

East
♠ 53
♥ ---
♦ AQ1053
♣ AQ9832

South
♠ J
♥ AQJ1032
♦ 862
♣ J65

Open Room

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|-------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Kras'ki | van Pr'en | Brink | Jansma |
| Bakhshi | Gromov | Gold | Dubinin |

| | | | |
|------|------|----|----------|
| Pass | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 1♦ | Pass | | Pass |
| 4♣ | Pass | 4♠ | All Pass |

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|-------|-----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Kras'ki | van Pr'en | Brink | Jansma |
| | | | 2♦(Multi) |

| | | | |
|------|-----|----------|------|
| Pass | 4♣ | 4NT | Pass |
| 5♣ | Dbl | All Pass | |

Closed Room

| | | | |
|---------|--------|------|-----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Bakhshi | Gromov | Gold | Dubinin |
| | | | 2♦(Multi) |

| | | | |
|------|-----|----------|------|
| Pass | 2NT | 4NT | Pass |
| 5♣ | Dbl | All Pass | |

I had been discussing with Jansma his failure to open third in hand, and he told me that this was because he was getting old (also, for him 1♣ doesn't really mean clubs). It certainly ought not to have mattered here, though Cheek-Del'Monte did miss game as E/W after a 1♣ opening from Welland when Del'Monte responded 1NT to his partner's double. Suddenly the Mixed lead was up to 40.

Bd: 22
Dlr: East
Vul: E/W

North
♠ J109853
♥ 96
♦ Q4
♣ Q74

West
♠ K7
♥ AJ2
♦ 109653
♣ A92

East
♠ 64
♥ KQ10543
♦ 72
♣ J63

South
♠ AQ2
♥ 87
♦ AKJ8
♣ K1085

Both pairs played 5♣x from West and led three rounds of spades, South overruffing dummy to play a heart back. Declarer crossed to the ♦K to finesse in trumps, ruffed a diamond to hand, then eventually drew trumps to claim down one. Not a triumph, not a disaster either.

When Welland was South, defending 5♣x, Auken led three rounds of spades, declarer ruffed the third with ♣9 and Welland pitched a diamond! Declarer now crossed to the ♦K and led a club to the eight. Welland won and played back a club, leaving declarer with a diamond loser. The hardest earned 7 imps of the event so far, in my opinion. Mixed led 35-0 on the set and 97-45 overall.

Bd: 24
Dlr: West
Vul: None
North
♠ 84
♥ J107
♦ Q10
♣ KQJ1032

West
♠ KQ72
♥ K863
♦ A96
♣ 86

East
♠ 5
♥ AQ5
♦ KJ7542
♣ A94

South
♠ AJ10963
♥ 942
♦ 83
♣ 75

Open Room

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|-------|--------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Kras'ki | van Pr'en | Brink | Jansma |
| | | 2♥ | Dbl |

| | | | |
|-----|----|----------|--|
| 3NT | 4♣ | All Pass | |
|-----|----|----------|--|

Closed Room

| | | | |
|---------|--------|------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Bakhshi | Gromov | Gold | Dubinin |
| | | 2♦ | 2NT |

| | | | |
|------|-------|----------|------|
| Pass | 3♥(♠) | Dbl | Pass |
| Pass | 3♠ | All Pass | |

The timing of the two auctions is remarkably different, given how similar the meanings of the two opening bids were. When Dubinin overcalled 2NT West could not raise his partner and so Gromov got to bid at the level he was worth. With the spade finesse losing, as it figured to, nine tricks were the

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|-----------|-------|----------|
| Kras'ki | van Pr'en | Brink | Jansma |
| 1♦ | 3♣ | 4♣ | Pass |
| 4♥ | Pass | 4NT | Pass |
| 5♣ | Pass | 6♦ | All Pass |

| Closed Room | | | |
|-------------|--------|------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Bakhshi | Gromov | Gold | Dubinin |
| 1♣(2+) | Pass | 2♦ | 2♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Dbl | All Pass |

In 2♠x Dubinin had four trump tricks and a club for -500, thus meaning the result from the other room would swing 20 imps. After a club lead the facile analysis here is that declarer simply needs both red suits to split to have a chance to make the slam. Krasnosselski saw deeper after winning the club and leading out the ♦K, dropping the ten from North. If he finessed in trumps he might succeed against a 2-3-1-7 pattern in North. Indeed, if clubs were 7-1 he might squeeze South out of his major-suit holdings, whatever they were. I'm not going to try to calculate which line is better; seeing all the hands is bound to bias one's judgment. The bottom line is that declarer finessed and NEDUK was now back in the match, down just 51-33.

Cheek-Del'Monte also went down in slam here (the 4-3 heart fit after a "forget" of transfers in competition). It was 107-45 now for Mixed.

Bd: 26 North
 Dlr: East ♠ 85
 Vul: Both ♥ Q4
 ♦ J98743
 ♣ K95

| | |
|--------|-----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ AQ96 | ♠ 42 |
| ♥ 652 | ♥ J73 |
| ♦ AK62 | ♦ Q10 |
| ♣ J4 | ♣ A108732 |

| |
|----------|
| South |
| ♠ KJ1073 |
| ♥ AK1098 |
| ♦ 5 |
| ♣ Q6 |

Open/Closed Rooms

| West | North | East | South |
|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
| Kras'ki | van Pr'en | Brink | Jansma |
| Bakhshi | Gromov | Gold | Dubinin |
| | | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 2♣ | All Pass | |

Both Wests led a top diamond against 2♣. Krasnosselski continued with a low diamond, then led diamonds at every turn, tapping declarer out so that he lost four spades and one trick in each minor. Bakhshi shifted to a club at trick two, which gave declarer both a trick and a tempo; +110. The Russian lead was back up to 57-33.

In our other match Welland-Auken had their first soft result of an otherwise dominating set, playing 2♦ down 300 while Grue-Lall stopped in 1♣ for +80. It

was 107-55 now for Mixed. That was the first swing for USA. When Cheek, on the next deal, took the opportunity to open a 3♦ on a feeble six-card suit at favorable vulnerability he got his swing — but not the way he had hoped for, going for 1100 against game. The margin was back to 62 imps, and time had almost run out. Still, on the next board both pairs for USA more than beat par, bidding and making 3NT with a spade stopper in the opponents' suit of Q4 facing 765 and doubling 5♦ for 500 in the other room. 15 imps made it 117-70. Meanwhile, an undertrick meant NEDUK was down 57-36, in a set where a total of 27 imps had thus far been accumulated.

USA added three more undertrick imps on the next deal. Then...

Bd: 31 North
 Dlr: South ♠ KJ
 Vul: N/S ♥ KJ1072
 ♦ J72
 ♣ A87

| | |
|---------|----------|
| West | East |
| ♠ 1042 | ♠ Q98653 |
| ♥ A64 | ♥ 8 |
| ♦ 954 | ♦ KQ |
| ♣ 10652 | ♣ QJ94 |

| |
|----------|
| South |
| ♠ A7 |
| ♥ Q953 |
| ♦ A10863 |
| ♣ K3 |

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-----------|-------|--------|
| Kras'ki | van Pr'en | Brink | Jansma |
| | | | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | 2♠ | 3♥ |
| 3♣ | 4♥ | 4♠ | Dbl |
| All Pass | | | |

| Closed Room | | | |
|-------------|--------|------|---------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Bakhshi | Gromov | Gold | Dubinin |
| | | | 1♦ |
| Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ | 2♥ |
| 2♣ | 4♥ | 4♠ | Dbl |
| All Pass | | | |

Both tables led a heart against 4♣x. Both declarers won the ♥A and led a trump. Gromov hopped up with the king and shifted to a diamond and Dubinin continued the suit, letting declarer draw trumps and escape for -300. Van Prooijen played low on the trump and David Gold won his ace and shifted to the ♣K to get his ruff for -500. 5 imps meant NEDUK was barely alive, down 57-41 with one deal to go, and needing the miracle of all time to reach the final.

Meanwhile, both pairs in our other match played 4♥ for +650.

Bd: 32
Dlr: West
Vul: E/W

North
♠ Q3
♥ KJ73
♦ 106542
♣ Q4

| | |
|---------|---------|
| West | East |
| ♠ J5 | ♠ 10972 |
| ♥ AQ852 | ♥ 106 |
| ♦ Q7 | ♦ AK98 |
| ♣ AJ102 | ♣ K53 |
| South | |
| ♠ AK864 | |
| ♥ 94 | |
| ♦ J3 | |
| ♣ 9876 | |

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Open Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Kras'ki | van Pr'en | Brink | Jansma |
| 1♥ | Pass | 1♠ | Pass |
| 1NT | All Pass | | |
| Closed Room | | | |
| West | North | East | South |
| Bakhshi | Gromov | Gold | Dubinin |
| 1NT | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♦ | Pass | 2NT(1) | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 3NT | All Pass |
| (1) 5-card Stayman | | | |

Against 3NT Gromov led the ♦6 to the eight, jack and queen. Next Bakhshi led a low spade from hand and might well have made his game had Gromov put up the queen. But North ducked, Dubinin won and shifted to a club to the ten, queen and king. Bakhshi now simply took the heart finesse, needing either that or a 3-3 club break, and ended up down a trick when nothing worked. Since 1NT had fetched +120 Russia had 6 imps and won by 63-47, on a day where they had won two matches while scoring just 140 imps in 64 deals, a tribute to the overall standard of accurate bridge.

While Cheek-Del'Monte played 2♥ for +110 Pepsi found his way to 3NT as East. Lall led a spade and after two rounds of the suit switched helpfully to the ♣9. That got declarer up to eight tricks once he had established his long spade. Lall exited with a heart after winning his ♠A. Declarer finessed, won the club return to run his winners, and in doing so squeezed South out of his hearts to keep the fourth club while North had to pitch hearts to keep the fourth diamond so dummy's ♥8 was sure to win trick 13. Another 10 imps meant a 127-73 win for Mixed.

18th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

| Day/Date | Time | Event | Venue |
|--------------------|-------------|------------------------|----------|
| Saturday (Apr. 20) | 09:00-11:15 | NEC Cup Final (1) | 513, 514 |
| | 11:35-13:50 | NEC Cup Final (2) | |
| | 13:50-15:00 | Lunch Break | |
| | 15:00-17:15 | NEC Cup Final (3) | |
| | 17:35-19:50 | NEC Cup Final (4) | |
| | 10:00-17:00 | Yokohama Swiss Teams | 501, 502 |
| Sunday (Apr. 21) | 10:00-17:30 | Asuka Cup (Open Pairs) | 501, 502 |
| | 18:00-20:00 | Closing Ceremony | |

NEC Cup Qualifying Swiss: 12 rounds of 14-board matches

NEC Cup Quarter- & Semi-finals: two 16-board segments

NEC Cup Final: four 16-board segments

A Blast From the Past

Frank van Wezel and Hans van de Konijnenberg live in the Netherlands. They both collect books, magazines and daily bulletins about bridge. They especially enjoy reading daily bulletins from the pre-internet era because these bulletins contain a lot of wonderful photographs, marvellous sketches, splendid deals and tremendous stories and anecdotes. If you enjoy this type of material (as we do) surf right over to their web site (www.bridgedailybulletins.nl) — and enjoy!

Today's VuGraph Match of the NEC Cup Final features Russia (2) vs Mixed (3)