



NEC Bridge Festival

Tuesday, February 10, 2015
Bulletin Number 1

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

Welcome to the 20th NEC Cup Bridge Festival

Once again this year's NEC Cup sports an impressive international field that includes many of the world's top players. Stage One features a 12-round, three-day Swiss Teams qualifier with 14-board matches, imps converted to Victory Points using the new 14-Board WBF scale. (Note: the VP scales in the player score book are still the "old" scales. The new 14-Board scale may be found posted outside the playing area and on page 3 of this bulletin.) For Match One, the top 22 teams from the 46-team field have been paired at random against teams 23-44; teams 45 and 46 play one another. Subsequent pairings will be based on current VP totals. The top eight teams at the end of the third day's play will qualify for the KO phase. The quarter- and semi-finals will consist of 32-board matches, while the final will be contested over 64 boards (with the two losing semi-finalists tying for 3rd/4th). On Friday, February 13, the Yokohama IMP Pairs will be held followed on Saturday, February 14, by the Yokohama Swiss Teams (A, B & C) and on Sunday, February 15, by the Asuka Cup (Open Pairs). (Note the Convention Regulations for pair games is in your player bag and here on page 8.) Once again this year the results of all current matches in the NEC Cup will be uploaded to the JCBL web site on a real-time basis (see page 6). We tried to recruit a JCBL staff member to do this but they all claimed to be too busy working on their fantasy soccer picks. So instead we recruited a *Zashiki-warashi* to oversee the web updating.

The Daily Bulletin Office/Secretariat and the Chief Director

As always, we need your help to keep everyone informed of the happenings at this tournament. Please report anything amusing, challenging, or skillful that happens in your matches (bridge or otherwise) to the **Daily Bulletin Office, a.k.a. The Secretariat** (Conference Center, Room 417). If we're not in, leave a note in front of either of our computers (they're the two PCs on the left end of the table at the rear). The **Secretariat** opens each day 30 minutes before starting time. You can contact the Secretariat via house phone from the hotel (Ext. 3411), 228-6402 (from the Yokohama City area), 045-228-6402 (from outside Yokohama), or +81 45 228-6402 (from overseas). The editors may be contacted via e-mail (rcolker@gmail.com; barryrigal@mindspring.com). If you're trying to reach someone you can't find here at the festival, you may leave a message with us and we'll do our best to get it to them. The **Chief Tournament Director** at the **NEC Bridge Festival** is once again the witty, urbane and occasionally immovable **Richard Grenside**, as always under the close supervision of wife Sue. Be advised that you call him at your own risk. Co-Director of the NEC Cup is **Tadayoshi Nakatani**.

PCs with Internet access are available for player/ use inside the Secretariat (Room 417), along the wall to the left.

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 20th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/home/English/nec/tabid/1043/Default.aspx>

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

NEC Cup 2015: 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, the latest version of WBF 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 the latest version of WBF 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: Bridgmate 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 and the upload of the results of all matches in progress on the web.

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 — 3imps for the 1st offense, 10imps 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, personal computers, 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. In KO rounds, mobile phones in the playing area are prohibited during game time. Players with mobile phones should surrender their phones to the staff at the service desk and receive a number tag which is used to collect the phone after the game. 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.

WBF VP scale (14 boards)

IMPs	VPs - Won	VPs - Lost	IMPs	VPs - Won	VPs - Lost
0	10.00	10.00	29	16.88	3.12
1	10.33	9.67	30	17.04	2.96
2	10.66	9.34	31	17.19	2.81
3	10.97	9.03	32	17.34	2.66
4	11.28	8.72	33	17.49	2.51
5	11.58	8.42	34	17.63	2.37
6	11.87	8.13	35	17.77	2.23
7	12.16	7.84	36	17.91	2.09
8	12.44	7.56	37	18.04	1.96
9	12.71	7.29	38	18.17	1.83
10	12.97	7.03	39	18.29	1.71
11	13.23	6.77	40	18.41	1.59
12	13.48	6.52	41	18.53	1.47
13	13.72	6.28	42	18.65	1.35
14	13.96	6.04	43	18.76	1.24
15	14.19	5.81	44	18.87	1.13
16	14.42	5.58	45	18.98	1.02
17	14.64	5.36	46	19.08	0.92
18	14.85	5.15	47	19.18	0.82
19	15.06	4.94	48	19.28	0.72
20	15.26	4.74	49	19.38	0.62
21	15.46	4.54	50	19.47	0.53
22	15.66	4.34	51	19.56	0.44
23	15.85	4.15	52	19.65	0.35
24	16.03	3.97	53	19.74	0.26
25	16.21	3.79	54	19.83	0.17
26	16.38	3.62	55	19.91	0.09
27	16.55	3.45	56	19.99	0.01
28	16.72	3.28	57	20.00	0.00

The 20th NEC Cup Guest List

Konichi wa and welcome to the 20th NEC Bridge Festival. As always, two matches from every session of the NEC Cup will be on Bridge Base Online, the world's leading Online Bridge site (hi Fred, Sheri, Uday, and all), with live broadcasts starting with Round One: YBM (10) vs SAKURAI (37) and Beijing Trinergy (14) vs NANIWADA (39). Plus, again this year all match results will be updated on the JCBL web site on a real-time basis. As in past years, we're confident that not just the favorites will be playing for the championship come Saturday so if you start off poorly, keep your chin up, play with heart, and fight until the man from down under (the reverend Sir Grenside) taps you out. As always, we're thrilled to see the many foreign teams here and a special welcome to those attending the festival for the first time as well as to those back for the first time in a while. As always, it brings joy to our hearts to see so many friendly and familiar faces from around the bridge world. We're all family here.

The defenders, Team Russia (**Andrey Gromov, Evgeny Gladyshev, Alexander Dubinin, Mikhail Krasnosselski, Sebastiaan Drijver, Sjoert Brink**), are back with the familiar two Russian pairs augmented by a pair of Flying Dutchmen. Indeed, this team has demonstrated why they occupy the number one seed by virtue of their record in the NEC. In 2013 they won this event with one Dutchman on the team, extracted a walk-over last year with two Dutchmen on the squad, and frankly we think there is no way they can get any stronger without adding a third Dutchman — though the laws permit no more than six players per squad. As for recent performances on the World stage, last year Brink and Drijver lost a nail-biter in the semi-finals of the Rosenblum Teams at Sanya. The smart money has them as this year's favorite (though no one has ever accused us of being smart).

The team from England/Netherlands (**David Bakhshi, David Gold, Ricco van Prooijen, Louk Verhees**) is really last year's Team NEDUK in "nominal" disguise. Gold and Bakhshi are now regulars on the England team which won bronze at Opatija last summer and will be going to Chennai. Van Prooijen and Verhees have also been regulars on the Dutch squad, and were Bermuda Bowl winners in 2011. In 2012 this same team lost here to the eventual NEC champions in the semi-finals, as did almost the same team (but with Verhees replaced by Jan Jansma) in 2013. We reckon the renamed NEDUKs may well be a team to reckon with. Welcome back, gentlemen.

Team Down Under (**Sartaj Hans, Peter Gill, Martin Reid, Peter Newell**) lost in last year's semi-finals, but won the NEC Cup back in 2012 retaining most of their line-up from that squad. The mixed Australia/New-Zealand squad features two regular partnerships and you can be sure there will be smiles (and conversation) a-plenty at both tables. They too must be considered one of this year's favorites. G'day again, mates.

From the same continent comes a "reconstituted" version of 2001's Team Australia (**Michael Wilkinson, Griff Ware, Terry Brown, Avi Kanetkar**). Only Terry Brown was a member of that earlier team, which qualified for the KO stage before losing to Brian Senior's England squad. This year's edition is a mixture of youth and experience with Kanetkar and Brown frequent members of the Australian senior squad while Wilkinson and Griff, a regular partnership at the national level, just this week defeated Gill-Hans by 1 imp for the right to represent Oz in the 2015 Bermuda Bowl in Chennai. Other Australian teams have competed here, both before and since that 2001 NEC team, sometimes playing in combination with pairs from other countries. A couple have made it to the semi-finals. Could this be the first to find greener pastures? Stay tuned. Welcome, mates.

Team England Hinden (**Frances Hinden, Graham Osbourne, Alex Hydes, Mike Bell**) is back, and this time they've sworn to take no prisoners. In their first NEC outing last year they lost to Russia in the final, where they ran out of gas, perhaps due to the fatigue of playing four-handed. The scuttlebutt is that they have plans to avenge that loss, and who is to say they won't. Some of you will recall that we introduced Frances Hinden as "the strongest woman player in the UK who has never competed in the Women's game." She is playing now, as then, with regular partner Graham Osbourne and teammates Alex Hydes and Mike Bell, who have had "impressive junior careers...in English domestic competitions." Welcome back, and remember to rest up between matches.

Team India (**Subhash Gupta, Gopal Venkatesh, Sridharan Padmanabhan, Sunderram Srinivasan, Swarnendu Banerji, Keyzad Anklesaria**) is back, this year featuring Banerji-Anklesaria in place of Jyotindra Madhukar Shah-Rajeshwar Tewari. This is Banerji's first NEC but Anklesaria was a member of 2011's Hemant

Jalan (India) team. This year's team has much international experience, though only Gupta has been to the NEC more than once before. The squad includes members of the Texan Aces, who have had much success in the European open teams, including an appearance in the finals. Welcome, gentlemen.

After a one-year absence from this event Jason Hackett is back (**Hackett: Jason Hackett, Brian Senior, John Holland, Gunner Hallberg**), though this time without either Papa or brother Justin. Jason (a member of the current English Bermuda Bowl team) is joined by NEC veterans Brian Senior (who has played on many and varied NEC teams over the years and won the event in both 2003 and 2002), who is currently on England's Home International Senior (no pun intended) squad, and John Holland and Gunner Hallberg. The latter two have each been to the NEC once before, Holland in 2007 and Hallberg last year, though neither has made it to the KO stage. Holland and Hallberg have been one of the keys to England's success at Senior level for the last decade — and they are the current European champions. Make no mistake, this team has considerable talent and experience and its members are certainly no strangers to winning. Good luck, gentlemen.

This year for the first time we welcome a team from Singapore (**Poon Hua, Loo Choon Chou, Kelvin Ng, Lam Cheng Yen**). While its four members are all newcomers to the NEC, this young squad has been capturing scalps at US Nationals over the last few years. We expect great things from them, sooner rather than later. Welcome lads and good luck.

The latest edition of Team Sweden (**Peter Fredin, Gary Gottlieb, David Probert, Thomas Andersson**) features two-time NEC veteran Peter Fredin (2008 and 2002) teamed up with NEC newcomers Gary Gottlieb, David Probert and Thomas Andersson. Fredin, a one-man wrecking crew (just ask any of his previous partners), is certain to enliven the bulletin editors' day. There is a never a dull moment when he is at the table as he has single-handedly been responsible for as many stories as the rest of the entrants put together. Gary Gottlieb hails from NYC, Probert and Andersson from Malmo. This squad has more than their fair share of firepower. Welcome, gentlemen. *Lycka till!*

This year's Yeh Bros Mixed, Team YBM (**Ming Sun, Chen Yeh, Yalan Zhang, Juei-Yu Shih, Ping Wang, Dawei Chen**), features five NEC veterans joined by the inimitable Dawei Chen, local hero and JCBL's most prominent Chinese transplant. Though past Yeh Bros teams (all absent Dawei Chen) have failed to qualify for the KO stage of this event, this team is filled with experienced players who have won or placed highly in top competition in other international events. Indeed, several members have made it to the KO stage of the NEC as members of other teams and World Champion Ming Sun won the 2009 NEC as a member of Team China LongZhu National Women. Of course Chen Yeh was the first Asian bridge player to win a world team title when his team won the World Transnational Mixed Teams in 2008 in Beijing. Welcome, and *zhù ni hao-yùn!*

A Korea-Taipei hybrid, Team KORTAI (**Kyunghae Sung, Sungae Yang, Patrick Huang, Cheng-Jui Huang**) features three NEC Cup veterans and one newcomer (Cheng-Jui Huang). Kyunghae Sung and Sungae Yang have both been members of previous NEC Korean teams (most notably Hammer and Cacti) while Patrick Huang, China Taipei's Renaissance Man, living legend, and our favorite co-commentator has been a member of no fewer than seven previous NEC squads. Huang claims to be intending to take things more easily, but don't hold your breath waiting for that to happen. Welcome, gentlemen, and good luck.

Team ZhiHaoLe (**Zhao Haibo, Zhao Yuqiao, Sun YanHui, Li Jie, Fu Zhong**) from China teams a pair of NEC veterans (Li Jie and Fu Zhong in partnership) with two NEC newcomers (the two Zhao's). Fu is the World Pairs Champion from Verona and he and Jerry Li are probably China's best-known current partnership. Jerry is not only the IBPA representative for Asia but also the Ourgame liaison (play your cards right and you too can be shown on Vugraph). Fu has done well at past NECs playing mostly on Japanese teams (most notably on Team SARA in 2010, which qualified for the KO stage) and with Japanese partners in the weekend pair events. Li Jie has been a member of two NEC China Evertrust teams. Welcome gentlemen, and good luck.

Also from China comes Team SANDEN (**Hu Mao Yuan, Yang Li Xin, Dai Jian Ming, Jin Ke, Wang Wei Min, Liu Yi Qian**), another mixture of veteran and first-time NEC players. The newbies are Hu Mao Yuan, Jin Ke and Wang Wei Min. The veterans, Yang Li Xin, Dai Jian Ming and Liu Yi Qian, have all been members of past NEC Chinese teams. (We would mention that when Dai is on the squad you should never say "Dai.") Oh, all right then. Dai and Yang Li Xin were part of the silver-medal winning mixed team at Sanya this past autumn. While this team is seeded thirteenth, 13 is not an unlucky number for the Chinese (or so we understand) and they will be hoping to prove that point here this week. Welcome, and *zhù ni hao-yùn!*

From Korea comes Team Daisy (**Choi Anhee, Park Sunhee, Lee Soohyun, Kim Sunyoung, Lee Hansang**), featuring four NEC newcomers and one veteran (Kim Sunyoung from last year's Team Harmony). Welcome, and *haeng un!*

Another team from Korea is 7 Heart (**Chung Ilsub, Hwang Iynryung, Choi Jungjin, Jang Jungbai**) and is comprised, we believe, of all NEC Cup veterans. (The last two players' names are spelled slightly differently on previous years' team rosters, an occurrence we are inclined to attribute to our perennial less-than-perfect recording of names.) Welcome back, welcome back...and good luck.

Another component of this year's Korean invasion is Team Scity (**Park Jungyoon, Kim Yoonkyung, Im Hyun, Kwon Sooja**), all members of previous Korean NEC Cup teams. Welcome, and may the force be with you.

Team Beijing Lawyers (Yoshie Kikuchi, Xue Xiaoli, Wang Fei, Qi YouGuang, Tao Jianhua), while listed several places below the "invited" foreign teams on the rosters on page 7, seems to have a four-to-one Chinese-to-Japanese player ratio. The five players all seem to be first-time NEC attendees (unless Wang Fei is actually our old friend Wang Wenfei, member of several NEC China Women's teams including, most notably, the 2009 NEC Cup Champion China LongZhu National Women's team) so we bid you welcome and good luck, ladies.

Other top Japanese teams sport many familiar names, most notably teams Soul (**Oh Hyemin, Kim Hyeyoung, Kazuo Furuta, Hiroki Yokoi, Yasuhiro Shimizu**), Morimura (**Tadashi Yoshida, Hiroya Abe, Shunsuke Morimura**, and "ringer" **Sue Picus**), Japan Senior (**Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Masayuki Ino, Kazuhiko Yamada**), SARA (**Tadashi Teramoto, Kumiko Sasahira, Hiroshi Kaku, Masaaki Takayama, Takeshi Niekawa, Shugo Tanaka**) and last year's qualifier NAITO (**Ryoga Tanaka, Sakiko Naito, Ayako Miyakuni, Kenji Miyakuni**). It has become almost *de rigueur* for one or more home team to qualify for the KO stage, so do not be surprised to see one or more Japanese team fighting on in Saturday's KO.

So welcome to the 2015 NEC Bridge Festival. May all of your bids be inspired. May all of your plays be double-dummy, and may your fiercest competitors finish one place below you in the standings. Good luck to all.

NEC Bridge Festival Smoking Policy

NEC Cup:

See the Smoking section of the CoC (page 2).

Other events:

Once a session has started, and until the player has finished all boards in the session, smoking is prohibited at ALL times other than a single designated smoking break, which may be announced at the option of the Director.

Smoking areas:

Smoking is only permitted in the smoking rooms located on the 3rd and 5th floors of the Conference Center.

Penalties:

Penalties for violations will be assessed by the Director.

Alerts Behind Screens

When Alerting behind screens it is expected, given the language differences here, that players **write down** both the question and the answer. Players failing to do so may well jeopardize their rights when it comes to a Director's ruling or to any appeal that may follow.

Real-Time NEC Cup Match Updates on the Web

Wondering how your favorite team is doing RIGHT NOW? Surf to:
Qualifying Live Results@ <http://jcbl.willnet.ad.jp/Global/tsdbtr2ed032m95qzpl2/Top>
Qualifying Lineups@ <http://jcbl.willnet.ad.jp/Lineup/tsdbtr2ed032m95qzpl2/Top>
(And no, there will not be a quiz on this later)

Team Rosters: 20th NEC Cup

#	Team Name	Members
1	Russia:	Andrey Gromov, Evgeny Gladyshev, Alexander Dubinin, Mikhail Krasnoselskii, Sebastiaan Drijver, Sjoert Brink
2	England/Netherlands:	David Bakhshi, David Gold, Ricco van Prooijen, Louk Verhees
3	Down Under:	Sartaj Hans, Peter Gill, Martin Reid, Peter Newell
4	Australia:	Michael Wilkinson, Griff Ware, Terry Brown, Avi Kanetkar
5	England Hinden:	Frances Hinden, Graham Osbourne, Alex Hydes, Mike Bell
6	INDIA:	Subhash Gupta, Gopal Venkatesh, Sridharan Padmanabhan, Sunderram Srinivasan, Swarnendu Banerji, Keyzad Anklesaria
7	Hackett:	Jason Hackett, Brian Senior, John Holland, Gunner Hallberg
8	Singapore:	Poon Hua, Loo Choon Chou, Kelvin Ng, Lam Cheng Yen
9	Sweden:	Peter Fredin, Gary Gottlieb, David Probert, Thomas Andersson
10	YBM:	Ming Sun, Chen Yeh, Yalan Zhang, Juei-Yu Shih, Ping Wang, Dawei Chen
11	KORTAL:	Kyunghae Sung, Sungae Yang, Patrick Huang, Cheng-Jui Huang
12	ZhiHaoLe:	Zhao Haibo, Zhao Yuqiao, Sun YanHui, Li Jie, Fu Zhong
13	SANDEN:	Hu Mao Yuan, Yang Li Xin, Dai Jian Ming, Jin Ke, Wang Wei Min, Liu Yi Qian
14	Beijing Trinergy:	Dong Lu, Chuancheng Ju, Zhengjun Shi, Lidang Dong, Haitao Liu, Yanhong Wang
15	Daisy:	Choi Anhee, Park Sunhee, Lee Soohyun, Kim Sunyoung, Lee Hansang
16	7 Heart:	Chung Ilsub, Hwang Iynryung, Choi Jungjin, Jang Jungbai
17	Scity:	Park Jungyoon, Kim Yoonkyung, Im Hyun, Kwon Sooja
18	Soul:	Oh Hyemin, Kim Hyeyoung, Kazuo Furuta, Hiroki Yokoi, Yasuhiro Shimizu
19	Morimura:	Tadashi Yoshida, Hiroya Abe, Shunsuke Morimura, Sue Picus
20	Jenny-Chang:	Kyoko Shimamura, Makiko Sato, Jenny Kim, Chang Mirye
21	Great God:	Natsuko Nishida, Masayasu Oga, Yoko Shimominami, Lee Bokhee
22	Beijing Lawyers:	Yoshie Kikuchi, Xue Xiaoli, Wang Fei, Qi YouGuang, Tao Jianhua
23	Japan Senior:	Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Masayuki Ino, Kazuhiko Yamada
24	SARA:	Tadashi Teramoto, Kumiko Sasahira, Hiroshi Kaku, Masaaki Takayama, Takeshi Niekawa, Shugo Tanaka
25	PYON:	Yuki Fukuyoshi, Takeshi Hanayama, Terumi Kubo, Tadashi Imakura
26	Edelweiss:	Haruko Koshi, Hideyuki Sango, Nobuko Matsubara, Fumiko Kimura, Hiroaki Miura, Yoko Oosako
27	NAITO:	Ryoga Tanaka, Sakiko Naito, Ayako Miyakuni, Kenji Miyakuni
28	Five Star:	Kazuko Takahashi, Katsumi Takahashi, Takako Fujimoto, Sumiko Sugino, Kazuko Kawashima, Akiko Kawabata
29	Akarui:	Robert Geller, Setsuko Ogiwara, Mutsue Kokubo, Noriko Akira, Noriyuki Okamoto
30	Kitty-chan:	Yoko Nenohi, Kyoko Toyofuku, Kumiko Matsuo, Toshiko Kaho, Hiroko Sekiyama, Mieko Nakanishi
31	BlueLights:	Osami Kimura, Hiroko Kobayashi, Chizuko Tsukamoto, Harue Iemori, Chisato Kiriya, Yasuyoshi Toriumi
32	Katsumata:	Atsuko Katsumata, Yasuyo Iida, Misae Kato, Kimiko Kamakari, Takako Nakatani, Sachiho Ueda
33	JA-panda:	Megumi Takasaki, Yuko Noda, Masayuki Hayasaka, Hidenori Narita, Hiroyuki Noda
34	Tom and Jerry:	Chieko Ichikawa, Yoshiko Murata, Kei Nemoto, Kuniko Saito, Junko Den, Aiko Banno
35	Japan Youth:	Yuki Harada, Takumi Seshimo, Mizuki Ishibashi, Takahiro Honda, Tomoaki Nakanishi, Tadahiro Kikuchi
36	LAS FLORES:	Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura, Michiko Shida, Kotomi Asakoshi, Yoko Komuro, Shimako Yaji
37	Sakurai:	Tsuneo Sakurai, Atsushi Kikuchi, Kenichi Asaoka, Takehiko Tada
38	HOSHI:	Masako Sakurai, Yukiko Hoshi, Junko Tsubaki, Megumi Takasaka
39	NANIWADA:	Toshiro Nose, Masaru Naniwada, Hisami Kataoka, Hideo Togawa, Junzo Kobayashi
40	River Side:	Yumiko Kawakami, Masakatsu Sugino, Ryoichi Yasuhara, Hiroko Tanaka, Noriko Yagi, Toshiharu Hirose
41	Air-TRK:	Yoko Fukuyama, Takashi Sumita, Mark LaForge, Timothy Curtis, Kazuo Takano, Hisako Kondo
42	HNES:	Hisayo Goto, Hiroko Ishino, Emi Sakata, Sae Ohashi, Kazumi Nitta, Yumiko Nagato
43	Friends:	Yoko Saito, Mamiko Odaira, Sayori Harasawa, Mayumi Tanaka, Eiko Sakamoto, Setsuko Minami
44	Sacrum:	Hiroko Sentsui, Naoto Matsumoto, Hu Wenhui, Shintaro Sentsui
45	KinKi:	Sonoko Namba, Chizuko Sugiura, Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka, Yukinao Homma, Chie Fujita
46	Gardenia:	Makoto Nomura, Masako Otsuka, Naoko Hishikawa, Takashi Hatakeyama, Mitsuko Suyama, Yumiko Kichise

1st-round match-ups: 1 v 35; 2 v 26; 3 v 28; 4 v 31; 5 v 24; 6 v 30; 7 v 33; 8 v 27; 9 v 40; 10 v 37; 11 v 42; 12 v 23; 13 v 38; 14 v 39; 15 v 29; 16 v 41; 17 v 44; 18 v 32; 19 v 43; 20 v 34; 21 v 36; 22 v 25; 45 v 46

**Today's 1st VuGraph Matches will feature YBM (10) vs SAKURAI (37)
and Beijing Trinergy (14) vs NANIWADA (39)**

The Future of the NEC Bridge Festival

We expect that the NEC Bridge Festival will be moving to an alternate-year schedule, starting from the current year. That means the next NEC will be held in 2017. Dates may be available by the end of this tournament, but as of now we expect it to be in Yokohama in February 2017. Watch this space for final confirmation.

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♣ 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♣ artificial opening bid indicating one of:
 - a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
 - a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
- 2♦ artificial opening bid showing one of:
 - at least 5-4 distribution in the majors with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Flannery, anti-Flannery etc.)
 - a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
 - a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
- 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.
- Opening notrump bid at the two level or higher indicating at least 5-4 distribution in the minors, 10 or more HCP.
- Opening 3NT bid indicating:
 - any solid suit or
 - a broken minor suit.
- Opening four-level bid transferring to a known suit (e.g., Namyats, etc.).
- Strong opening at the two level or higher, asking Ace, King, Queen, singleton, void, trump quality.

Responses and Rebids

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

- All constructive calls starting with the opening bidder's second call.
- Calls that ask for aces, kings, queens, singletons, voids, trump quality and responses thereto.
- 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

- Any conventional balancing calls.
- Conventional doubles and redoubles and responses (including free bids) thereto.
- Notrump overcall for either:
 - 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.)
 - three-suited takeout (as with a takeout double, at least 3 cards in each of the 3 suits).
- Jump overcalls into a suit to indicate at least 5-4 distribution in two known suits, and responses thereto.
- 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.
- Comic 1NT overcall.
- Defense to:
 - conventional calls (including takeout doubles).
 - natural notrump opening bids and overcalls.
 - opening bids of 2♣ or higher.
- Nos. 5 through 9 under "Responses and Rebids" above apply to both pairs.
- Transfer overcall to show a specified suit at the four level.

Carding

- 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

The 2014 NEC Cup: England Hinden vs Russia

Last year's top round-robin qualifier Down Under chose fifth-place qualifier NAITO as their quarter-final opponent. Second-place England Hinden chose to play eighth-place China Women 2, third-place Beijing Trinergy chose sixth-place England/Denmark, leaving fourth-place Russia to play the seventh-place Bulgaria All Stars in the quarter-finals.

Down Under took a 55-8 first-half lead over NAITO, then added another 19 imps in the second half to take the first semi-final slot 112-47. England Hinden led China Women 2 18-16 at the half, then won the second half 44-31 to take the second semi-final slot 62-47. In a squeaker Beijing Trinergy eked out a 1-imp first half lead over England/Denmark at 34-33, then virtually duplicated that result by winning the second half 35-34 to take the third semi-final slot 69-67. Finally, Russia led the Bulgarian All Stars 66-39 at the half. They increased their lead by two more imps (40-38) in the second half to win 106-77, taking the fourth and final slot in the semi-finals.

The semi-finals matches were Down Under against England Hinden and Beijing Trinergy against Russia. Underdog England Hinden won both halves (44-36; 53-28) to advance to the final, 97-64. Russia found themselves down 47-48 at the half, then pitched a near shut-out, 50-5, in the second half to take the remaining spot, 97-53, in the NEC Cup final.

The 2014 NEC Cup final pitted team England Hinden (Frances Hinden, Graham Osbourne, Alex Hydes, Mike Bell), four relative unknowns (at least to most of us from outside the UK) who had finished a strong second in the qualifying Swiss, against team Russia (Andrey Gromov, Evgeny Gladyshev, Alexander Dubinin, Mikhail Krasnoselskii, Sebastiaan Drijver, Sjoert Brink), six experienced internationalists (including the defenders from a year earlier) who had finished a mediocre fourth in the qualifying swiss. Mismatch or challenge? Only time would tell.

First Quarter (Boards 1-16):

Bd: 1
Dir: North
Vul: None

North
♠ AQJ6
♥ 108
♦ Q73
♣ Q954

West
♠ K104
♥ K965
♦ AK10
♣ 1086

East
♠ 952
♥ QJ
♦ 98642
♣ K32

South
♠ 873
♥ A7432
♦ J5
♣ AJ7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladyshev</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
	1NT	Pass	2♦(♥)
Pass	2♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	All Pass	

After Hydes' weak notrump the defense to 2♥ began with a diamond lead and spade shift. When the finesse held Hydes ducked a trump and the defense continued trumps. Declarer lost the five red winners and did not need the club finesse when everything broke for him.

1♠ was a slightly more comfortable spot. The defenders led a diamond to the king and a low heart back. Declarer won, played a second diamond, and avoided any trump promotions by discarding a club when West played a third heart. He lost two hearts and two diamonds. First blood to Russia, 1-0.

Following a push on Board 2 the fun started.

Bd: 3
Dir: South
Vul: E/W

North
♠ Q842
♥ 6
♦ AK
♣ AKJ1042

West
♠ 73
♥ AJ4
♦ QJ732
♣ 973

East
♠ 1095
♥ KQ75
♦ 1084
♣ Q85

South
♠ AKJ6
♥ 109832
♦ 965
♣ 6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladyshev</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦(♥)
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣(2+)	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♠(1)
Pass	4♣(2)	Pass	4♦(3)
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

(1) In conjunction with the 1♦ bid, 4-4+ majors, INV

- (2) Do you like your hand; specifically your trumps
 (3) Yes, and KJ10x or better in spades

How many expert pairs would get this deal right? Yes, a strong club auction might do the trick but this partnership had an unusual gadget in a slam-going auction to find out what they needed to know. Drijver had a serious 3NT and a 4♦ slam-try available if he needed them, both of which would have focused on other problems here. E/W did not play cue-bidding in these auctions, a fact that is both interesting and unusual. Against the slam the defenders cashed a top heart and shifted to diamonds. Declarer cashed the ♣A, ruffed a club, took the ♠AK, ruffed a heart to hand and a club to dummy, came back to hand with a top diamond and drew trump and claimed. Very nicely done.

The auction in the other room was all about getting to game, so Russia had 11 more imps to lead 12-0.

Bd: 4 North
 Dlr: West ♠ 10943
 Vul: Both ♥ Q
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ A109873

West ♠ 8 ♥ KJ87432 ♦ 10976 ♣ 5	South ♠ AK7652 ♥ A105 ♦ AJ5 ♣ J	East ♠ QJ ♥ 96 ♦ 8432 ♣ KQ642
--	---	---

Open Room
 West North East South
Gladys *Hydes* *Kras'skii* *Bell*
 3♥ Pass 4♣ 4♠
 All Pass

Closed Room
 West North East South
Hinden *Drijver* *Osborne* *Brink*
 3♥ Pass Pass 3♠
 Pass 4♣(1) Pass 4NT
 Pass 5♣ Dbl 5NT
 Pass 6♦ Pass 6♥(2)
 Pass 7♠ All Pass

- (1) Slam try
 (2) Last Train

Another tailor-made opportunity for Brink-Drijver to show their mettle. Brink heard his partner cooperate for slam, and when the club response was doubled his hand got even better. He found a diamond card, then focused on a heart control. (What would he

have done had he only needed third-round heart control? North didn't care.) When trumps were two-one South claimed 13 tricks and a 17-imp pick-up since Krasnoselski's 4♣ lead-directing response had completely stymied N/S. It was 29-0 now, Russia.

After both tables played 3NT, down on a four-zero break offside, Hinden got on the scoreboard.

Bd: 6 Dlr: East Vul: E/W	North ♠ K652 ♥ KJ1073 ♦ K10 ♣ Q5	East ♠ 7 ♥ A654 ♦ A875 ♣ KJ96
West ♠ AQJ9 ♥ 82 ♦ 942 ♣ A1082	South ♠ 10843 ♥ Q9 ♦ QJ63 ♣ 743	

Open Room
 West North East South
Gladys *Hydes* *Kras'skii* *Bell*
 1♠ Pass 2♣ Pass
 2♥ Dbl Pass Pass
 4♣ Pass 4♦ Pass
 5♣ Pass 6♣ All Pass

Closed Room
 West North East South
Hinden *Drijver* *Osborne* *Brink*
 1♥(♠) Dbl Pass Pass
 3♣ All Pass

The finals of a major championship may rarely have featured such a ridiculous disparity between the valuation of a hand as the two Wests displayed here. Admittedly Gladys expected to be facing more shape than he was, but after driving to game might not 3♣ have been enough? Krasnoselski obviously expected at least one more ace to come down in dummy. The good news was that bidding slam and not being doubled when partscore is the limit may not be a tragedy. The bad news was that the imps for three down vulnerable add up pretty fast. Against 3♣ Brink led a trump and declarer ended up taking four red-suit winners and five trump tricks. In slam on a heart lead declarer scrambled his way glumly to nine tricks as well, but it was 29-9 now for Russia.

Bd: 7
 Dir: South
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ 65
 ♥ J1042
 ♦ 10764
 ♣ AQ2

West
 ♠ KQ43
 ♥ A65
 ♦ AKJ83
 ♣ 10

East
 ♠ AJ97
 ♥ K
 ♦ Q952
 ♣ K843

South
 ♠ 1082
 ♥ Q9873
 ♦ ---
 ♣ J9765

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
1♣(1)	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣(2)	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♥	Pass
5NT(3)	Pass	6♠	All Pass

- (1) Bal/18+
- (2) Relay 18+
- (3) ♠Q+ ♦K

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
			Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	1NT(!!)
4♣	4♥	Pass	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	Dbf
All Pass			

This was a somewhat unlucky board for Hinden, though in hindsight Osborne might have been able to find a way to 6♦. In the Open Room West set up a game-force and showed four spades facing his partner's known four-card suit. An exchange of cue-bids saw the slam reached from the safer hand. Bell led a trump and when both hands followed to the second trump declarer claimed.

In the other room Brink not only came in vulnerable to show his two-suiter of power and quality, he doubled the final slam and hit his partner's ace to get the ruff. Some nice creativity there, though had the slam been doubled, redoubled and cold for an overtrick we would have been a trifle less sympathetic; 46-9, now.

Bd: 8
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ K1043
 ♥ 1032
 ♦ A98
 ♣ KQ7

West
 ♠ Q9
 ♥ J974
 ♦ QJ10
 ♣ J943

East
 ♠ J62
 ♥ KQ8
 ♦ K654
 ♣ A106

South
 ♠ A875
 ♥ A65
 ♦ 732
 ♣ 852

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♦(1)	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

(1) Diamonds or a balanced 11-13

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Hydes found the obvious rebid with his balanced hand and succeeded when, in an effort to be equally creative, Krasnoselski hit his partner's suit by leading the ♠J. Hydes knew what to do now and when he set up his club winner he had seven tricks off the top.

Osborne led a top heart against 1NT. Drijver won in dummy, led a club to the king, then a spade to dummy for a club to the queen. Osborne won and set up the diamonds for his side, leaving declarer with just five tricks. The 6imps made it 46-15, now.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ Q6
 ♥ 986
 ♦ Q643
 ♣ A965

West
 ♠ 7
 ♥ KQJ75
 ♦ 9
 ♣ KJ10873

East
 ♠ K109842
 ♥ A43
 ♦ 852
 ♣ 2

South
 ♠ AJ53
 ♥ 102
 ♦ AKJ107
 ♣ Q4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
2♥(1)	Pass	Pass	1NT
3♣	Pass	3♥	Dbf
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	3NT	2♠	3♦
All Pass			

One can hardly blame Hydes for leading trumps against 3♥, after which declarer won in dummy, led a club to the jack and in no time was entering +170 on his scorecard. Note that an initial diamond lead might well have worked much better, with a defense straight out of Reese's "Expert Game." If declarer ruffs and crosses to dummy to lead a trump to his jack, North should duck. The easiest way to make the game is to ruff a club now, but declarer might continue with the ♣K, which would be ducked around. When the queen appears declarer must now lead another club and discard a spade from dummy rather than ruffing. If declarer and the defense do all of that, someone would win an award.

In the other room Osborne's second seat vulnerable 2♠ opening was [choose your adjective]. We suggest "sporting," though you might well select something more pejorative. His opponents riposted by waltzing into 3NT and now the spade opening lead was truly questionable (we suggest a low heart though "anything else in your hand" works both in theory and in practice. Drijver had nine tricks now and Russia had 11 imps to lead 57-15...with more to come.

Bd: 10 North
 Dir: East ♠ A9543
 Vul: Both ♥ K102
 ♦ K95
 ♣ A3

West East
 ♠ 1062 ♠ J7
 ♥ Q975 ♥ AJ3
 ♦ Q108 ♦ 742
 ♣ J84 ♣ K9762

South
 ♠ KQ8
 ♥ 864
 ♦ AJ63
 ♣ Q105

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	4♠	Pass	2♠
		All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	2♦
		All Pass	

The editors were for once united in their opinion here that if push came to shove (and the editors are

pushy) we would rather have driven to three notrump than insisted on playing the spade game with a five-three fit. But our first preference would have been to offer a choice of games, as was done in the Closed Room. Of course we both come from a school where judgment overrides system and we can raise spades with three trumps — *quelle horreur!*

Thus, we both bought wholeheartedly into Brink's approach to the North cards and would not have touched Hydes' approach with the proverbial barge-pole. The fact that 3NT on a low heart lead was a far superior spot, especially when Brink made the correct play at trick one of ducking in dummy, did not surprise us. Osborne won the jack, returned ace and another heart, and declarer had nine tricks at once. In the other room the fate of 4♠ hinged on the guess at trick one when East led a club. Declarer put in dummy's ten and was effectively doomed now. He took an early diamond finesse, and when Gladys won his ♦Q he shifted to a low heart, forcing Hydes to rise with the king for a swift two down. Unlucky, but not that unlucky; 70-15, now.

Bd: 11 North
 Dir: South ♠ 42
 Vul: None ♥ KQJ5
 ♦ 10
 ♣ Q97432

West East
 ♠ A1095 ♠ K86
 ♥ 104 ♥ A97632
 ♦ KQ9642 ♦ 87
 ♣ 5 ♣ KJ

South
 ♠ QJ73
 ♥ 8
 ♦ AJ53
 ♣ A1086

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
2♦	All Pass		1♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
1♦	Dbf(♥)	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
2♦	3♣	All Pass	

The somewhat random nature of which minor South opens made a big difference here, though Osborne's silence at all three of his turns — arguably with the

best hand at the table — was somewhat surprising. He should surely have tried 3♦ over 3♣. In the other room it was far harder for N/S to get to precisely 3♣ (though using Lebensohl over 2♦ might have allowed one to do so). Both partscores made nine tricks. In 2♦ West guessed clubs and kept North off lead so the heart loser went away. Russia led 76-15, now.

After a low-level partscore for E/W, Russia set out to expand its lead.

Bd: 13 North
 Dir: North ♠ ---
 Vul: Both ♥ 10753
 ♦ K109
 ♣ AKJ983

West
 ♠ KQ87432
 ♥ A8
 ♦ Q3
 ♣ Q4

East
 ♠ J96
 ♥ K964
 ♦ A62
 ♣ 1072

South
 ♠ A105
 ♥ QJ2
 ♦ J8754
 ♣ 65

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♠(♦)
2♠	3♣	3♠	Pass
4♠	4NT	Pass	5♦
Dbf	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
	1♣	Pass	1NT
2♠	4♣	4♠	All Pass

Osborne did well to compete to 4♠, since it is far from clear that Hinden would have found another call at the four level had he passed. Of course you could argue, since 4♠ had no sensible play, even when facing that monster as West, that his action was unjustified. But since Drijver led a top club and shifted to a diamond, that line of argument might be difficult to support. Plus 620 was a great result but it was not enough. Hydes took something of a flier to bid on to 5♦ and Bell in 5♦ ruffed the spade opening lead to play on hearts. The defenders took their ruff, played a second spade, and now Bell won and led out three clubs, letting East ruff in with the ♦Q for -800; 81-15, now, Russia.

Words of Wisdom:
 Broken pencils are pretty much pointless

Bd: 14 North
 Dir: East ♠ 54
 Vul: None ♥ K10976
 ♦ Q10876
 ♣ 4

West
 ♠ AK3
 ♥ A4
 ♦ K9
 ♣ AKJ1082

East
 ♠ J10982
 ♥ Q8
 ♦ 52
 ♣ 7653

South
 ♠ Q76
 ♥ J532
 ♦ AJ43
 ♣ Q9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
1♣	1♥	Pass	Pass
3NT	All Pass	Pass	2♣

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
6♠	All Pass	2♠	Pass

Hydes led a heart against 3NT and declarer claimed 11 tricks, which could have been 13. Meanwhile, in 6♠ declarer needed to find the doubleton ♠Q. We have all been in worse slams, but this wasn't his day; 11 moreimps made it 92-15, Russia.

Bd: 15 North
 Dir: South ♠ 108753
 Vul: N/S ♥ A985
 ♦ KJ83
 ♣ ---

West
 ♠ 9
 ♥ Q10743
 ♦ AQ642
 ♣ J6

East
 ♠ AQJ62
 ♥ K62
 ♦ 10
 ♣ A1075

South
 ♠ K4
 ♥ J
 ♦ 975
 ♣ KQ98432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
All Pass			3♣

Against 4♥ Hydes led a low spade — a good start. Declarer, with a slow club loser, finessed as Bell took his king and exited in spades. Declarer pitched his

club, then cross-ruffed spades and diamonds, Bell taking the opportunity to ruff in and help promote a trump for his partner. Eventually declarer had to lead a club and concede the ruff to the ♠4, with two natural trump losers to follow. Down one cost 8 imps since 3♣ on a spade lead eventually had to lose both pointed aces and five trump tricks,

The final score at the quarter became 92-23 when on Board 16 the N/S pairs at both tables brought home 12 tricks in 4♠ off the red aces. Hinden had come back already previously in this tournament, but they surely had their work cut out for them if they were to prevent Russia retaining their title.

Second Quarter (Boards 17-32):

Trailing by 69 imps (92-23) after just 16 boards requires serious work, the kind that resides just beyond the road sign up ahead reading: The Twilight Zone. Don't believe us? Just ask Alex Hydes...

Bd: 17 North
 Dlr: North ♠ KJ74
 Vul: None ♥ 94
 ♦ J105432
 ♣ 2

West
 ♠ A103
 ♥ 75
 ♦ 96
 ♣ AKJ974

East
 ♠ Q965
 ♥ AQ63
 ♦ 87
 ♣ Q65

South
 ♠ 82
 ♥ KJ1082
 ♦ AKQ
 ♣ 1083

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Bell</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♥

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
2♣	Dbf	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Not that E/W could have made anything special here (3♣ seems to be the limit) but wouldn't you like to go plus as N/S playing in diamonds? Oh well, one can't expect the precision of a scalpel when one operates with a hacksaw. Hydes' psychic 1♠, combined with Bell's 2♥ response, blew E/W completely out of the auction when Krasnoselski lacked sufficient strength or shape to come in as a first actor at the three level and the opponents had stopped in Gladys's best

suit. Krasnoselski led the ♣A and shifted immediately to a trump. Gladys won the ace and continued the suit. Bell ducked this around to the nine, crossed back to hand with a diamond, cashed the ♥K, unblocked the top diamonds (Gladys pitching a spade), then played a spade and guessed well to rise with the king when Krasnoselski followed low. Now a diamond allowed Bell to pitch a club loser as Gladys ruffed with the ♥Q. Bell still had two more black-suit tricks to lose but scored up a nice +110.

In the Closed Room Hinden got to make the overcall that Krasnoselski in the Open Room would have liked to have made, then pushed for game based on his sixth club (which some might argue he showed when he bid 2♣ previously). In any case, Dubinin led the ♦K, got an encouraging deuce from his partner, and continued with the other two top diamonds, Gromov signaling for a spade switch with the ♦J on the third round. Dubinin obeyed and now all Osborne could do, with the 1♥ opening on his left (and thus, given the limited nature of South's opening, the ♠K clearly in North), was to cash out for down one, -50. That was 2 imps for Hinden (trailing 92-25, now) and a clear vindication for Hydes' psychic (just ask him).

Bd: 18 North
 Dlr: East ♠ J10985
 Vul: N/S ♥ A
 ♦ K3
 ♣ Q5432

West
 ♠ AQ64
 ♥ Q9853
 ♦ 5
 ♣ A107

East
 ♠ K73
 ♥ K1076
 ♦ AQ84
 ♣ 98

South
 ♠ 2
 ♥ J42
 ♦ J109762
 ♣ KJ6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Bell</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♥	1♠	2♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Both West's reached the good 4♥ contract and got the ♠J opening lead. In the Open Room Krasnoselski won the king in dummy and led a heart to the queen

and ace, which should have resulted in his making ten tricks. But when Hydes got out with the ♠8 Bell inexplicably ruffed with a natural trump trick and now dummy's club loser went away on the fourth spade; +450. In the Closed Room Hinden won the opening lead in hand, led a heart up, and when the ace showed up she too scored up +450. Still 92-25.

Bd: 19 North
 Dir: South ♠ AQJ6
 Vul: E/W ♥ K9
 ♦ A106
 ♣ 10642

West
 ♠ 92
 ♥ 732
 ♦ QJ432
 ♣ J98

East
 ♠ K10754
 ♥ J1086
 ♦ K8
 ♣ AK

South
 ♠ 83
 ♥ AQ54
 ♦ 975
 ♣ Q753

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♦	1♠	Dbl
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinín</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbl	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

Playing 1NT from the North seat in the Open Room Hydes received a low spade lead. He won the queen, played a club to the king, won the heart return in hand, played another club to the ace, ducked the ♦K switch, won the diamond continuation, cashed two clubs, then threw Gladysch in with the fourth heart to lead a spade at trick 12 for a cool +150.

Playing 1NT from the South seat in the Closed Room Dubinín received a low diamond lead, ducked to the king, followed by the ♥J switch. He won in dummy and led a club. Osborne won the king, cashed the ace, then got out with a diamond. Dubinín ducked, won the diamond continuation (Osborne pitching a spade), crossed to the ♣Q, took a losing spade finesse, and claimed eight tricks for +120. Another imp to Hinden, who trailed now 92-26. At this rate watching our hair grow (or as the Junior Editor who has precious little hair to watch obstinately had it, watching paint dry) would be about equally exciting.

Bd: 20 North
 Dir: West ♠ K75
 Vul: Both ♥ 7
 ♦ AQ842
 ♣ Q1075

West
 ♠ 10963
 ♥ A1065
 ♦ K10
 ♣ 843

East
 ♠ A84
 ♥ KQ2
 ♦ 53
 ♣ AKJ96

South
 ♠ QJ2
 ♥ J9843
 ♦ J976
 ♣ 2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbl	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinín</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbl	3♦
Dbl	All Pass		

Krasnoselski's 2♠ contract in the Open Room could not be described as a thing of beauty, except, perhaps by contrast with the contract in the Closed Room. But more about that later. Hydes led his stiff heart. Krasnoselski won the ten, ducked a spade to the jack and lost a heart ruff. He won the club return, cashed the ♠A, the ♥K, the ♣K (Bell pitching a heart), then exited with a club. Hydes won the ten and played the ♣Q. Krasnoselski ruffed, cashed the ♥A which Bell ruffed, and lost two diamonds in the end for down one, -100.

Edgar Kaplan believed strongly that takeout doubles were meant to be taken out, and we're certain he'd agree that responsive doubles fall into the same category. Enter Graham Osborne, passer *extraordinaire*. Well, he did have a bit extra (or a bit more than a bit) for his previous bidding, but to channel what Edgar Kaplan might have said, "Trumps supercede high-cards in trump contracts." We'd take you through the play but then we'd have to relive the whole grizzly experience. Suffice it to say that with only three top losers, a nine-card trump fit with the adverse trumps split two-two, there was no defense and Gromov soon scored up +670. That was 11 imps back to Russia, ahead now 103-26.

And the beat went on.

Bd: 21
 Dir: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ QJ
 ♥ J8
 ♦ AJ842
 ♣ AQ98

West
 ♠ A108765
 ♥ A65
 ♦ K10
 ♣ 65

East
 ♠ 43
 ♥ K973
 ♦ Q96
 ♣ K1074

South
 ♠ K92
 ♥ Q1042
 ♦ 753
 ♣ J32

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysz</i>	<i>Bell</i>
	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♦(1)	Pass	2♠(2)	All Pass

(1) Major one-suiter
 (2) P/C

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
	1♦	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	2♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	Pass	2♦
All Pass			

In the Open Room Krasnoselski lost the obvious four tricks in 2♠ for +140. In the Closed Room the play in 2♦ was a bit more challenging for Gromov. Osborne led a trump to the king and ace. Gromov led the ♠J to the ace, won the club switch with the ace, cashed the ♠Q, then got out with a low diamond. Hinden won the ten, played a second club, the nine losing to the king, and arrived at the crossroads. The defense had to cash their two heart tricks before declarer reached dummy with the ♣J and pitched a heart on the ♠K. Alas, Osborne fell from grace and exited with a club, allowing Gromov to come home with +90. Six moreimps to Russia, who led by 83 at 109-26.

Bd: 22
 Dir: East
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ AK
 ♥ Q7542
 ♦ KJ83
 ♣ 73

West
 ♠ 10765
 ♥ 103
 ♦ 954
 ♣ AK92

East
 ♠ Q932
 ♥ AJ
 ♦ AQ6
 ♣ J1085

South
 ♠ J84
 ♥ K986
 ♦ 1072
 ♣ Q64

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysz</i>	<i>Bell</i>
		1NT	Pass
Pass	2♥(1)	Pass	3♥
Dbl	Pass	3♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	4♥
Dbl	All Pass		

(1) 5+♥, 6-11 HCP (not 3♠+5♥)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		1♣(2+)	Pass
1♥(♠)	Dbl	2♠	All Pass

It was difficult to know exactly who could make what on this deal, even looking at all four hands, so everyone was due some slack here. In the Open Room Bell knew Hydes had at most two spades and 11 hcp and so E/W had to have at least eight spades and 23 hcp, hence the 3♥ bid to try to prevent E/W from discovering their fit (and level). Well, not only did it not work but it backfired when Hydes, unaware that Bell was as weak as he was for 3♥, "protected" with a double of 3♠ (cold as the cards lie) and now Bell was forced to take the hit in 4♥x. Oh well, some days you eat The Bear and some days The Bear eats you (pun intended). Bell lost the mandatory five tricks to finish two down, -300.

In the Closed Room the auction was much shorter — and less revealing. The Russians could not uncover their nine-card heart fit (indeed, they could not even be sure of an eight-card fit) and so sold out to 2♠. The defense managed to hold Osborne to eight tricks by attacking diamonds early, then scoring the ♠J by leading the case diamond. But +110 was worth 5imps, increasing Russia's lead to 88 at 114-26.

Board 23 saw both N/S pairs conduct an uninterrupted auction to 3♦, making five with the help of two finesses and a normal trump break. No swing.

Bd: 24
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ AK4
 ♥ A
 ♦ AK10842
 ♣ Q54

West
 ♠ J10963
 ♥ J72
 ♦ 53
 ♣ KJ6

East
 ♠ 52
 ♥ K108543
 ♦ J97
 ♣ 107

South
 ♠ Q87
 ♥ Q96
 ♦ Q6
 ♣ A9832

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	2♣	2♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
2♠	Dbl	3♠	Pass
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Gladysh must have been wondering what he did to deserve such treatment. After all, he simply bid his six-card suit at the two level to mess with the opponents' 2♣ auction and BAM! ZONK! KA-POW! Holy buzz saw, Batman. The defense started out well when Bell led the ♦Q, then switched to a trump to stop declarer from ruffing diamonds in dummy. But when Hydes did not have a trump to return he led a low diamond to Bell's "presumed" jack (he did lead the queen, didn't he?) but it was Gladysh's ♦J that won the trick. Hydes won Gladysh's spade exit with the king, cashed the ♠A, and got out with a low club, which only served to remove any guesswork from that suit. Now Gladysh quickly claimed seven tricks for -100. Whew!

A thing of beauty is a joy forever, but with beauty residing in the eye of the beholder we now know who *not* to ask to judge our beauty pageants. (Hint: His initials are M.K.) Anyhow, things did not turn out all that poorly when Gromov-Dubinin could not find a way to punish 3♠ (a minimum of 800 would have been our guess as to the damage) and settled for 3NT, taking 11 tricks without really breaking much of a sweat. But that was 8 more imps to "The Bear," whose lead was now 96 at 122-26.

Bd: 25	North
Dlr: North	♠ Q
Vul: E/W	♥ K742
	♦ J10964
	♣ K86

West
♠ K873
♥ A8
♦ Q875
♣ 432

East
♠ AJ64
♥ Q653
♦ K
♣ Q1075

South
♠ 10952
♥ J109
♦ A32
♣ AJ9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣(2+)	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	2NT(T/O)
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
3♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
	All Pass		

Just a slight difference in hand evaluation here. Each side could make a partscore, but when Krasnoselski-Gladysh reached the three level they were headed for a minus. The defense could perhaps have done a bit better than they did: ♦J to the ace; spade to the queen and ace; heart to the ace; heart back, ducked to the nine; heart to the king (club from dummy); ♥4 to the queen (Bell pitching a diamond, dummy a club); ♣10 to the ace; club from Bell, but now Gladysh ruffed the club, pitched a club on the ♦Q, and came to eight tricks for down one, -100. That was 3 imps to Hinden when the deal was passed out at the other table; 122-29, now.

Bd: 26	North
Dlr: East	♠ Q98
Vul: Both	♥ KQ
	♦ K64
	♣ A8542

West
♠ K104
♥ J96
♦ Q1072
♣ J93

East
♠ J32
♥ A7543
♦ AJ9
♣ Q10

South
♠ A765
♥ 1082
♦ 853
♣ K76

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>Bell</i>
		1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣(2+)	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		1♥	Pass
1♠(1)	1NT	All Pass	
(1) Denies four or more spades			

The Russians bought the hand in both rooms and had a good shot at a double partscore swing. In the Open Room 2♥ had only five losers, provided declarer played trumps to best advantage. Gladysh did; +110 for Russia.

In the Closed Room Gromov bid an aggressive sandwich 1NT and came up smelling like roses. Osborne led a heart to the eight, nine and king and Gromov played a club to the king and a club back,

ducking. Osborne won the queen, perforce, and now led a second low heart (playing Hinden to have started specifically with king-nine doubleton, else the ace was the right play). Perhaps Osborne was right in theory since with three hearts Hinden would normally just raise to 2♥ (we can only assume she used the sequence she did planning to show a “bad” 2♥ raise by converting a 1NT rebid to 2♥), but in practice this cost the contract as Gromov won the ♥K and cashed out for +90. That was 5 more coals to Newcastle...errr, imps to Russia, ahead now 127-29.

Three flat boards followed. Then...

Bd: 30
 Dir: East
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ 10943
 ♥ K1092
 ♦ Q1097
 ♣ J

West
 ♠ KQ
 ♥ A87
 ♦ J52
 ♣ AK762

East
 ♠ A8752
 ♥ QJ5
 ♦ K
 ♣ 10953

South
 ♠ J6
 ♥ 643
 ♦ A8643
 ♣ Q84

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>Bell</i>
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥(♠)	Pass
2♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

3NT in the Open Room received the ♦9 lead. Bell took dummy's king with the ace, returned the ♦4, and the defense ran the suit (dummy pitching one spade, one heart and a club as declarer pitched two hearts) before Bell got out with a heart. Krasnoselski won the ace, cashed the ♣A noting the fall of the jack, but he unblocked the ♣10, thus committing to playing for the suit to split two-two. (He did not have to do this. He could have followed with a low club, retaining his options, and if he later chose to finesse crossed to the ♠A, finessed the club and, if covered, cleared the clubs and used the second spade to return to his hand. If he decided not to finesse in clubs he could have cashed the other top club and if they split crossed to the ♣10 and again used the spade entry to his hand to run the suit. If he got the play right he would have escaped for down one.) But as it was, when clubs proved to be three-one he cashed the ♠KQ, got out with a club, and the defense claimed the rest for down four, -200.

In the Closed Room Gromov led the ♥2. Hinden called for the queen from dummy and when that held played a club to the ace (the eight appearing from South) and ducked a club rather than overtake her spade winner or use her remaining heart winner to play clubs to best advantage. Unlucky! Dubinin won, cashed the ♦A and continued the suit for down two, -100; 3 imps back to Hinden, trailing 127-32.

Bd: 31
 Dir: South
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 64
 ♥ 76
 ♦ QJ96
 ♣ AKJ75

West
 ♠ KJ97
 ♥ 105
 ♦ 1085
 ♣ 10943

East
 ♠ A853
 ♥ KQ93
 ♦ AK74
 ♣ 2

South
 ♠ Q102
 ♥ AJ842
 ♦ 32
 ♣ Q86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♣	Dbl	1♦(♥)
Pass	1♥	Dbl	Rdbl
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♣
2♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♦	Dbl	1♥
1♠	2♣	3♠	All Pass

Against Krasnoselski's 2♠ Hydes led the ♥7. Bell ducked the king from dummy while encouraging and Krasnoselski played a club. Hydes took the ten with the jack and switched to...a spade, queen, king. Now Krasnoselski played the ♥10 and let it ride. Bell won the jack and returned a low heart but Krasnoselski could ruff with the ♠7 as Hydes pitched. Now came a club ruff, a heart ruff, the ♠J, a diamond to the ace, the ♠A, and a claim of +140.

Against Hinden's 3♠ in the Closed Room Gromov led the ♣A and switched to a heart. Hinden ducked this to Dubinin's jack and he continued with the ace and a third heart. Hinden pitched a diamond as Gromov ruffed and now the defense had book. Gromov tried the ♦Q to the ace and Hinden played a spade to the jack, ruffed a club, cashed the ♥K pitching a diamond, cashed the ♦K pitching a club, ruffed a diamond as Dubinin pitched his last club, and when Hinden tried to ruff her last club Dubinin over-ruffed

for down one, -50, and 5imps back to Russia, now leading by 100 at 132-32.

Last bored...er, board, of the set.

Bd: 32
 Dir: West
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ Q8754
 ♥ J8743
 ♦ 6
 ♣ 75

West
 ♠ K96
 ♥ 92
 ♦ 1095
 ♣ AKJ43

East
 ♠ A32
 ♥ AK
 ♦ AK842
 ♣ 986

South
 ♠ J10
 ♥ Q1065
 ♦ QJ73
 ♣ Q102

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Bell</i>
1♣	1♠	Dbl	Pass
1NT	Pass	4NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠(GF)	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

With the club finesse working and the suit splitting well even should declarer eschew the finesse, it was hard to see where either contract would be in trouble. Then again, maybe we should have had our glasses checked. In the Open Room Hydes led the ♥3 to the king and Krasnoselski played a club to the ace and carelessly passed the ♦10, losing to the jack. Back came a heart to the ace. The contract was still safe as long as he took the club finesse, so Krasnoselski played a club to...the king and now he was down two, -200, when diamonds failed to split. Maybe, given the state of the match, he chose the line he did hoping to duplicate the anti-percentage line he thought would be taken (again, given the state of the match) at the other table. Or maybe he had a club mixed in with his spades. Inquiring minds wanted to know – but even now we're just not that curious.

In the Closed Room Hinden got a spade lead. She rose ace, cashed the ♣AK, and when both opponents followed conceded a club and claimed ten tricks, for +630 and 13imps. Hinden had suffered a terrible set following a worse-than-terrible set but had finished on a brief high note. The score stood at 132-45 and as we saw it Hinden had one more set to try

get back into the match to make the fourth quarter worth playing.

Third Quarter (Boards 33-48):

Hinden needed to make a charge quickly to get back into the match. While "We'll get them in singles" might work in cricket (and thanks for the quote, Rich) the Hinden team needed more than the occasional boundary.

Bd: 33
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ Q85
 ♥ AK65
 ♦ 96
 ♣ Q763

West
 ♠ K7
 ♥ QJ10942
 ♦ J10854
 ♣ ---

East
 ♠ A64
 ♥ ---
 ♦ Q72
 ♣ AKJ9542

South
 ♠ J10932
 ♥ 873
 ♦ AK3
 ♣ 108

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
4♥	1NT	Dbl	2♠
	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♠
Dbl	2♠	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♣	All Pass

Hinden reached the better four-level contract and though neither contract came home, they picked up two undertrick imps for doing so to make it 132-47. Both defenders took their trump trick(s) together with the diamond ruff. It may have been just too hard to stop in a makeable contract here, though passing 3♣ on the Closed Room auction does seem conceivable.

Two push boards followed. Then...

Bd: 36
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ K3
 ♥ AQ93
 ♦ AJ2
 ♣ AK84

West
 ♠ Q76
 ♥ 1082
 ♦ Q87
 ♣ QJ63

East
 ♠ A92
 ♥ K754
 ♦ 10953
 ♣ 72

South
 ♠ J10854
 ♥ J6
 ♦ K64
 ♣ 1095

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT

All Pass

Both declarers won the diamond lead and advanced the ♠K. Both defenders ducked. Then came a heart to the jack and a heart to the nine. Well done. That set up the ninth trick as the cards lay, and left the clubs as a possible source of overtricks on a really good day. No swing, but nicely played.

Bd: 37
Dir: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ A10652
♥ 6
♦ AKJ7
♣ KQ6

West
♠ QJ3
♥ 74
♦ Q10954
♣ J54

East
♠ 987
♥ KQJ852
♦ 6
♣ 987

South
♠ K4
♥ A1093
♦ 832
♣ A1032

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	2♥	Dbl

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	1♠	3♥	3NT
Pass	4NT	All Pass	

After a heart lead to the jack, ducked, Osborne shifted to the ♠7, jack, ace. Brink cashed dummy's top diamonds, crossed to hand in spades and led a diamond up. Hinden won and returned the suit, leaving it up to declarer to bring in the clubs to make his game. In order for the finesse in clubs to be right East would have had to shift to a low spade at trick two from ♠87. Brink took time out for 5 minutes or so before getting it right. If East had shifted to the ♠9 at trick two Brink might still be thinking.

In the other room Bell found a decent swing position when he doubled 2♥. The defenders could actually

have gotten +800 had they taken the spade ruff early, then cashed their minor-suit winners before leading a fourth spade to promote the trump. They did not manage that so Russia had 4 imps.

Bd: 38
Dir: East
Vul: E/W

North
♠ ---
♥ Q97
♦ KQ108753
♣ 985

West
♠ QJ732
♥ J86
♦ 94
♣ J107

East
♠ A10954
♥ AK10
♦ A
♣ AQ32

South
♠ K86
♥ 5432
♦ J62
♣ K64

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
1♦	4♦	1♣(STR)	Pass
4♠	All Pass	Dbl	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
1NT(F)	3♦	1♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	Dbl	Pass
4♠	All Pass	4♣	Pass

Both tables coped well in practice, if not in theory, with the problems of this deal. It would have been easy to imagine both Easts moving beyond 4♠, especially when they found real spade support opposite. Slam here looked to depend on one of two black-suit finesses, but with no entry to the West hand you needed the ♠K to fall or the club finesse. But that's with the odds in abstract and probably no better than a 50-50 chance after the auctions.

The next deal was pushed in 3♠ making on the lie of the cards. That was seven deals down and not a shadow of a real swing yet.

Bd: 40
Dir: West
Vul: None

North
♠ KQ10942
♥ 95
♦ Q
♣ QJ75

West
♠ AJ7
♥ AJ1072
♦ J109
♣ A8

East
♠ 53
♥ K3
♦ AK64
♣ K10963

South
♠ 86
♥ Q864
♦ 87532
♣ 42

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
1♥	3♠	Dbl	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
1NT	3♠	4♠	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♣	All Pass

If spades had been seven-one 6♣ might well have come home (switch the ♠8 and ♣Q for example). However, as the cards lay the spade lead put paid to declarer's chances in slam. Drijver split his club honors on the second round. Declarer played a third club and North cashed out. 3NT was cold for 11 tricks and Russia had 11 imps. They led 149-47.

Bd: 41
 Dlr: North
 Vul: E/W

North
♠ AQ94
♥ KJ1054
♦ 104
♣ J8

West
♠ J752
♥ 98
♦ Q6
♣ AK1075

East
♠ K3
♥ 7632
♦ AK975
♣ Q3

South
♠ 1086
♥ AQ
♦ J832
♣ 9642

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
3♣	2♠	Pass	Pass
	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
	2♠	All Pass	

Both tables responded 1♠ with the South cards, leaving us dazed and confused. Hinden sold out to 2♠, Dubin competed to 3♣ in balancing seat. The defense against 3♣ could not prevent declarer from scoring eight minor-suit tricks and a spade. By contrast, 2♠ looked less comfortable. However, when Hinden led her top club and shifted to the ♦Q Osborne wanted to get a trump promotion and maybe should have overtaken, cashed his second diamond, then played a club for his partner to overtake and lead a third club. He chose to overtake the diamond and play the ♣Q without cashing the second diamond, and now the trump promotion was harder to get. Hinden did not realize her partner had two spades, so she played him for the ♦J, overtook

the second club, returned a diamond, and now declarer could not be forced. He was able to take two spade finesses and collect +110, making it 156-148.

Both tables then bid unopposed to a heart game with ten top tricks. Six deals to go and Hinden still had one solitary pair of undertrick imps to their credit.

Bd: 43
 Dlr: South
 Vul: None

North
♠ J92
♥ KJ10874
♦ 5
♣ AQJ

West
♠ 864
♥ AQ632
♦ 10742
♣ 5

East
♠ Q3
♥ 5
♦ AQ93
♣ K98643

South
♠ AK1075
♥ 9
♦ KJ86
♣ 1072

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
Pass	4♠	All Pass	2♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	2♦(♥)	3♣	1♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	Pass

Against Bell's 4♠ the club lead rang no danger signals. Declarer finessed, lost the red-suit aces, then a club ruff, and declarer had the rest when trumps behaved. Brink knew not to take the club finesse. He tried the two top trumps (good) and a heart up. West won and shifted to a high diamond spot for East to give her the ruff. Down one at both tables; no swing. Still 156-47.

After a dull 3NT landed Russia another imp, they had another opportunity to take full advantage of an error by the Hinden team.

Bd: 45
 Dlr: North
 Vul: Both

North
♠ J1098764
♥ 87
♦ K5
♣ 84

West
♠ A3
♥ KQ92
♦ AJ3
♣ J652

East
♠ 2
♥ AJ53
♦ 764
♣ Q10973

South
♠ KQ5
♥ 1064
♦ Q10982
♣ AK

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
	2♦(1)	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	3♥	3♠
Pass	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Dbl	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Bell started with a top club and shifted to a top spade. Perhaps he should have worked out that, even given the match score, when vulnerable Hydes might have just this sort of hand. It is easy to be wise after the event, but declarer now simply drew trumps and claimed.

Cui culpa in the other room? Drijver led the top of his doubleton club — the best practical start for the defense. Brink won and seeing the singleton spade in dummy shifted to a diamond. He selected the ♦8 and now declarer could have flown with the ace, drawn trump, then knocked out the club with the diamonds blocked. But how was she to know what was going on? She put in the ♦J. North won and... reverted to clubs, maybe worried that his partner had not given him the club ruff because he needed to establish a diamond trick first. Declarer now drew trump and claimed as soon as she obtained the lead, the losing diamond going on the clubs.

Afterwards Brink explained that his ♦8 was second- or fourth-best (the ten would have promised one higher; he would shift to the ♦9 from a ♦109 suit). But he said his mistake was to win the ♣K, not the ♣A. Had he done so his partner would have known there was no future in clubs. He did not play back the ♦10 because he could see that if his partner had the ♦K then declarer might well work out to block the suit.

Still, 5 imps to Russia, leading 161-47.

Bd: 46	North
Dlr: East	♠ KQ76
Vul: None	♥ 842
	♦ K63
	♣ Q62
West	East
♠ 9532	♠ 84
♥ AK10765	♥ 93
♦ A10	♦ J9542
♣ 7	♣ KJ104
	South
	♠ AJ10
	♥ QJ
	♦ Q87
	♣ A9853

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
		Pass	1NT
Dbl(1)	Rdbl	Pass	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
		Pass	1NT
2♥	Dbl	Pass	3♣
All Pass			

This was very nicely judged by Drijver-Brink in the Open Room, albeit the four-one trump break doomed the partscore. The defense led and continued hearts and South could do his best by ruffing and passing the ♣8. When he won the next spade he tried the ♣Q, finding the good and bad news. He could not avoid losing control, and thus a trick to East's fourth club, meaning down two. But in the other room Dubinin adroitly doubled the opponents in what he knew was a four-three fit. Bell ruffed the third heart and tried a low club to the queen, losing a total of two clubs and a ruff, plus three tricks in the red suits, for -500 and 9 more imps to Russia.

Bd: 47	North
Dlr: South	♠ KQ
Vul: N/S	♥ J
	♦ K84
	♣ AQ98765
West	East
♠ A64	♠ J1087
♥ 96532	♥ K104
♦ J5	♦ 1032
♣ K43	♣ J102
	South
	♠ 9532
	♥ AQ87
	♦ AQ976
	♣ ---

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bell</i>
			1♦
Pass	2♦(F)	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
			1♦
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

At both tables South showed diamonds but Drijver relayed for shape while Hydes followed a relatively natural sequence after raising diamonds. Against 5♦ a trump lead might have been very awkward. Dubinin led a heart. Declarer drove out the ♠A, then ruffed a spade and a heart in dummy while ruffing two clubs in hand. When all of that passed off peacefully enough he had four plain winners, five trump tricks in hand and two ruffs in dummy.

Drijver received the ♠J lead and won in hand to take the heart finesse. When that won he had nine top tricks so long as diamonds behaved. Just in case, he tried for more by playing a second spade and could afford the club finesse when West won her ♠A and shifted to a low club. When the ♣Q held Drijver invested his overtrick back by taking the safety play in diamonds, leading a diamond to the ♦6 for +600, and no swing.

Finally Hinden scored a swing in the set; they had been waiting since the first deal.

Bd: 48 North
 Dlr: West ♠ A62
 Vul: E/W ♥ J543
 ♦ Q92
 ♣ K63

West
 ♠ QJ1094
 ♥ K10
 ♦ AK
 ♣ AQ102

East
 ♠ 53
 ♥ A987
 ♦ J87543
 ♣ 8

South
 ♠ K87
 ♥ Q62
 ♦ 106
 ♣ J9754

Open Room
 West North East South
Dubinin *Hydes* *Gromov* *Bell*
 1♣(STR) Pass 1♦ Pass
 1♠ Pass 2♦ Pass
 2NT Pass 3♦ Pass
 3NT All Pass

Closed Room
 West North East South
Hinden *Drijver* *Osborne* *Brink*
 1♠ Pass 1NT Pass
 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass
 2NT All Pass

Against 3NT Hydes led a low heart to the queen and king. The ♦AK failed to produce the ♦Q so Dubinin went after spades. Bell won the first spade and played a club through, to the queen and king. Back came a low heart to the ten, but now when Dubinin played a second top spade Hydes won and cashed his ♦Q, then exited in spades for his partner to win trick 13 with the ♣J. In the Closed Room Brink led a heart as South, so Osborne simply went after spades and took eight tricks without pain; 6 imps to Hinden.

Trailing by 117 (170-53) Hinden decided to withdraw, understandable given the stress of 56-plus boards for five days straight, playing four-handed. Russia (and the Flying Dutchmen) had defended their NEC Cup title successfully, leaving us to wonder if: Can they make it three straight this year? Only time will tell.



2014 NEC Cup Champions: Russia

20th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Tuesday (Feb. 10)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (1)	411, 412, 414, 415, 418, 419
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (2)	
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (3)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (4)	
Wednesday (Feb. 11)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (5)	411, 412, 414, 415, 418, 419
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (6)	
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (7)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (8)	
Thursday (Feb. 12)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (9)	411, 412, 414, 415, 418, 419
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (10)	
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (11)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (12)	
Friday (Feb. 13)	09:00-11:15	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (1)	414, 415
	11:35-13:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (2)	
	13:50-15:00	Lunch Break	414, 415
	15:00-17:15	NEC Cup Semi-Final (1)	
	17:35-19:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)	
10:00-17:00	Yokohama IMP Pairs	503	
Saturday (Feb. 14)	09:00-11:15	NEC Cup Final (1)	414, 415
	11:35-13:50	NEC Cup Final (2)	
	13:50-15:00	Lunch Break	501, 502
	15:00-17:15	NEC Cup Final (3)	
	17:35-19:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams	503	
Sunday (Feb. 15)	10:00-17:30	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	501, 502
	18:00-20:00	Closing Ceremony	503

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

