

NEC CUP: SECOND DAY STANDINGS

The rankings after six rounds of the NEC Cup are:

<u>TEAM</u>	<u>VPs</u>
GREAT BRITAIN	129
JAPAN – PABF OPEN	116
JAPAN – YAMADA	101
USA	94
JAPAN – TATAI	89
CHINA	88
JAPAN – TAKAYAMA	79
JAPAN – PABF WOMEN	69
JAPAN – YOUTH	63
JAPAN – NAITO	60

GREAT BRITAIN, with 129 VPs, scored two solid wins and its first loss to retain its lead going into the third and final day of round-robin play. JAPAN – PABF OPEN remained in second place with 116 VPs. JAPAN YAMADA with 101 VPs took over third place from CHINA with three wins in yesterday's play while USA remained in fourth place with 94 VPs, just 5 small VPs ahead of JAPAN TATAI and CHINA, in a virtual tie for fifth. JAPAN TAKAYAMA, lead PABF WOMEN by 10 VPs with JAPAN YOUTH and JAPAN NAITO bringing up the rear. Today's final three matches figure to be a thriller, with all ten teams retaining at least a chance to qualify.

Once again the overall standard of play was high. In our match against PABF OPEN, Dawei Chen and Masayuki Ino played a near-flawless set. As Sundance Kid said to Butch Cassidy in the movie of the same name, "Who are those guys, anyway?" Well, we all know who these guys are.

Again we include for your interest in this and the next issue the datums for each match. As long as you remember the direction you played in, you will be able to see how you fared compared to your counterparts in that session. A table containing all of the head-to-head match results as well as the teams' VP totals and rankings can be found immediately before the datums.



TODAY'S AND TOMORROW'S SCHEDULES

Play will be held today and tomorrow on the fourth floor Pacifico, Rooms 415 (Open) and 416 (Closed). Two-hours and fifty-minutes are allotted for each 20-board match today, with a one-hour-and-ten-minute lunch break. Tomorrow's 16-board quarters will be allotted two-hours and twenty-minutes each, with a ten minute break between the first and second quarters, a one-hour and ten-minute lunch break after the second quarter, and a ten minute break between the third and fourth quarters. Richard "The Australian Taskmaster" Grenside warns, "Don't be late. Sessions will start *on time!* As always, the Secretariat is in Room 417.

Today's Times

10:00-12:50 MATCH SEVEN
12:50-14:00 LUNCH BREAK
14:00-16:50 MATCH EIGHT
17:10-20:00 MATCH NINE

Tomorrow's Times

10:00-12:20 SEMI-FINAL 1ST QTR
12:30-14:50 SEMI-FINAL 2ND QTR
14:50-16:00 LUNCH BREAK
16:00-18:20 SEMI-FINAL 3RD QTR
18:30-20:50 SEMI-FINAL 4TH QTR

THE NEC BRIDGE FESTIVAL IS ON THE INTERNET

We are happy to announce that our Daily Bulletins are once again available on the Internet. Call your family and friends and tell them they can follow the adventures of the **NEC Bridge Festival** players by surfing the net to either of the following addresses:

<http://bridge.cplaza.ne.jp/necfest.html>

— or —

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp>

RE-ALERT!



Last year's NEC Bridge Festival's poster child, nicknamed "England's Revenge," is back again this year to defend his title. Good seats are still available at popular prices. In an exclusive interview with your DB editor's, Jason denied any truth to the rumor that he is planning to take up sumo wrestling at the conclusion of the tournament. Watch these pages for further developments.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARK “THE MAN” ITABASHI

Mark Itabashi is an ACBL Gold Life Master with over 10,000 masterpoints and scores of regional victories as well as a recent National Championship to his credit. We met with Mark, prime candidate for our “*Courage of His Convictions*” Award at this year’s tournament, over breakfast.

Bd: 15	North		
Dir: South	♠ AQ1064		
Vul: N/S	♥ —		
	♦ KQ9752		
	♣ 43		
West		East	
♠ KJ		♠ 97	
♥ AKJ7		♥ 103	
♦ AJ1083		♦ 64	
♣ 86		♣ AKQJ1097	
	South		
	♠ 8532		
	♥ Q986542		
	♦ —		
	♣ 52		
West	North	East	South
	Mark		Gene
1♦	1♠	2♣	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♣	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	Pass
Rdbl	5♠	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		
OL: High club; Result: minus 200			

Eds: So Mark, tell us about that hand from the first session of the NEC Cup on Monday. You know, Board 15, the one where you played in 5♠ doubled. How did you manage to go down only one? Our analysis suggests that North can legitimately come to only nine tricks. Is there some sort of obscure end position that we missed?

Mark: Not really. East began by cashing two high clubs and then shifted to a diamond. I pitched a heart from dummy and West won his ace. From there the rest of the tricks were easy. I ruffed the ♥K, ruffed a diamond, played a spade to the jack and queen, cashed the ♠A drawing the remaining trump, and eventually ruffed another diamond to set up the suit.

Eds: Your partner, Gene Simpson, alluded to us that something else amusing happened on that board. Can you enlighten us on just what he was referring to.

Mark: Oh, he must have meant the auction.

Eds: Well, yes. How did you get to 5♠ doubled?

Mark: Can you believe Gene bid 4♠ on that South hand? 3♠ seems sane with only four small trumps.

Eds: Gee whiz, we might have bid 4♠ too. Besides, was it the 4♠ bid that did your side in?

Mark: When they bid 5♣ I doubled, thinking that I could get a heart ruff, the ♠A, and possibly a diamond trick or that Gene might produce a trick. I like to double, you know. It’s like my signature on my business card: “Have Double, Will Travel.” After the redouble I began to have doubts. If Gene were something like 6-5-1-1 we might have trouble scoring a diamond trick, or perhaps spades were three-zero. And I didn’t really want to stake the whole match on one deal by opening up the possibility of a huge adverse swing. I’m aggressive, but, hey, I’m not a masochist.

Eds: You soon discovered that the defense against 5♣ doubled would have been brutal. On the ♥2 lead you would ruff, return a diamond (treating the ♥2 as suit-preference) for Gene to ruff, and after two more ruffs a spade through dummy would produce two additional tricks. That’s down four, plus 1600, instead of minus 200. We’d have won 16 imps on the board instead of losing 9. That’s a 25-imp swing. Let us not speak of how we went minus 200 with the East/West cards at the other table.

Mark: Yes, I certainly would have liked to have taken my 5♠ bid back once I saw the dummy.

Eds: That’s okay. Your insight might help others to avoid such disasters in the future. And who knows, perhaps it might inspire us as well to create a new award: maybe something like the “20-20 Hindsight” Award. In any case, we wish you and Gene well in your (and our) future NEC Cup matches. Oh, and by the way, you two might try some sushi and wine after the evening session. We hear it cleanses the soul and fortifies the psyche.

Mark: Thanks, guys. This isn’t, um, going to appear in on CNN or anything, is it?

Eds: (polite giggling) Nah, just the Daily Bulletin.

NEC CUP: ROUND THREE (continued)

To refresh your memory, these were the scores in ROUND THREE:

	VPs	IMPs
CHINA over NAITO	22-8	(56-23)
GREAT BRITAIN over TATAI	20-10	(46-21)
USA over PABF WOMEN	19-11	(45-24)
YAMADA over YOUTH	19-11	(57-38)
TAKAYAMA over PABF OPEN	16-14	(39-36)

Bd: 7	North	
Dlr: South	♠ 32	
Vul: Both	♥ 108	
	♦ AJ1092	
	♣ AJ107	
West		East
♠ AJ8754		♠ KQ9
♥ J654		♥ A97
♦ K		♦ Q87543
♣ K8		♣ Q
	South	
	♠ 106	
	♥ KQ32	
	♦ 6	
	♣ 965432	

If West guesses correctly, he can always make 4♠, even on the challenging lead of the ♥10. Kaz Yamada was the only declarer to fail in game, so YOUTH gained 12 imps to take the lead over YAMADA, 20-13. Declarer must duck the heart and later discard a heart from dummy on the ♣K. He will either be able to ruff two hearts, or (if the defense leads trumps) discard one heart on the ♦Q and ruff the other. GREAT BRITAIN gained 13 imps against TATAI (22-9 now in the match) when Hirata-Shimizu overbid to 6♠, two down.

If this doesn't strike you as a North/South game, we commend you on your perception. Three pairs tried 3NT, however, two of them in the same match. Declarer has no ninth trick and the defense seems to have access to five winners, but Fu-Ju scored plus 400 against Sekizawa-Ohta of NAITO, 28-2. At all the other tables, East/West played a partial in diamonds or spades, usually with little success. If West has a weak 2♦ bid available, he might silence everyone with it and make his contract. Perhaps

Bd: 9	North	
Dlr: North	♠ Q862	
Vul: E/W	♥ J5	
	♦ AQ10852	
	♣ 5	
West		East
♠ KJ94		♠ 53
♥ Q87		♥ A10964
♦ K963		♦ 7
♣ 43		♣ Q10982
	South	
	♠ A107	
	♥ K32	
	♦ J4	
	♣ AKJ76	

that's how Gene Simpson

achieved his plus score against PABF WOMEN.

Nine of ten North/South pairs tried 3NT (the other was Fu-Ju, down in 5♦) and only two of them failed. The unlucky declarers were GREAT BRITAIN's John Armstrong, who seems to have received the imaginative lead of the ♠J from TATAI's Shimizu, and NAITO's Moriyama. Other leads against 3NT were the ♦3, the ♥7 (from PABF OPEN's Imakura, which looks best for the defense), the ♣4, the ♠4, and the ♠9 (from Natsuko Nishida; perhaps a conventional third best from an even number).

Bd: 8	North	
Dlr: West	♠ K7	
Vul: None	♥ J543	
	♦ 632	
	♣ KQJ7	
West		East
♠ A6		♠ 98543
♥ 76		♥ AKQ92
♦ KQ10854		♦ 9
♣ 864		♣ 92
	South	
	♠ QJ102	
	♥ 108	
	♦ AJ7	
	♣ A1053	

Bd: 10	North	
Dlr: East	♠ 963	
Vul: Both	♥ A1097	
	♦ AJ7	
	♣ AQ6	
West		East
♠ A		♠ Q542
♥ J5		♥ K832
♦ KQ1086542		♦ —
♣ 53		♣ KJ1074
	South	
	♠ KJ1087	
	♥ Q64	
	♦ 93	
	♣ 982	

If East and South both pass, what would you open with the West hand, both sides vulnerable? 1♦, 4♦, 5♦, and even 3♦ each have some merit. As the final contract was often 2♦ or 3♦, it would seem that the popular choice was 1♦. The two big results came in GREAT BRITAIN vs TATAI, where the twins conceded 500 to Tatai-Hara in 5♦ doubled but emerged magically with a 4-imp gain when their teammates made an overtrick in 3NT at the other table for plus 630. Perhaps the bidding proceeded: Pass-Pass-3♦-3NT; All Pass, and East led a club. With the ♠A singleton in West, the diamonds onside, and the ♥K in front of the queen, try to beat it. Ino-Chen, for PABF OPEN, finished in 4♠, presumably pushed there. This fared much worse than 3NT, going three down; minus 300, but the loss was only 5 imps because Imakura-Miyakuni came back with plus 110 in 3♦.

This one was played in 4♥, 4♠, or 5♥ (doubled), with spades the more popular strain. To defeat 4♠, South must lead ace and another club, get in with the ♥A, and give North a second ruff. If he does not do this, declarer can lead a heart up to build a club discard while dummy has a diamond entry to cash it. The contract was defeated at both tables in USA vs PABF WOMEN, but at no other table. As usual, the big action was in GREAT BRITAIN vs TATAI, where the twins made 4♠ doubled (plus 590) while Hackett-Armstrong saved at 5♥ (down 500). Just 3 imps to the Brits.

Bd: 11	North	
Dlr: South	♠ K54	
Vul: None	♥ QJ9652	
	♦ Q74	
	♣ 6	
West		East
♠ 92		♠ AQJ10873
♥ K84		♥ 3
♦ K9532		♦ A6
♣ 932		♣ K108
	South	
	♠ 6	
	♥ A107	
	♦ J108	
	♣ AQJ754	

Bd: 12	North	
Dlr: West	♠ AJ1095	
Vul: N/S	♥ J52	
	♦ Q972	
	♣ 6	
West		East
♠ 874		♠ KQ32
♥ A6		♥ K10743
♦ A10863		♦ —
♣ A97		♣ J432
	South	
	♠ 6	
	♥ Q98	
	♦ KJ54	
	♣ KQ1085	

Atypically, this was a quiet deal in GREAT BRITAIN vs TATAI, both North/South pairs going plus in the humble contract of 1NT. CHINA picked up 8 imps vs NAITO by collecting five undertricks (two of them vulnerable) against 2♣ and 2♦. In PABF OPEN vs TAKAYAMA, Mizuta-Tanaka went one down in 2♥ with the East/West cards, but their counterparts (Miyakuni-Imakura) bid and made 3♥. 5 imps to PABF OPEN. In USA vs PABF WOMEN, it was East/West who played in notrump. Nishida-Ohno made an overtrick in 2NT, while Simpson-Itabashi got all the way to game and went down. Both Souths found the interesting opening lead of the ♣8.

Kaz Yamada went one down in the quiet contract of 1NT from the West side (we wonder if all these teams played the same deal) but his teammates did considerably worse; Hirata-Shimizu conceded an 800-point penalty in 2♠ doubled. 13 imps to YOUTH, ahead now 33-15.

Bd: 13	North	
Dlr: North	♠ J975	
Vul: Both	♥ KQ1085	
	♦ 2	
	♣ 642	
West		East
♠ A82		♠ KQ1043
♥ 96		♥ 74
♦ AQ1095		♦ 4
♣ A95		♣ KQ1083
	South	
	♠ 6	
	♥ AJ32	
	♦ KJ8763	
	♣ J7	

Seven of ten East/West pairs achieved the normal result, plus 650 in 4♠. Liu-Zhang for CHINA emerged with only plus 300, defending 2♦ undoubled. We presume: Pass-1♠-2♦-All Pass. NAITO gained 8imps but were still far behind, 15-38. The other two anomalous results came in YAMADA vs YOUTH. Akama-Masamura found their way to 3NT rather than 4♠ and lost the first five tricks in hearts for minus 100 while Kohno-Harada doubled Takahashi-K Yamada in 4♠ and allowed 12 tricks; plus 1190. 15imps to YAMADA, who closed to within 3imps of YOUTH in the match.

Eight of ten North/South pairs thought this was game in spades. Correctly. The other two thought it was slam in spades. They were fortunate that the other pair with the same perception happened to be at the other table in their match. Had clubs come in for four tricks, both Ino-Chen and Nagasaka-Takano would have made their 6♠ contracts without a heart lead. Just another push in paradise.

Bd: 15	North	
Dlr: South	♠ Q10743	
Vul: N/S	♥ AJ64	
	♦ K7	
	♣ Q2	
West		East
♠ 98		♠ 62
♥ K10732		♥ Q9
♦ QJ42		♦ 109853
♣ 43		♣ AJ65
	South	
	♠ AKJ5	
	♥ 85	
	♦ A6	
	♣ K10987	

Bd: 16	North	
Dlr: W	♠ K94	
Vul: E/W	♥ AQ52	
	♦ 853	
	♣ Q76	
West		East
♠ 10875		♠ J
♥ 3		♥ KJ1076
♦ AK10974		♦ 6
♣ A9		♣ KJ10853
	South	
	♠ AQ632	
	♥ 984	
	♦ QJ2	
	♣ 42	

This is not an easy combination for East/West, but most pairs managed to stay relatively low. Three North/South pairs bought the auction in spades. Ino-Chen for PABF OPEN were permitted to play in 2♠, down three, minus 150, a 2-imp loss to TAKAYAMA in their tight match. Cappelletti-Lipscomb achieved the same minus 150 for USA, but were pleased to discover that they had gained a cool 14imps when Itabashi-Simpson brought back plus 1100 against 4♠ doubled (down five); 43-15, USA over PABF WOMEN.



"I'm sure there's no such score!"



"Nantekottai! Where did that king come from?"

Bd: 17	North	
Dlr: North	♠ 109	
Vul: None	♥ J1072	
	♦ A54	
	♣ AK82	
West		East
♠ 7		♠ KQ54
♥ Q9653		♥ K8
♦ KQJ1087		♦ 632
♣ Q		♣ 7654
	South	
	♠ AJ8632	
	♥ A4	
	♦ 9	
	♣ J1093	

Might East overcall North's 1♣ with 1♠? Some would consider that a normal action. Which goes to show that the Apocalypse may well be upon us (who needs the Clinton impeachment trial when we can feast upon a 1♠ overcall in our own back yard?). Four North/South pairs played 4♠ undoubled and made it. Fu-Ju were doubled by Sekizawa-Ohta and made five. Shimamura-Fukuda got 500 against their opponents' 5♦ sacrifice (it might have been 800 on a trump lead, or a trump switch if North had not led the ♣K). Naito-Moriyama missed game, so CHINA gained 10 imps. YAMADA's Shimizu/Irata collected 500 against 3♥ doubled, for a 2-imp gain. Their match with YOUTH was just about even. The odd men out on this one were all in GREAT BRITAIN vs TATAI. The contract at both tables was 3♦ by West. Hirata-Shimizu were doubled by Hackett-Armstrong but they took eight tricks for the same minus 100 as the

twins, who were down two undoubled.

What would you bid with the West hand after 1♣-Pass-1♠-? If you're a two-suited person, you will double or use a toy, but if you're a tactician, you might settle for a jump to 3♦. Interested parties are invited to conduct a survey. We will publish the results.

Bd: 18	North	
Dlr: East	♠ K9842	
Vul: N/S	♥ 1096432	
	♦ 7	
	♣ A	
West		East
♠ AJ		♠ 1073
♥ —		♥ QJ87
♦ KQ1093		♦ AJ
♣ Q97654		♣ J832
	South	
	♠ Q65	
	♥ AK5	
	♦ 86542	
	♣ K10	

The best East/West results were recorded by Shimizu-Hirata of TATAI and Takahashi-Kaz Yamada of YAMADA, who both made 5♣ doubled (a spade lead will beat it, and Kyoko Shimamura found it against Itabashi-Simpson of USA to gain 7 imps for PABF WOMEN when 4♥ went two down at the other table). Shimizu-Hirata gained only 2 imps because their teammates conceded 500 in 4♥ doubled, but Takahashi-Yamada gained 12 imps when their teammates bought the auction at 2♥ and made 4. There was a new leader now in that match. Ino-Chen went for 500 in 5♥ doubled to wipe out a sound plus 130 by Imakura-Miyakuni, those 9 imps giving TAKAYAMA the lead. In CHINA vs NAITO, Naito-Moriyama got out for minus 200 in 5♥ doubled while Fu-Ju conceded

500 in 4♥ doubled. 7 imps to NAITO.

CHINA produced another five undertrick special against NAITO (two of them vulnerable) to gain 8 imps. PABF OPEN struck back against TAKAYAMA when Ino-Chen made 120 with the North/South cards while their teammates collected 300 against Nagasaka-Takano's 2♠ doubled on their three-three fit; 9 imps. The other results were normal enough, Hackett-Armstrong being the only pair to go plus against 2♥ to gain 5 imps. YAMADA scored again vs YOUTH by making partscores in both rooms.

Bd: 19	North	
Dlr: South	♠ A106	
Vul: E/W	♥ J7	
	♦ A1073	
	♣ QJ92	
West		East
♠ KJ		♠ 98742
♥ AK10942		♥ 6
♦ QJ		♦ K964
♣ 875		♣ A63
	South	
	♠ Q53	
	♥ Q853	
	♦ 852	
	♣ K104	

Bd: 20	North	
Dlr: West	♠ Q94	
Vul: Both	♥ 74	
	♦ 10832	
	♣ KJ106	
West		East
♠ A10873		♠ K5
♥ QJ		♥ 106532
♦ QJ7		♦ K94
♣ 872		♣ AQ4
	South	
	♠ J62	
	♥ AK98	
	♦ A65	
	♣ 953	

This deal decided TAKAYAMA vs PABF OPEN, when Mizuta-Tanaka made 1NT with the East/West cards while Miyakuni-Imakura went down in 2♠. Those 5imps gave TAKAYAMA a 3-imp victory. YOUTH played in 1NT at both tables, down one in both, doubled when South declared. Those 7imps completed a strong comeback for YAMADA, who won the match by 19imps, outscoring their opponents 27-0 over the last four deals.



"I love to make him happy."

NEC CUP: ROUND FOUR

Bd: 1	North	
Dlr: North	♠ J84	
Vul: None	♥ Q432	
	♦ KQJ1083	
	♣ —	
West		East
♠ 73		♠ KQ1065
♥ AJ1085		♥ 976
♦ 75		♦ 2
♣ A963		♣ KQJ2
	South	
	♠ A92	
	♥ K	
	♦ A964	
	♣ 108754	

4♥ is a fair contract for East/West, but North can get two club ruffs to set it two tricks. 5♦, on the lie of the cards, is a worthwhile contract for North/South; declarer has five entries to the South hand to establish the long club and cash it, and if he ducks one spade, the defense is cut off from its second spade winner when declarer knockouts out the ♥A.

The only declarer to bid and make 5♦ was Paul Hackett, who was doubled; plus 550. That combined with the twins' plus 170 in 3♥ for first blood to GREAT BRITAIN over USA, 12imps. Yoshida went down undoubled in 5♦ for YOUTH, but Harada made 4♥ at the other table; YOUTH gained 9imps against TATAI. If our records are correct, Miyakuni went down doubled in 5♦ from the South side while Ino-Chen went one down in 3♥, so the first swing, 4imps, went to PABF WOMEN over PABF OPEN. In TAKAYAMA vs CHINA, both North/Souths went plus in a diamond partscore. The same two contracts were declared in YAMADA vs NAITO but Akihiko Yamada was doubled in 4♦, which he made with an overtrick on the lead of the ♣K; plus 610. 10imps to YAMADA.

Bd: 2	North	
Dlr: East	♠ Q5	
Vul: N/S	♥ AJ94	
	♦ AQ52	
	♣ K73	
West		East
♠ AJ94		♠ K6
♥ —		♥ KQ10863
♦ 1096		♦ K84
♣ AJ10954		♣ 62
	South	
	♠ 108732	
	♥ 752	
	♦ J73	
	♣ Q8	

The West hand is not an easy one to bid over a 1♥ opening from partner. If you start with 1♠, you will never get the black lengths right, and if you start with 2♣, intending to show an invitational one-suiter, you won't find always find spades. It's worse for strong 2/1 systems that don't build a one-suited minor invitation into the system. Perhaps you should start with 2♣, bid your spades, and force to game. And what of North, who has a strong notrump? He might try 1NT over 1♠ -

or double 1NT if that shows high cards (with an artificial 2♣ available as takeout of spades), but really, he ought to pass.

Cappelletti-Lipscomb won 5 imps for USA against GREAT BRITAIN by reaching 2NT, plus 150, while the twins went one down in 2♥. Kohno-Harada did just as well for YOUTH, playing 3♣, plus 130, while TATAI's Maeda-Hayashi went one down in 3♥; 14-0 for YOUTH. Sakamoto-Toyofuku won 5 imps for PABF WOMEN for 2NT, plus 150, while Ino-Chen went minus 50 in 2♥; 9-0. YAMADA's Shimizu-Hirata also won 5 imps against NAITO by playing in 2♣; plus 130, while Amano-Sekizawa went down a trick in 3NT. You can imagine making 3NT with the combined 21-count; it's that close.

Bd: 3	North	
Dlr: South	♠ K10974	
Vul: E/W	♥ 62	
	♦ AJ765	
	♣ 3	
West		East
♠ AQ2		♠ J65
♥ J9		♥ AKQ85
♦ Q94		♦ K32
♣ KQ852		♣ A10
	South	
	♠ 83	
	♥ 10743	
	♦ 108	
	♣ J9764	

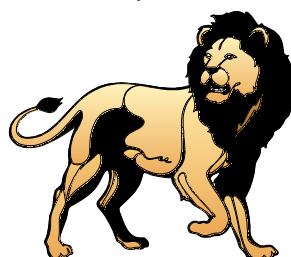
6NT from West's side is not horrible, single dummy. It needs clubs to come in (low to the ten is the percentage play) and either five heart tricks or the spade finesse. Only one pair (Maeda-Hayashi of TATAI) bid it. They were minus 200 to give YOUTH another 13 imps and a 27-0 lead after three deals.

Bd: 4	North	
Dlr: West	♠ 1065	
Vul: Both	♥ 93	
	♦ KJ10954	
	♣ Q7	
West		East
♠ QJ32		♠ 987
♥ K108		♥ AQJ542
♦ AQ8		♦ 3
♣ A84		♣ 1092
	South	
	♠ AK4	
	♥ 76	
	♦ 762	
	♣ KJ653	

3NT is no worse than the diamond finesse and 4♥ is a bit more complex, with possibilities of a spade ruff that might not establish the long card in West. In practice everyone played in hearts, with only one pair missing the normal game. The twins, of all people. Big loss? Nah, 4♥ went down at the other table, played by East. Spade ace, club shift beats it legitimately. TATAI's Hirata found the fine lead of the ♣Q to defeat YOUTH's Harada (perhaps Shimizu bid the suit), making it 12-27 in the match. CHINA's Zhang went down 200 from the West side, playing to make after the ♣A was dislodged. Everyone else made it. TAKAYAMA gained 13 imps against CHINA, the first real swing in the match.

Bd: 5	North	
Dlr: North	♠ Q5	
Vul: N/S	♥ K8764	
	♦ 942	
	♣ A82	
West		East
♠ A87632		♠ J4
♥ 105		♥ J93
♦ AK75		♦ QJ8
♣ 4		♣ QJ1093
	South	
	♠ K109	
	♥ AQ2	
	♦ 1063	
	♣ K765	

This was a normal cold 2♠ for East-West, but Maeda-Hayashi sold out to 2♥ for a double partscore loss. 7 imps back to YOUTH against TATAI, 34-12. Sakamoto-Toyofuku got too high for PABF WOMEN, turning over 4 imps to PABF OPEN. Liu-Zhang for China sold out to 1NT, which they couldn't beat, TAKAYAMA scooping in another 6 imps, 19-1.



"I have a hunger for alpaca."

Bd: 6	North	
Dlr: East	♠ QJ98	
Vul: E/W	♥ AQ72	
	♦ Q87	
	♣ Q3	
West		East
♠ —		♠ 7543
♥ J98654		♥ 103
♦ K52		♦ J1063
♣ J876		♣ K102
	South	
	♠ AK1062	
	♥ K	
	♦ A94	
	♣ A954	

Nine of ten North/South pairs reached the excellent 6♠, which needs little trumps two-two or hearts no worse than five-three (so declarer can discard diamonds before conceding a club and ruffing club losers). Eight declarers duly failed, and it is fair to say that TATAI's Hirata-Shimizu did not deserve the 11 imps they gained for stopping in game. TATAI was within 11 imps of YOUTH now, 23-34. The successful declarer in 6♠ was CHINA's Zhong Fu, who made it against Nagasaka-Takano. CHINA was back in business against TAKAYAMA with a 14-imp gain, 15-19.

It's a big stretch to reach 3NT with the East/West cards, and even with the good spade position, you're an underdog to make it. Four pairs tried 3NT, but only YOUTH's Harada-Kohno made it for a 12-imp gain against TATAI, 46-12. There was one pair in 4♠ (the twins, of course), but this time their luck was out, down 200. They lost 7 imps, and USA moved closer, 12-20.

Bd: 7	North	
Dlr: South	♠ K632	
Vul: Both	♥ QJ109	
	♦ 76	
	♣ 763	
West		East
♠ AJ		♠ Q8754
♥ K864		♥ A32
♦ J92		♦ A853
♣ KQ54		♣ 8
	South	
	♠ 109	
	♥ 75	
	♦ KQ104	
	♣ AJ1092	

Bd: 8	North	
Dlr: West	♠ AJ4	
Vul: None	♥ 8764	
	♦ K9	
	♣ A1076	
West		East
♠ —		♠ KQ109765
♥ AQJ1093		♥ K52
♦ 7543		♦ A6
♣ QJ5		♣ 4
	South	
	♠ 832	
	♥ —	
	♦ QJ1082	
	♣ K9832	

This was a trouble hand for East/West, who went down in contracts that included 4♥, 4♠, 5♥ and 6♥, sometimes doubled. Three declarers made 4♥, which can be accomplished if the defenders allow declarer to get two ruffs in dummy and a spade trick. Two of those declarers were in GREAT BRITAIN vs USA, so there was no swing there, but Dawei Chen gained 10 imps for PABF OPEN against PABF WOMEN, opening up some daylight at 20-9.

USA's Itabashi-Simpson were the only North/South pair to miss game on this combination, GREAT BRITAIN gaining 6 imps, 26-12. If South uses a Michaels Cue-bid, he will need to choose a second-round action that convinces North that ten-third of trumps and the ♥Q are enough for game. If South overcalls 1♠, North ought to raise to 2♠, but if he doesn't, 1♠ might be passed out.

Bd: 9	North	
Dlr: North	♠ 1063	
Vul: E/W	♥ Q5	
	♦ QJ965	
	♣ 1062	
West		East
♠ J82		♠ K7
♥ 972		♥ 1086
♦ A72		♦ K1043
♣ J954		♣ AQ73
	South	
	♠ AQ954	
	♥ AKJ43	
	♦ 8	
	♣ K8	

Bd: 12	North	
Dlr: West	♠ AK75	
Vul: N/S	♥ KQ1086	
	♦ A4	
	♣ J7	
West		East
♠ Q642		♠ J10983
♥ A5		♥ —
♦ 1053		♦ 762
♣ 9653		♣ AQ1084
	South	
	♠ —	
	♥ J97432	
	♦ KQJ98	
	♣ K2	

Half the North/South pairs reached 6♥, perhaps because they were pushed there. The four who were left to play there all went down on the essential club lead. Ino-Chen saved at 6♠ against Ohno-Nishida, down “only” 800. That turned a 13-imp gain for PABF OPEN into a 3-imp gain for PABF WOMEN, but the guys were still ahead of the girls, 22-12. Hackett-Armstrong judged correctly to double Cappelletti-Lipscomb at 5♠ for 800 while the twins sold out to 5♥. 3 imps to GREAT BRITAIN, who were ahead of USA, 29-13.

This was an East/West partial, with 2♥ usually, but not always, making. The British style worked well at both tables, with Justin Hackett overcalling 1♣ with a heavy 1♥ and playing there, plus 80, while Papa Bear’s 1♠ opening, coupled with John Armstrong’s raise to 2♠, extracting two takeout doubles from Lipscomb, East. That got her to 3♥ and I can’t tell you the motivation for reaching 4♥, down 200. 7 imps more to GREAT BRITAIN, ahead 36-13.

Bd: 13	North	
Dlr: North	♠ KQ96	
Vul: Both	♥ Q62	
	♦ AJ8	
	♣ J92	
West		East
♠ 532		♠ AJ
♥ 97		♥ AKJ84
♦ Q32		♦ K654
♣ 107643		♣ KQ
	South	
	♠ 10874	
	♥ 1053	
	♦ 1097	
	♣ A85	

Paul Hackett made 2♥ and Makoto Kohno made three! No one else made anything. GREAT BRITAIN led USA, 40-13. YOUTH was still ahead of TATAI, 47-31.

Bd: 14	North	
Dlr: East	♠ Q954	
Vul: None	♥ AK1082	
	♦ A7	
	♣ KQ	
West		East
♠ AKJ6		♠ 1087
♥ 9753		♥ Q4
♦ Q32		♦ K864
♣ AJ		♣ 8653
	South	
	♠ 32	
	♥ J6	
	♦ J1095	
	♣ 109742	

2♥ was the right contract for East/West on this one, and a handful of pairs scored plus in and around that destination. There were, however, three pairs in 4♥, down, one North/South pair in 3NT, and the twins, in 2♣ from the West side (don’t ask), down 50. USA gained 4 imps, 17-40. YAMADA pulled further ahead of NAITO with a 6-imp gain, 31-9, and PABF OPEN added 5 imps to move ahead of PABF WOMEN by 19 imps, 31-12.

Bd: 15	North	
Dlr: South	♠ Q1086	
Vul: N/S	♥ K3	
	♦ KQJ	
	♣ J862	
West		East
♠ AK9753		♠ J
♥ A984		♥ 10752
♦ A6		♦ 1052
♣ 9		♣ Q10754
	South	
	♠ 42	
	♥ QJ6	
	♦ 98743	
	♣ AK3	

Bd: 16	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 83		
Vul: E/W	♥ Q984		
	♦ J82		
	♣ K875		
West		East	
♠ A952		♠ K1076	
♥ J652		♥ 107	
♦ 654		♦ AKQ1073	
♣ A3		♣ 9	
	South		
	♠ QJ4		
	♥ AK3		
	♦ 9		
	♣ QJ10642		

Seven East/West pairs got to 4♠ and made it, four of them in the same two matches. Ino-Chen's 620 combined with Imakura-Miyakuni's 5♣ undoubled, minus 100, to give PABF OPEN 11imps, 42-12. Maeda-Hayashi's 650 combined with Hirata-Shimizu's minus 150 (Kohno-Harada stopped in 4♦ and made five) to give TATAI 11imps. They were within 5imps of YOUTH now. And Amano-Sekizawa's 620 combined with Setoguchi-Ohta's minus 100 in 5♣ undoubled to recoup 11imps for NAITO against YAMADA, 20-31. Much closer now.

Bd: 17	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A762		
Vul: None	♥ AJ963		
	♦ K4		
	♣ J9		
West		East	
♠ QJ43		♠ K5	
♥ K		♥ Q1082	
♦ J75		♦ A983	
♣ AKQ104		♣ 763	
	South		
	♠ 1098		
	♥ 754		
	♦ Q1062		
	♣ 852		

There were seven successful 3NT contracts for East/West, four of them in the same two matches. Cappelletti-Lipscomb sold out to 2♠ (?) on the following unlikely auction:

West	North	East	South
Capp	Paul H	Lipscomb	Armstrong
	1♥	Pass	1♠!
2♣	2♠	All Pass	

East really should have raised or tried 2NT, but Armstrong gets a credit for sowing seeds of doubt about the relative strength of the two sides. 7imps to GREAT BRITAIN, 47-17. Sakamoto-Toyofuko played the East/West cards in 3♦, down 50. 10imps to PABF OPEN, 52-12. Kohno-Harada produced a comprehensible, if inadequate result, plus 110 in 3♣, but that cost them 7imps and vaulted TATAI into the lead, 49-47.

Bd: 18	North		
Dlr: East	♠ Q3		
Vul: N/S	♥ A52		
	♦ K1083		
	♣ K875		
West		East	
♠ 762		♠ 10954	
♥ Q3		♥ KJ6	
♦ A9764		♦ QJ52	
♣ A42		♣ QJ	
	South		
	♠ AKJ8		
	♥ 109874		
	♦ —		
	♣ 10963		

A handy little heart partial for North/South, but the deal was passed out several times and there were a variety of other contracts around the rooms. TAKAYAMA's 4-imp gain extended their lead to 28-19 over CHINA.



"Who, me!?"

Bd: 19	North
Dlr: South	♠ K108
Vul: E/W	♥ AKQJ96
	♦ 105
	♣ 96
West	East
♠ AJ75	♠ Q963
♥ 102	♥ 7543
♦ QJ832	♦ A
♣ 53	♣ AJ107
	South
	♠ 42
	♥ 8
	♦ K9764
	♣ KQ842

This really doesn't have the look of a successful 3NT for North-South, does it? The three pairs who bid it all made it, TATAI's Hirata-Shimizu brought in 7 imps to extend their lead to 59-47 over YOUTH. Ohno-Nishida brought in 6 imps for PABF WOMEN, but they were too far behind PABF OPEN, 18-52.

Kobayashi-Takayama gained 6 imps, and that brought them nearly even with CHINA, 25-28.

Bd: 20	North
Dlr: West	♠ 983
Vul: Both	♥ 87
	♦ 9874
	♣ A1075
West	East
♠ Q76	♠ K102
♥ AKQJ4	♥ 10652
♦ 1062	♦ J
♣ 43	♣ QJ986
	South
	♠ AJ54
	♥ 93
	♦ AKQ53
	♣ K2

The spade suit is critical on this one. If East covers both the nine and eight, South can't make 4♦. Is that what happened to Takayama and TATAI's Hirata? It would seem that declarer should make 3♥ with the East/West cards because the defenders can't break spades profitably. Well, that's the theory. In practice, we know that Ayako Amano went down in 3♥ after Akihiko Yamada led...the ♠3. On this lead, the right play is the ten from dummy, to avoid a later guess in the suit (assuming that North is up to underleading the ♠A). When the ten is covered with the jack, North can later lead the nine through the king to collect two spade tricks. Well done, Akihiko-san. Those 6 imps to YAMADA gave them a solid win over NAITO. Three declarers went down in 4♥, of natural causes. Ino-Chen gained an imp for doing this because Imakura-Miyakuni bid and made 3♠ with the other cards. YOUTH gained 5 imps for beating two high partials, and they lost to TATAI by 7 imps, 52-59.

The results in	VPs	IMPs
GREAT BRITAIN over USA	22-8	50-17
PABF OPEN over PABF WOMEN	22-8	54-18
YAMADA over NAITO	19-11	42-22
TATAI over YOUTH	16-14	59-52
CHINA over TAKAYAMA	15-15	28-26

NEC CUP: ROUND FIVE

Bd: 1	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A8		
Vul: None	♥ AQ93		
	♦ A654		
	♣ KJ4		
West		East	
♠ KQ743		♠ J952	
♥ 1076		♥ K84	
♦ 72		♦ KJ98	
♣ A82		♣ 97	
	South		
	♠ 106		
	♥ J52		
	♦ Q103		
	♣ Q10653		

Many pairs got overboard on the North/South cards, 3NT being the most common overreach. Both East and West had fairly normal spade leads against that contract when North opened 1♦ and everyone who landed there failed by from one to three tricks. Miyakuni-Imakura climbed their way to 3♠ on the East/West cards for PABF OPEN and failed by two tricks, giving USA a 5-imp pickup. NAITO's Setoguchi-Ouchi somehow managed to stay at the one-level, going plus 90 in 1NT. When Ohno-Nishida failed by three tricks for PABF WOMEN, NAITO picked up 6 imps. The rest were all undertrick battles in some number of notrump except for Maeda-Hayashi, who managed to play in and make 3♠ East/West for a 3-imp gain for TATAI.

Board 4 produced 12-imp swings in three of the five matches. After 1♦-Pass-1♥ East/West typically ended in 3NT, posing a lead problem for whoever was unlucky enough to find himself on opening lead. Dawei Chen chose a heart from the South side, presenting Colker-san with an easy ninth trick. In practice a spade lead also presented declarer with the contract, since the ♠7 falls doubleton and the tempo is now in declarer's favor.

Those North/Souths who started clubs registered the plus scores on the board, and were rewarded with 12 imps for their effort. But while a club lead is clearly best for the defense, 3NT can still be made with careful play. Say declarer ducks (best) and the defense shifts to a spade. Declarer is now in control. He ducks, wins any continuation, finesses the diamond, returns to hand with a club, finishes the ♦Q, then cashes the ♣A and tries the heart finesse. South wins and has no reply. If a spade exit is available it begets a second high heart from declarer and South cannot avoid yielding the ninth trick in that suit.

Board 5 produced another double-digit swing potential. Most auctions began 1♠-Pass-2♦, after which North became declarer in 3NT. When Kenji Miyakuni started a low heart from ace third he gave Mark Itabashi a chance for a brilliancy prize – by ducking at trick one! Alas, poor Mark seized his king and the contract was no longer makeable. In GREAT BRITAIN versus TAKAYAMA Jason the Hackett led the ♥Q when Masaaki Takayama became declarer from the South side. Masaaki also fell from grace when he failed to duck at trick one. Both declarers were rewarded for their transgressions with a 13-imp loss.

Bd: 4	North		
Dlr: West	♠ KQ102		
Vul: Both	♥ 9		
	♦ 7532		
	♣ Q1063		
West		East	
♠ J98		♠ A653	
♥ 8		♥ KJ1075	
♦ AKJ106		♦ 84	
♣ A852		♣ K7	
	South		
	♠ 74		
	♥ AQ6432		
	♦ Q9		
	♣ J94		

Bd: 5	North		
Dlr: North	♠ KQ932		
Vul: N/S	♥ K106		
	♦ J9		
	♣ AQ5		
West		East	
♠ 54		♠ 10876	
♥ QJ853		♥ A94	
♦ 1085		♦ A7	
♣ 974		♣ K1063	
	South		
	♠ AJ		
	♥ 72		
	♦ KQ6432		
	♣ J82		

Bd: 6	North	
Dlr: East	♠ Q985	
Vul: E/W	♥ Q	
	♦ A105432	
	♣ KJ	
West		East
♠ AK10		♠ 642
♥ 9832		♥ J764
♦ K96		♦ J
♣ A85		♣ 76432
	South	
	♠ J73	
	♥ AK105	
	♦ Q87	
	♣ Q109	

3NT from the South side (but not of Chicago, which would be bad, bad Leroy Brown's milieu) is unbeatable, but two Wests (not including Kokish-san) managed to do just that. Since the result sheets fail to record even the leads at these tables, we can only speculate as to how this was accomplished – we can, but we won't.

When Ino-Chen bid to game via 1NT-3NT, Colker-san chose to lead his better major rather than a high club, expecting the club to concede

Bd: 7	North	
Dlr: South	♠ AQ9	
Vul: Both	♥ K10965	
	♦ KJ7	
	♣ Q5	
West		East
♠ J1054		♠ K83
♥ Q8		♥ 732
♦ Q986		♦ 532
♣ J109		♣ AK82
	South	
	♠ 762	
	♥ AJ4	
	♦ A104	
	♣ 7643	

a tempo with the minor-suit length on his left. That presented Ino his ninth trick. Itabashi-Simpson did well to stop in 2NT at the other table since Kenji Miyakuni found the winning ♣K lead, holding them to eight tricks. That was worth 10 imps to PABF OPEN. YOUTH's Akama-Harada sitting East/West appear to have gone for 500 in 2♠ doubled against CHINA's Ju-Fu, giving up 12 imps when 3NT failed at the other table. And Maeda-Hayashi for TATAI gave up 400 declaring 3♣ against YAMADA's A Yamada-Ohno, also worth 12 imps when 3NT went down two in the replay.

Board 8 looks like everyone's 3NT North/South, but NAITO's Setoguchi-Ohta reached the six-level and failed by three tricks to yield 11 imps to PABF WOMEN who stopped two levels lower and scored one trick more in the play. TATAI's Hirata-Shimizu wended their way to the inglorious contact of 5♣, failing by one trick when they had to lose a trump in addition to the inescapable spade and diamond. That was 11 imps to YAMADA.

Bd: 8	North	
Dlr: West	♠ Q106	
Vul: None	♥ 103	
	♦ A10832	
	♣ A64	
West		East
♠ 74		♠ A9532
♥ J86		♥ 7542
♦ KJ74		♦ 95
♣ 10872		♣ J9
	South	
	♠ KJ8	
	♥ AKQ9	
	♦ Q6	
	♣ KQ53	

Bd: 9	North	
Dlr: North	♠ A1054	
Vul: E/W	♥ 8	
	♦ A109	
	♣ Q10642	
West		East
♠ Q63		♠ 92
♥ A6532		♥ K97
♦ 752		♦ KQJ83
♣ J3		♣ A75
	South	
	♠ KJ87	
	♥ QJ104	
	♦ 64	
	♣ K98	

If we were told that two pairs were crazy enough to get to 4♠ on the North/South cards on Board 9, we'd have guessed that one of them would be Messrs Hackett and Hackett, aka "Les Enfants Terrible." But we'd have been wrong – though not far wrong. One of the two culprit pairs was none other than Papa H. and John Armstrong, "Les Vieux Terrible," who managed to not only get there but to make it! And the other crazy duo? Our very own Crazy Mark and Dirty Gene, Itabashi-Simpson. But not to worry, for their fate was the same as Papa-John's. Plus 420 earned both pairs a handy pickup (6 imps for GREAT BRITAIN, 7 for USA) and a "get into the asylum free" card to be used at their first legal opportunity.

Bd: 10	North	
Dlr: East	♠ Q5	
Vul: Both	♥ QJ7	
	♦ QJ106	
	♣ 10875	
West		East
♠ K3		♠ AJ109764
♥ A98		♥ 10543
♦ AK9875		♦ 3
♣ A3		♣ 6
	South	
	♠ 82	
	♥ K62	
	♦ 42	
	♣ KQJ942	

Slam is in the offing for East/West, but how high must you bid to winimps? In USA versus PABF OPEN, both East/West pairs reached 6♠, with USA earning an imp on the overtrick. CHINA's Ju-Fu bid to the seven-level and brought in their contract to pick up 13imps against YOUTH's 6♠. In the other three matches one pair at each table bid only to game. Six was reached by PABF WOMEN against NAITO for a 13-imp gain and the grand was bid by YAMADA (Shimizu-Hirata) against TATAI and by GREAT BRITAIN (the Hackett twins) against TAKAYAMA, both for 17-imps pickups.

East/West have a great save against any North/South slam, but only one pair (Shimizu-Hirata for YAMADA) managed to find it – at the four-level! 4♠ doubled went down only 100, which was a 14-imp pickup when A Yamada-Ohno bid and made 6♥. GREAT BRITAIN picked up 10imps when TAKAYAMA's Kobayashi-Takayama stopped in 5♥ while Papa-John bid to 6♣ and scored the overtrick. Yoshida-Masamura for YOUTH outbid CHINA's Ju-Fu at the other table when they reached 6♥ to the mainlanders' 5♥; 11imps to YOUTH. And finally USA pipped PABF OPEN by 2imps when their 6♥ scored higher than 6♣, both with their respective overtricks.

Bd: 11	North	
Dlr: South	♠ 876	
Vul: None	♥ AJ8762	
	♦ —	
	♣ KQJ5	
West		East
♠ KQ109		♠ AJ5432
♥ 543		♥ Q
♦ K7432		♦ Q86
♣ 10		♣ 763
	South	
	♠ —	
	♥ K109	
	♦ AJ1095	
	♣ A9842	

Bd: 12	North	
Dlr: West	♠ Q8	
Vul: N/S	♥ A986	
	♦ AQ84	
	♣ 1087	
West		East
♠ A7652		♠ 93
♥ 107		♥ J52
♦ J10732		♦ K65
♣ 2		♣ AKQ65
	South	
	♠ KJ104	
	♥ KQ43	
	♦ 9	
	♣ J943	

Board 12 swung between 5 and 8imps in each of the five matches. We managed to beat 3♥ one trick when Colker-san started with four rounds of clubs, Kokish-san ruffing with the ♥10 to later provide East/West a trump trick when Ino misguessed and cashed king-queen. Meanwhile, Itabashi-Simpson were collecting a cool 100 against 2♠ doubled for 5imps. China dumped 6imps to YOUTH when Ju-Fu overbid to 4♥ while Yoshida-Masamura stopped at the three-level and made it. We didn't ask, and they didn't tell us, how Papa-John climbed their way to 4NT on the North/South cards. When Kobayashi-Takayama played 3♥ and made it that was 8imps to TAKAYAMA. YAMADA's Shimizu-Hirata competed to a brazen 3♦ on the East/West cards and were lucky not to see a red card on the raised felt surface. Minus 150 was not a good result to bring back to A Yamada-Ohno, but they were

in no position to criticize when they reached the ambitious 4♥ game and went one down; 6imps to TATAI. And finally, in the battle of the "femme fatales" PABF WOMEN picked up 8imps on NAITO when Setoguchi-Ohta also reached game in hearts and failed by two tricks while Ohno-Nishida stopped in three and made it.

Bd: 13	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 632		
Vul: Both	♥ J10432		
	♦ 53		
	♣ K95		
West		East	
♠ J10875		♠ KQ9	
♥ 85		♥ Q97	
♦ A		♦ J8762	
♣ AQ763		♣ J10	
	South		
	♠ A4		
	♥ AK6		
	♦ KQ1094		
	♣ 842		

When Dawei Chen opened the South hand with a strong notrump Kokish-san made a spades-and-a-minor 2♠ and Colker-san raised gently to three. Kokish-san bid the excellent game, depending only on the club finesse through the opening strong notrumper, but as with many other sterling contracts the editing duo bid this day a plus score was not to be had. But Itabashi-Simpson managed to by the contract in 2♥ and go plus 110 at the other table to salvage a push. Wow. Game on a finesse and the opponents played in 2♥ making! Akama-Harada for YOUTH played in 2♠ making three while their teammates, Yoshida-Masamura, outbid Liu-Zhang for CHINA and played in 2♥ going one down; 1 imp to YOUTH. Shimamura-Fukuda for PABF WOMEN reached the 4♠ game East/West and suffered the same fate as your editors, but when Sekizawa-Amano stopped in 3♠ for NAITO the fickle Dame Fate dealt

NAITO 6 undeserved imps. The twins bid the 4♠ game and yielded 5 imps to TAKAYAMA when Papa-John went one light in 3♥ North/South. And finally, both Shimizu-Hirata and Maeda-Hayashi bid the spade game in YAMADA versus TATAI for a push. Well done, gentlemen.

Bd: 14	North		
Dlr: East	♠ 84		
Vul: None	♥ AK		
	♦ K872		
	♣ AQJ107		
West		East	
♠ KQJ953		♠ 102	
♥ 43		♥ Q10652	
♦ J105		♦ Q6	
♣ K9		♣ 8542	
	South		
	♠ A76		
	♥ J987		
	♦ A943		
	♣ 63		

3NT, 5♣ and 5♦ are cold for North/South on this deal, and in four of the five matches two different contracts were reached at the opposing tables for a 400-point push (give or take a notrump overtrick). In a fourth match Hirata-Shimizu somehow ended up in 4♥ from the North side. (That'll teach you to cue-bid, Makoto.) The five-two trump split actually worked to declarer's advantage, as he was able to escape with ten tricks (the ♥AK, four clubs, two diamonds, one spade, and the ♥J *en passant* at the end) after drawing two trumps before running the clubs; and it's cold on any lead! That wins Hirata-Shimizu our Even-a-Blind-Squirrel-Finds-an-Acorn-Every-Once-in-a-While Award.

East/West are cold for 3NT via an auction such as: Pass-1♣-3♣ (bid 3NT with a club stopper)-Pass; 3NT. The only catch is, North/South might not let them play there if North tries 4♣, as is likely. This will leave East with a difficult problem. If he presses on to 4NT North will have to find a red-suit lead as either black suit gives declarer his tenth trick. If East tries the "safe" 4♦ he is likely to meet with a cruel fate as the defense can manage four tricks by cashing the ♣A and ♥AK before putting East in to fend for himself. That's what happened at both tables in USA versus PABF OPEN. In TAKAYAMA versus GREAT BRITAIN both 4NT and 4♠ failed, the Japanese picking up 3 imps on undertricks. In TATAI versus YAMADA 3NT made at both tables, with TATAI picking up 3 imps when A Yamada tried the ♠K for his opening lead. In CHINA versus YOUTH, CHINA picked up 12 imps when they made 3NT with an overtrick at one table while beating 4♦ at the

Bd: 16	North		
Dlr: West	♠ K3		
Vul: E/W	♥ K10		
	♦ 85		
	♣ AJ96543		
West		East	
♠ Q10962		♠ A7	
♥ QJ75		♥ 86	
♦ —		♦ AKQJ7432	
♣ K1087		♣ 2	
	South		
	♠ J854		
	♥ A9432		
	♦ 1096		
	♣ Q		

other. And finally, in NAITO versus PABF WOMEN the East players had a slight difference of opinion in their evaluation of the East hand. Sekizawa for NAITO played in 2♦ (yes, you read that right) making plus 130 while Shimamura for WOMEN reached 5♦ doubled, minus 500. That was 12 imps to NAITO.

Bd: 17	North	
Dlr: North	♠ Q97	
Vul: None	♥ J95	
	♦ K1063	
	♣ 753	
West		East
♠ K62		♠ J1054
♥ KQ84		♥ A3
♦ Q5		♦ J72
♣ AK64		♣ Q1098
	South	
	♠ A83	
	♥ 10762	
	♦ A984	
	♣ J2	

3NT is cold on the East/West cards, and nine of the ten pairs bid it. In two of the four matches where 3NT was reached at both tables it made once while failing in the replay: 10-imps to GREAT BRITAIN versus TAKAYAMA and to USA versus PABF OPEN. In TATAI versus YAMADA 3NT failed at both tables and in the fourth match CHINA picked up 1-imp on an overtrick against YOUTH. NAITO won 5 imps against PABF WOMEN when they beat 3NT at one table while stopping in 1NT making three at the other. Go figure.

Bd: 18	North	
Dlr: East	♠ K872	
Vul: N/S	♥ 3	
	♦ 9542	
	♣ A753	
West		East
♠ AQJ4		♠ 10653
♥ KQJ1074		♥ 862
♦ 10		♦ AJ87
♣ 106		♣ Q9
	South	
	♠ 9	
	♥ A95	
	♦ KQ63	
	♣ KJ842	

Game is on the spade finesse on Board 18, and we were on the losing side of yet another unlucky game contract. But when our teammates went plus 130 in 4♦ at the other table USA gained 2 imps against snake-bit PABF OPEN. TATAI picked up 2 imps against YAMADA on an extra undertrick in 4♥, while GREAT BRITAIN, riding an incredible streak of good fortune, gained 7 imps on poor TAKAYAMA by making both 3♥ and 4♦ at the two tables. CHINA's Ju-Fu bid the North/South cards to 5♣, but they failed on the four-one diamond split. Their teammates Liu-Zhang also failed in 4♥, so that was 4 imps to YOUTH. NAITO gained 6 imps on PABF WOMEN when they sawed off 4♥ at one table and beat it 300 while returning 50 at the other table in the same contract undoubled.

Bd: 19	North	
Dlr: South	♠ 93	
Vul: E/W	♥ 75	
	♦ AQ543	
	♣ A1094	
West		East
♠ QJ876		♠ AK542
♥ 942		♥ A108
♦ K7		♦ 8
♣ 762		♣ J853
	South	
	♠ 10	
	♥ KQJ63	
	♦ J10962	
	♣ KQ	

With the ♦K onside, 5♦ is a claim, as is 4♥ with trumps breaking three-three. Three pairs bid the 5♦ game: Itabashi-Simpson for USA, Papa-John for GREAT BRITAIN, and A Yamada-Ohno for YAMADA. Each gained 6 or 7 imps for their effort. CHINA pushed the board against YOUTH in diamond partscores, as did NAITO against PABF WOMEN.



"Playing with Nobu is like eating ice cream."

Bd: 20	North		
Dir: West	♠ 8754		
Vul: Both	♥ J1094		
	♦ 62		
	♣ K42		
West		East	
♠ —		♠ AQ963	
♥ 8762		♥ AK	
♦ K954		♦ AJ73	
♣ AQJ75		♣ 93	
	South		
	♠ KJ102		
	♥ Q53		
	♦ Q108		
	♣ 1086		

6♦ is a fair contract for East/West. If the club finesse works trumps must come in for no more than one loser. If the club finesse fails, trumps must break three-two with the queen onside. If Kokish-san was a fatalist, as he should have been on this day, he would have listened more closely to me when I signed off in 5♦. Besides, the handwriting was on the wall from the previous nineteen boards. But would he listen? Nooo. 6♦ said he. Down one said I. But once again Itabashi-Simpson came through for us at the other table when Kenji Miyakuni somehow managed to go down three in the same contract. That was 5 imps to USA. GREAT BRITAIN and TAKAYAMA pushed minus 100's in 6♦ and 3NT, while TATAI gained 2 imps in overtricks against YAMADA when both played 3NT. 3NT yielded a push in CHINA versus YOUTH, while NAITO picked up 13 imps versus PABF WOMEN when they made

3NT at one table and collected the inevitable plus 100 against 6♦ at the other.

The results in	VPs	IMPs
GREAT BRITAIN over TAKAYAMA	25-3	86-25
NAITO over PABF WOMEN	24-6	75-31
YAMADA over TATAI	23-7	65-27
CHINA over YOUTH	21-9	67-39
USA over PABF OPEN	18-12	45-30

NEC CUP: ROUND SIX

This round featured a crucial showdown between CHINA and USA, two struggling teams who were tied for fourth going into the match. Another interesting matchup featured YAMADA, running well, against TAKAYAMA, showing real staying power.

Bd: 1	North		
Dir: North	♠ QJ4		
Vul: None	♥ AKQ8		
	♦ KJ63		
	♣ 43		
West		East	
♠ 972		♠ 1083	
♥ 75		♥ 109643	
♦ AQ982		♦ 54	
♣ J97		♣ AK10	
	South		
	♠ AK65		
	♥ J2		
	♦ 107		
	♣ Q8652		

One of the delights of sitting out is trying to figure out how your teammates achieved some of their more brilliant results without knowing any of the details. Now take Board 1, where nine of ten North/South pairs reached 3NT and made it in relative comfort. The tenth, Messrs Fu and Ju of CHINA, did rather better, going plus 800 to win 8 imps against USA. Now, where on earth could they find a contract to net them 800 points? There it is now, Rich, looming on the horizon. 2♥ doubled, by East. My best guess is that the honorable Itabashi jumped to 2♥ over a strong club by North, and that North passed South's negative double for penalties. If we've maligned you, dear Mark-san, drop us a very short note in the Tijuana jail. On the other hand, if we've maligned you where malignancy is

due, send us a small contribution to induce us to stay out of your dirty laundry.

Bd: 2	North	
Dlr: East	♠ Q93	
Vul: N/S	♥ Q10974	
	♦ Q10	
	♣ K63	
West		East
♠ K842		♠ A
♥ 6		♥ 85
♦ K432		♦ A98765
♣ 10954		♣ AJ82
	South	
	♠ J10765	
	♥ AKJ32	
	♦ J	
	♣ Q7	

This is a lovely 5♦ for East/West on no cards, with the ♠K wasted, to boot. If the defense starts with two rounds of hearts to force dummy prematurely, declarer must take an immediate club finesse (low to the eight or jack). The horrible position of the trump piups leaves declarer with only one more entry to repeat the club finesse; he'll win any return, play ace-king of trumps, and run the ♣10. Six pairs bid 5♦ and made it and two others would surely have done so had East/West let them play it there. Sekizawa-Amano neglected to double TATAI's Hirata-Shimizu in 5♥, collected only 200, and lost 5imps. Ino-Chen did not pass up the opportunity to double Kohno-Harada, and did well to get all their tricks (with North declarer, it was much easier to get the spade ruff: ♠A, suit preference eight, diamond underlead) for down 800. 9imps to PABF OPEN, 10-0 over YOUTH. CHINA gained another 6

imps against USA to go up 14-love when Itabashi-Simpson stopped in 3♣ (how, we dare to wonder, did Fu-Ju manage to sell out so early with their ten-card heart fit?). Shoko Fukuda recorded a coup of sorts by overcalling Justin Hackett's 1♦ with 1♥, and Kyoko Shimamura's jump raise to 3♥ over Jason's negative double bought the auction. Jason led a diamond, so Shoko made 3♥ for an 11-imp gain (Sakamoto-Toyofuku made 5♦).

Bd: 3	North	
Dlr: South	♠ AQ10	
Vul: E/W	♥ 542	
	♦ QJ1082	
	♣ Q4	
West		East
♠ 96		♠ K75
♥ AK63		♥ Q98
♦ K73		♦ A654
♣ J1053		♣ K82
	South	
	♠ J8432	
	♥ J107	
	♦ 9	
	♣ A976	

The only declarer to make a contract on Board 3 was PABF OPEN's Tadashi Teramoto, who scored plus 80 in 1♠ (in a manner not immediately obvious to the naked eye). Small swings in all five matches.

Marginal power slams on a finesse tend to produce random results, and so it was on Board 4, which gave 13imps to USA (Cappelletti-Lipscomb bid 6NT), YOUTH (Kohno-Harada bid it), and YAMADA (Akihiko Yamada-Ohno bid it). Wasn't that fun?

Bd: 4	North	
Dlr: West	♠ A8	
Vul: Both	♥ A975	
	♦ KQ97	
	♣ AJ7	
West		East
♠ 1075		♠ 9642
♥ Q10		♥ J832
♦ A1042		♦ J63
♣ 10632		♣ 54
	South	
	♠ KQJ3	
	♥ K64	
	♦ 85	
	♣ KQ98	



"When I grow up I want to be just like Mark."

Bd: 5	North	
Dir: North	♠ AK7	
Vul: N/S	♥ K9	
	♦ KQJ1097	
	♣ 102	
West		East
♠ QJ1063		♠ 842
♥ AJ104		♥ Q532
♦ 854		♦ 32
♣ 8		♣ A764
	South	
	♠ 95	
	♥ 876	
	♦ A6	
	♣ KQJ953	

Well, maybe not, but this one was certainly fun.
Consider the Open Room in PABF OPEN vs YOUTH:

West	North	East	South
Chen	KohnoIno	Harada	
	3NT	Pass	Pass
4♣*	Pass	Pass!	Dble!
Rdbl	Pass	4♥	Dble
All Pass			

The intrepid Dawei Chen, with an eye on the vulnerability, protected against 3NT (Kohno was showing something like he had, perhaps with an extra diamond) with 4♣, intending it as takeout for the majors. Masayuki Ino misread 4♣, and left Harada with an unusual problem. He didn't want to pass out 4♣ and collect an infinite number of 50s, with a sure 600-odd

his way. But he knew that someone would run if he doubled. He hated to double, but he did it, and it all ended at 4♥ doubled, three down; minus 500. That was a lovely 3-imp save against the cold 3NT, but Hisatomi-Teramoto finished in 5♦ instead, where they could have been beaten on a club ruff. Yoshida-Akama did not find their ruff, however. Whew!

Everyone else bid and made 3NT.

Bd: 6	North	
Dir: East	♠ —	
Vul: E/W	♥ AK1032	
	♦ J93	
	♣ 98654	
West		East
♠ KQ1082		♠ A7
♥ QJ4		♥ 96
♦ 10		♦ K87542
♣ AJ102		♣ KQ3
	South	
	♠ J96543	
	♥ 875	
	♦ AQ6	
	♣ 7	

East/West can't make a game if North/South defend accurately (two hearts and three diamonds without being unusually brilliant). And 4♠? Well, South has all those trumps, you see.

In GREAT BRITAIN vs PABF WOMEN, Sakamoto-Toyofuku fetched up in 4NT, declared by East. Brigitte Mavromichalis led a heart through, and Papa Bear switched to the ♦J. The defense took five hearts and three diamonds for five down; minus 500. Looking good, Brits. Not good enough. After Justin opened the East hand with a 14-16 point notrump, the partnership settled in 4♠, which South (Shoko Fukuda) doubled. Jason, with something in reserve, sent it back. The good news for Jason was that Justin had to play it (transfers, you know). The bad news was that South got to lead hearts through the queen-jack. The defense

was in the hunt for 1600 now, but a trick got away and Justin escaped for two down; minus 1000. "Sorry, dad." Well, maybe not really sorry. 11 imps to PABF WOMEN, 22-3. Now that's more like it. All those successful impossible contracts might have been going to their heads.

Simpson made 4NT against Fu-Ju, presumably on a low heart lead. Lipscomb did not make 3♥ doubled with the North-South cards, but one down was good for 11 American imps and the lead in the match, 26-18.

Harada could not make 2♠ with the North/South cards, but he came close. That might have been a reasonable result, but Teramoto made 3♥ doubled at the other table...with an overtrick; plus 630. 12 imps to PABF OPEN, 30-13.

Both East/Wests made 3NT in YAMADA vs TAKAYAMA.

The biggest swing came in NAITO vs TATAI where Hirata-Shimizu made 3♥ doubled while Maeda-Hayashi made 3NT the other way. 15 imps to TATAI, ahead 25-2. At both tables, the bidding had started 1♦-2♠. Hayashi jumped to 3NT but Amano passed, hopefully, then left in the reopening double. When her opponents slithered into 3♥ with an SOS redouble, Amano doubled and led the ♥Q, but there was no defense.

Bd: 7	North	
Dir: South	♠ KQ8	
Vul: Both	♥ 10732	
	♦ Q105	
	♣ 543	
West		East
♠ J4		♠ 109653
♥ 85		♥ AKQ6
♦ A974		♦ 3
♣ QJ962		♣ K107
	South	
	♠ A72	
	♥ J94	
	♦ KJ862	
	♣ A8	

A partscore battle, you would think. East/West might make 2♠ or 3♣ while North-South might make 2♦ or 1NT. All those contracts were played, usually with little net effect to the score. Not so in GREAT BRITAIN vs PABF WOMEN, where Mavromichalis' 2♦ went one down (minus 100) while Shimamura was permitted to make 1NT doubled with an overtrick (plus 380). 10 imps more to PABF WOMEN, ahead 32-3.

Bd: 8	North	
Dir: West	♠ AK10	
Vul: None	♥ AJ963	
	♦ Q10	
	♣ AQJ	
West		East
♠ 32		♠ J875
♥ KQ87		♥ 4
♦ 9632		♦ A754
♣ 1054		♣ 9862
	South	
	♠ Q964	
	♥ 1052	
	♦ KJ8	
	♣ K73	

This was a routine game in notrump or hearts, with an easy plus for North/South at every table but one, where the twins managed to defeat 4♥ on a spade lead. Declarer must have won in hand to play ace and another trump. Although that must have seemed the safest line, it was not. West won and played a second spade, won the third trump, put East in with the ♦A, and got a spade ruff. It could happen to anyone. You're kidding yourself if you think otherwise.

Bd: 9	North	
Dir: North	♠ —	
Vul: E/W	♥ K6543	
	♦ K754	
	♣ A862	
West		East
♠ Q10942		♠ A8
♥ Q972		♥ AJ108
♦ 82		♦ AQ96
♣ 53		♣ J94
	South	
	♠ KJ7653	
	♥ —	
	♦ J103	
	♣ KQ107	

Okay, already. Which side really has the spades? In most matches, the final contract was a number of spades, but there was no real reason why it should be East/West rather than North or South. At a few tables, South did not come in over East's strong notrump (can someone please explain why not) and West transferred to spades, passed around to North, who doubled. Well, of course. South passed for penalties. One North did not reopen with a double (earth to North: "why not?"). One South jumped to 3♠ over 1NT and bought it. One South overcalled 2♣, a one-suiter somewhere. West's 2♠ was passed out. Two North-South pairs found clubs, but neither made their partial. The most interesting pair of results was in USA vs CHINA, where both East/West pairs finished in 2♠ doubled, down 200 and 500. USA got the extra undertrick and picked up 7 imps, 36-18. Kohno-Harada went minus 300 in 2♠

doubled with the North/South cards. Both NAITO pairs played in spades. They took 13 tricks but went minus 200 and 100 to give TATAI 7 imps, 34-4.

Bd: 11	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 1064		
Vul: None	♥ 9762		
	♦ 963		
	♣ Q54		
West		East	
♠ AKQ52		♠ J98	
♥ 10		♥ 8543	
♦ 8		♦ AJ104	
♣ AK10986		♣ 72	
	South		
	♠ 73		
	♥ AKQJ		
	♦ KQ752		
	♣ J3		

6♠ needs some breaks, but the breaks are there, which makes it a good slam, according to the illustrious Robert Hamman. Did anyone bid it? Sure. Both pairs in USA vs CHINA. Good stuff, huh? I can tell you how Itabashi-Simpson did it:

West	North	East	South
Itabashi	Ju	Simpson	Fu
1♠	Pass	2♠	1♣(strong)
4NT	Pass	5♣*	Pass
6♠	All Pass		Pass

A funny thing happened to Mark on the way to the cash-out window. Ju, trying to build a winner, led from his only honor, the ♣Q, low jack, ace. With clubs three-two, it was right to ruff a club in dummy and claim

before something went wrong, but Mark thought it likely that the opening lead was a singleton. If that were the case, he had to play two rounds of trumps and take a club finesse, hoping North had one club and only two trumps. Not liking it much, Mark talked himself into Plan B. ♠A, spade to the jack, club to the ten and queen, gut-wrenching experience when Ju won the trick. Believing that Itabashi needed a club ruff in dummy, Ju exited with his remaining trump. Not down yet, Mark saw his chance. He ran his black winners and poor Zhong was squeezed in the red suits. In order for the squeeze to work, South had to have all four heart honors and both diamond honors. Of course, he was marked with those cards for his strong club opening once North turned up with the ♣Q, but the availability of that piece of evidence does not detract from the sublimity of making 6♠ in this fashion. Ya gotta believe.

Okay, kids, why did Amano-Sekizawa and Mizuta-Tanaka play the East-West cards in 3NT? Please don't tell us too early in the morning. Double digit swings from nowhere to TATAI and YAMADA.

Bd: 12	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 65		
Vul: N/S	♥ 5		
	♦ AK1085		
	♣ KQJ76		
West		East	
♠ AJ1042		♠ 9	
♥ KQJ2		♥ A976	
♦ J63		♦ Q742	
♣ 2		♣ 10543	
	South		
	♠ KQ873		
	♥ 10843		
	♦ 9		
	♣ A98		

Eight North/South pairs played in 3♣. Only Mavromichalis-Hackett failed to make it. At two tables, East/West attempted 4♥. YOUTH's Yoshida-Akama were doubled and set 300 to turn over another 5 imps to PABF OPEN (41-14 now). Maeda-Hayashi were doubled and set one, but gained an imp against the 130 the other way.



"No, Paul, this is *their* trick!"

Bd: 13	North	
Dlr: North	♠ A7642	
Vul: Both	♥ 75	
	♦ K832	
	♣ A10	
West		East
♠ J853		♠ KQ
♥ 1086		♥ AKJ932
♦ 9765		♦ 10
♣ J3		♣ K962
	South	
	♠ 109	
	♥ Q4	
	♦ AQJ4	
	♣ Q8754	

East/West figure to take about nine tricks in hearts and North/South eight or nine in diamonds. So what happened? In GREAT BRITAIN vs PABF WOMEN, the declarers in hearts took (of course) eight tricks when they contracted for nine (Sakamoto) and ten tricks when they contracted for eight (Justin). 7 imps to GB, closer now at 24-37. USA did well against CHINA, Itabashi-Simpson getting 200 against Fu-Ju's 3♠ (3♠? wow!) While Cappelletti-Lipscomb made 3♦. 7 imps, 43-21. In YOUTH vs PABF OPEN, both Easts took ten tricks in hearts. The difference is that Ino was doubled in 3♥ (930) while Yoshida played peacefully in 2♥ (170). 13 imps to PABF OPEN, 54-14, and counting. Much smaller potatoes in the other two matches.

If declarer could cash three spades and still get diamond ruffs in South, he could make his routine 4♥ contract, but the defenders will usually kill the third spade trick and leave declarer with a club loser, and 4♥ is likely to go down. 4♥ was made three times on a spade lead, twice in USA vs CHINA to halve the board, and by Teramoto to run the PABF OPEN lead to 50 imps over YOUTH. Cappelletti-Lipscomb won 10 imps for USA by bidding and making 3NT. The defense has to avoid setting up the ♦9 for declarer and giving declarer a third club trick. Not so easy at the table.

Bd: 14	North	
Dlr: East	♠ K7	
Vul: None	♥ AQ108	
	♦ 9654	
	♣ J109	
West		East
♠ 54		♠ J108632
♥ 974		♥ K6
♦ K872		♦ AJ10
♣ Q843		♣ 72
	South	
	♠ AQ9	
	♥ J532	
	♦ Q3	
	♣ AK65	

Bd: 15	North	
Dlr: South	♠ 84	
Vul: N/S	♥ AJ3	
	♦ 9732	
	♣ KQ85	
West		East
♠ AKQ52		♠ 10963
♥ Q6		♥ 5
♦ 6		♦ AJ10854
♣ J7642		♣ A3
	South	
	♠ J7	
	♥ K1098742	
	♦ KQ	
	♣ 109	

In four matches, East/West made 4♠ at both tables. In YOUTH vs PABF OPEN, Akama went down in 4♠ while Ino, doubled in 5♠, made that. 12 imps more, 76-14.

5♣ is a good contract for North/South, needing only the ♦A or the doubleton jack-ten onside. The fact that it was often attempted

Bd: 16	North	
Dlr: West	♠ 6	
Vul: E/W	♥ 1074	
	♦ 876	
	♣ KQ9632	
West		East
♠ AKQ3		♠ J1087
♥ KJ863		♥ Q952
♦ AJ5		♦ 1042
♣ 4		♣ J8
	South	
	♠ 9542	
	♥ A	
	♦ KQ93	
	♣ A1075	

over an East/West major suit game made it seem like a save, so the contract was usually doubled and set 100 points. Fu-Ju sold out to 4♥ and beat it (I'm not sure why they didn't get more than one spade ruff) to gain 5 imps, 27-53. Yoshida-Akama bid all the way to 5♥, down 300, undoubled. Another 9 imps away. The big score on this one was Maeda-Hayashi's 620 in 4♥...on a spade lead. South did not return a spade when she won the ace of trumps. 11 imps to TATAI, ahead 60-4. Ouch.

Bd: 17	North	
Dlr: North	♠ QJ2	
Vul: None	♥ J652	
	♦ K854	
	♣ Q5	
West		East
♠ K10973		♠ 54
♥ A43		♥ Q108
♦ —		♦ Q1073
♣ A8762		♣ K1043
	South	
	♠ A86	
	♥ K97	
	♦ AJ962	
	♣ J9	

East/West are cold for 5♣ (spades are three-three and the hearts are frozen) but it is not surprising that no one bid as high as the five-level. All the swings were small ones, North/South often going set in diamond partials.

Bd: 18	North	
Dlr: East	♠ —	
Vul: N/S	♥ 109653	
	♦ 1095	
	♣ KJ865	
West		East
♠ 87432		♠ A95
♥ AKJ		♥ Q872
♦ Q43		♦ A6
♣ 97		♣ AQ103
	South	
	♠ KQJ106	
	♥ 4	
	♦ KJ872	
	♣ 42	

This was the biggest swing in USA vs CHINA, where USA had been on their way to a comfortable win. When Fu did not come in over Itabashi's strong notrump, the Americans bid their way to 4♠. Down 300 when Fu lowered the boom. At the other table, South showed her two-suiter and Liu-Zhang doubled Cappelletti in 3♦, then led ace and another trump. Down 800. 15 imps to CHINA, 42-53. Sakamoto-Toyofuku reached 3NT and made it easily while the twins failed to double 3♦ at the other table and got only 300. 3 imps to PABF WOMEN, ahead 40-27. Yoshida-Akama also scored plus 400 in 3NT, but their teammates played in 2♥ the other way, down 500...undoubled. Tough to make a living last night for the juniors. YAMADA's Hirata-Shimuzu stayed out of spades but their teammates went for 500 in 3♦ doubled, so TAKAYAMA registered a small pickup. Maeda-Hayashi got 500 against 3♦ doubled, but they got all of that into the imp-ing when Sekizawa went down in 3NT. It was 72-9 for TATAI.

Bd: 19	North	
Dlr: South	♠ 76	
Vul: E/W	♥ 95	
	♦ QJ10842	
	♣ K102	
West		East
♠ QJ842		♠ A109
♥ QJ876		♥ 1032
♦ 53		♦ AK76
♣ 4		♣ QJ9
	South	
	♠ K53	
	♥ AK4	
	♦ 9	
	♣ A87653	

Sensible club partials for North/South, overbid major suit games for East-West, and one unlikely plus 400 in 3NT for Kobayashi-Takayama, who gained 7 imps to close to within 11 imps of YAMADA.

The results in	VPs	IMPs
PABF OPEN over YOUTH	25-0	101-16
TATAI over NAITO	25-4	72-14
USA over CHINA	18-12	57-42
YAMADA over TAKAYAMA	17-13	32-21
PABF WOMEN over GR. BRITAIN	17-13	40-28

GREAT BRITAIN's first loss. A key win for USA over CHINA. A strong statement by PABF OPEN and a sad evening for the kids. YAMADA stayed in the qualifying group with a close win over plucky TAKAYAMA. A significant win for TATAI, who are very much in it too. It was not NAITO's night.



"Sigh. some days it just doesn't pay to get up in the morning."



"Bring on da funk...bring on da noise."



"Look, all A's and a D in Gym."



FOR SALE...
TWO HEADED MONSTER



"Marlon Brando, eat your heart out."



"When it's bad, it's very bad."

The 4th NEC CUP Qualifying

TEAMS	Rank	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. GREAT BRITAIN	1	129		25		13	22	24			25	20
2. NAITO	10	60	1		8	24			11	12		4
3. CHINA	6	88		22		18	12	9	12		15	
4. PABF WOMEN	8	69	17	6	12		11			8	15	
5. USA	4	94	8		18	19		19		18		12
6. PABF YOUTH	9	63	6		21		11		11	0		14
7. YAMADA	3	101		19	18			19		5	17	23
8. PABF OPEN	2	116		18		22	12	25	25		14	
9. TAKAYAMA	7	79	3		15	15			13	16		17
10. TATAI	5	89	10	25			18	16	7		13	

DATUM

Round 4

No	DATUM	GR. BRITAIN		NAITO		CHINA		PABF WOMEN		USA		PABF YOUTH		YAMADA		PABF OPEN		TAKAYAMA		TATAI	
		N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W
1	90	10	6	2	-11	2	-1	-1	5	-6	-10	-4	11	11	-2	-5	1	1	-2	-11	4
2	-20	-4	-2	-3	-2	2	-2	2	4	2	4	2	3	2	3	-4	-2	2	-2	-3	-2
3	-660	0	1	0	-1	-1	1	0	-1	-1	0	13	0	1	0	1	0	-1	1	0	-13
4	-380	10	-5	-6	6	-6	-11	-6	6	5	-10	-6	-10	-6	6	-6	6	11	6	10	6
5	-60	-2	2	-2	2	-2	-5	-1	-3	-2	2	5	2	-2	2	3	1	5	2	-2	-5
6	20	-2	2	-2	2	14	2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	-10	-2	2	-2	2	-2	-14	10	2
7	-10	-3	-5	-3	-3	3	3	-3	-3	5	3	3	11	3	3	3	3	-3	-3	-11	-3
8	-40	-9	9	4	-4	4	-4	-9	-3	-9	9	3	-5	4	-4	3	9	4	-4	5	-3
9	390	1	6	1	6	3	-1	1	-1	-6	-1	1	-1	-6	-1	1	-1	1	-3	1	-1
10	640	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1	-1	0	-1	1	0	0	1	-1	0	1	-1	1	0	0
11	410	0	-1	0	0	1	0	0	-1	1	0	0	-1	0	0	1	0	0	-1	1	0
12	400	9	-7	6	-7	-11	11	9	-7	7	-9	-12	11	7	-6	7	-9	-11	11	-11	12
13	-100	7	-1	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	-7	0	-1	-3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
14	-40	4	0	-2	0	0	0	-2	-3	0	-4	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	0
15	-40	-2	-3	-3	-4	3	-3	-3	-3	3	2	-2	3	4	3	3	3	3	-3	-3	2
16	-500	-3	3	9	3	-3	3	-3	-9	-3	3	-4	-8	-3	-9	9	3	-3	3	8	4
17	-350	5	2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	-9	-2	-5	-2	-6	-2	2	9	2	-2	2	6	2
18	110	1	0	1	0	1	3	1	-2	0	-1	-3	0	0	-1	2	-1	-3	-1	0	3
19	210	-2	3	-6	2	-1	-6	5	2	-3	2	-2	-6	-2	6	-2	-5	6	1	6	2
20	20	2	-3	-4	-2	-4	3	2	-3	3	-2	2	3	2	4	3	-2	-3	4	-3	-2
IMP +		49	35	24	26	33	29	20	19	27	28	29	44	35	33	48	33	33	31	48	37
IMP -		28	27	33	35	31	33	33	48	35	49	37	48	26	24	19	20	29	33	44	29

DATUM

Round 5

No	DATUM	GR. BRITAIN		NAITO		CHINA		PABF WOMEN		USA		PABF YOUTH		YAMADA		PABF OPEN		TAKAYAMA		TATAI	
		N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W
1	-70	-1	1	4	2	1	1	-2	-4	5	1	-1	-1	-2	-1	-1	-5	-1	1	1	2
2	80	1	6	1	1	1	-1	-1	-1	1	1	1	-1	1	1	-1	-1	-6	-1	-1	-1
3	430	1	0	1	-1	-10	0	1	-1	0	0	0	10	0	-1	0	0	0	-1	1	0
4	-250	8	-8	-8	-8	8	8	8	8	-8	8	-8	-8	-9	-8	-8	8	8	-8	8	9
5	520	5	12	5	-5	-9	-3	5	-5	-12	-5	3	9	5	-5	5	12	-12	-5	5	-5
6	310	-5	-3	3	8	-8	-3	-8	-3	3	-3	3	8	3	-3	3	-3	3	5	3	-3
7	310	-4	3	7	-7	5	9	7	-7	-5	-7	-9	-5	3	11	7	5	-3	4	-11	-3
8	390	2	-1	-11	-1	1	-2	1	11	2	-2	2	-1	2	10	2	-2	1	-2	-10	-2
9	180	6	0	1	2	-2	2	-2	-1	6	1	-2	2	-1	1	-1	-6	0	-6	-1	1
10	-1450	12	13	13	-1	-13	0	1	-13	1	0	0	13	12	13	0	-1	-13	-12	-13	-12
11	740	5	6	-6	6	-6	-7	-6	6	7	-5	7	6	7	12	5	-7	-6	-5	-12	-7
12	0	-5	-4	-5	-4	-3	-4	4	5	3	3	4	3	-3	-4	-3	-3	4	5	4	3
13	20	-3	-2	2	4	-4	3	-4	-2	3	-2	-3	4	2	-2	2	-3	2	3	2	-2
14	380	2	6	1	-1	1	-2	1	-1	-6	-2	2	-1	2	-1	2	6	-6	-2	1	-2
15	640	0	1	-1	1	0	1	-1	1	0	0	-1	0	0	-1	0	0	-1	0	1	0
16	-100	5	-7	12	1	5	11	-1	-12	5	-5	-11	-5	-12	11	5	-5	7	-5	-11	12
17	-150	5	7	5	0	-6	7	0	-5	5	6	-7	6	5	-5	-6	-5	-7	-5	5	-5
18	60	2	5	6	0	-4	0	0	-6	2	0	0	4	0	-1	0	-2	-5	-2	1	0
19	210	5	3	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	5	2	-2	2	5	3	-2	-5	-3	-5	-3	-5
20	-260	8	-8	8	9	-8	8	-9	-8	11	-8	-8	8	-8	9	8	-11	8	-8	-9	8
IMP +		67	63	69	36	22	52	28	33	59	22	22	75	47	71	39	31	33	18	32	35
IMP -		18	33	33	28	75	22	36	69	31	39	52	22	35	32	22	59	63	67	71	47

DATUM

Round 6

No	DATUM	GR. BRITAIN		NAITO		CHINA		PABF WOMEN		USA		PABF YOUTH		YAMADA		PABF OPEN		TAKAYAMA		TATAI	
		N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W
1	420	-1	1	-1	1	9	-1	-1	1	1	-9	0	-1	-1	1	1	0	-1	1	-1	1
2	-340	-2	-10	-2	-4	5	2	10	2	-2	-5	-10	2	-2	2	-2	10	-2	2	4	2
3	-10	-1	4	-3	-3	3	1	-4	1	-1	-3	-3	-3	5	1	3	3	-1	-5	3	3
4	1070	-9	9	9	-9	-9	-9	-9	9	9	9	9	10	9	9	-10	-9	-9	-9	9	-9
5	610	0	0	2	0	0	-2	0	0	2	0	-3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	-2
6	-50	11	-14	-11	-11	-11	2	14	-11	-2	11	-2	-12	-11	11	12	2	-11	11	11	11
7	-70	-1	-10	-4	2	-4	1	10	1	-1	4	5	-5	-1	1	5	-5	-1	1	-2	4
8	450	0	11	1	1	1	1	-11	0	-1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	-1
9	30	-2	4	-4	-5	5	-10	-4	2	10	-5	-8	2	-2	-5	-2	8	5	2	5	4
10	620	1	0	-1	0	0	1	0	-1	-1	0	0	1	-1	0	-1	0	0	1	0	1
11	-470	0	0	0	-11	-11	11	0	0	-11	11	0	0	12	-1	0	0	1	-12	11	0
12	120	-6	0	-1	0	1	0	0	6	0	-1	0	-5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	1
13	-130	6	1	-1	-1	-2	-6	-1	-6	6	2	-13	1	-2	0	-1	13	0	2	1	1
14	120	-5	5	7	-7	-5	-7	-5	5	7	5	-5	-7	-5	5	7	5	-5	5	7	-7
15	-440	1	-1	0	0	0	-1	1	-1	1	0	-5	-10	1	0	10	5	0	-1	0	0
16	-80	-1	1	-11	1	5	1	-1	1	-1	-5	-1	-9	-1	1	9	1	-1	1	-1	11
17	-100	2	2	5	0	-2	2	-2	-2	-2	2	-2	-6	-2	2	6	2	-2	2	0	-5
18	-370	-1	-2	-4	-10	12	10	2	1	-10	-12	-4	1	-4	2	-1	4	-2	4	10	4
19	160	-2	2	4	1	-2	1	-2	2	-1	2	-2	-4	-2	-6	4	2	6	2	-1	-4
20	670	0	1	0	0	-1	0	-1	0	0	1	0	2	-1	0	-2	0	0	1	0	0
IMP +		21	41	28	6	41	33	37	31	36	47	14	19	27	35	62	58	12	35	61	43
IMP -		31	37	43	61	47	36	41	21	33	41	58	62	35	12	19	14	35	27	6	28