



NEC Bridge Festival

Sunday, February 3, 2002
Bulletin Number 6

Editors: Eric Kokish
Richard Colker

England Wins NEC Cup



Country	Team	1 st Qtr	2 nd Qtr	3 rd Qtr	4 th Qtr	Final
	England (+.5)	29	35	36	38	138
	Canada	48	39	23	22	132



NEC Cup Winners: England



NEC Cup 2nd Place: Canada



NEC Cup 3rd Place: Eng/Nor



NEC Cup 4th Place: e-bridge

England/Norway Wins Playoff for Bronze

Country	Team	1 st Half	2 nd Half	Final
	e-bridge (+.5)	8	47	55
	England/Norway	35	25	60

Today's Starting Times

Match	Starting Time	Rooms
Asuka Cup	10:00-17:00	Room 301 & 302
Closing Ceremony	18:00-19:00	Room 303 & 304

Netherlands Team Wins OUCHI Cup



Final Results

Rank	VP	Country	Team Members
1	200	Netherlands	Jan van Cleeff, Jan-Paul Vis, Huub Bertens, Ton Bakkeren
2	184	Taiwan	Violet Liu, Shu-Ying Hsuieh, Piggy Lin, Cindy Chang, Ton Cheng, Masayasu Oga
3	180	Japan	Kyoko Shimamura, Mitsue Tajima, Santje Panelewen, Tadashi Teramoto, Cheng Dawei
4	173	Austria/ Denmark	Tino Terraneo, Josef Simon, Morten Andersen, Soren Christiansen
5	170	PABF Open	Hideki Takano, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura, Hiroya Abe
6-7	167	Japan	Shoichi Kojitani, Mitsuru Yamashita, Hiromu Nishida, Yoshie Nishida
6-7	167	Japan	Yuko Yamada, Koji Yamada, Akira Morozumi, Zhang Shudi
8	165	Sweden	P.O. Sundelin, Johan Sylvan, Magnus Lindkvist, Peter Fredin
9	164	Japan	Takeshi Higashiguchi, Koichi Suzuki, Taku Yagura, Yoshitaka Narita, Kazunori Sasaki
10	160	India	Subhash Gupta, Kiran Nadar, B. Satyanarain, Rajesh Dalal



1st place; OUCHI Cup: The Netherlands



2nd place: OUCHI Cup: Taiwan



3rd place: OUCHI Cup: Japan

The Viking Experience

In the second half of yesterdays' semifinals, the following hand arose in which Kokish-san asked the eternal question, "Should fairly natural systems be able to reach seven on these N/S cards?" Well, we can't answer that question definitively (Kokish-san is still searching, even as I write this) but we do know that one of the pairs in the event reached seven on what to us seems as close to a "perfect" auction as you can hope to get. They are the Norwegians, Terje Aa and Glenn Groetheim, and they get your editors' *Best Bid Hand of the Tournament Award* (worth big bucks in some quarters, none of which, unfortunately, have ever heard of the Japanese Yen or the U.S. dollar). Here is their auction. Try to keep your mouth closed as you read it.

Bd: 13	North		
Dlr: North	♠ K9		
Vul: Both	♥ 7543		
	♦ Q10		
	♣ 98765		
West		East	
♠ J1073		♠ Q64	
♥ 6		♥ 98	
♦ J97		♦ 65432	
♣ KQ1043		♣ AJ2	
	South		
	♠ A852		
	♥ AKQJ102		
	♦ AK8		
	♣ ---		

West	North	East	South
	Aa		Groetheim
	Pass	Pass	1♣(1)
Pass	1♦(2)	Pass	1♥(3)
Pass	2♥(4)	Pass	2♠(5)
Pass	3♣(6)	Pass	3♦(5)
Pass	3♠(7)	Pass	4♣(5)
Pass	4♥(8)	Pass	4♠(5)
Pass	4NT(9)	Pass	5♠(5)
Pass	6♥(10)	Pass	7♥

- All Pass
- (1) 16+ HCP
 - (2) 0-8 HCP
 - (3) 20+ HCP
 - (4) 5-8 HCP, 5+ clubs, 4 in another suit
 - (5) Relay
 - (6) 4 hearts
 - (7) 2-4-2-5 distribution, precisely
 - (8) No aces
 - (9) 1 king
 - (10) Spade king!

Okay, so the auction wasn't natural. So sue us. If you'd like to find out more about the system that was responsible for this achievement, The Viking Precision Club, log onto the Internet and surf on over to www.vikingclub.net—and learn.



NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Call your friends and tell them that your exploits are being chronicled on the World Wide Web. They can follow all of the action at the 7th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

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

– or –

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

– or –

<http://www.greatbridgelinks.com>

The Final of The 2002 NEC Cup

by Eric Kokish

Although e-bridge and Mavromichalis (England/Norway) were favored to win their semifinal matches, someone must have forgotten to tell England and Canada about it. Both the underdogs won quite convincingly, England with a strong second half, Canada with a huge first set.

It would be foolish to make any predictions about the final, which features several active players and figures to be a high-scoring affair, so we'll wait for other opportunities to look foolish, something at which we are quite proficient.

England vs Canada over 64 boards in the main event, e-bridge vs Mavromichalis in the 32-board playoff for third.

First Quarter (Boards 1-16):

Bd: 1	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 965		
Vul: None	♥ J6542		
	♦ AQ94		
	♣ 3		
West	East		
♠ K873	♠ AQ42		
♥ AK9	♥ Q8		
♦ K63	♦ 105		
♣ 1074	♣ Q9865		
	South		
	♠ J10		
	♥ 1073		
	♦ J872		
	♣ AKJ2		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
Dbl	2♦	2♠	3♦
Pass	Pass	3♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♥	1♠	2♣*
2♠	3♦	3♥	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

While waiting for the bidding/play records to come in, I sometimes try to project what the auction will be. Here I thought that both **Pablo Lambardi** and **Kamel Fergani** might well open 1♣ in third seat, although it would be more attractive for Lambardi, playing four-card majors, because clubs tend to mean clubs. Fergani, playing five-card majors, might open 1♣ with three small and a minimum balanced hand in third or fourth position, in which he plays strong notrumps, so bidding clubs doesn't say much about wanting them led.

I also thought **Darren Wolpert**, with nothing in clubs, would double for takeout with his balanced hand, but that didn't come to pass. Enterprising bidding by both **Brian Senior** and Lambardi served to jockey **Jurek Czyzowicz** into 3♠, which was a trifle high. Lambardi cashed the ♣K, saw Senior's three, and switched not to the ♦J, but to the ♥7. Although that enabled declarer to discard a diamond on the third heart, there was still work to be done. Czyzowicz came to the ♠A to lead his remaining diamond, but ducked South's jack. A second trump went to the king and the ♣10 was passed to the jack and a third diamond tapped declarer, who played another club. Lambardi won and played a third diamond, forcing Czyzowicz to ruff with the ♠Q. Senior's mighty nine of trumps was the setting trick; -50.

Nicolas L'Ecuyer, having passed originally, felt free to keep on bidding once Fergani slipped in a fit-showing cue-bid that he hoped would direct a club lead in a relevant position. **John Armstrong** tried for game with 3♥ and Fergani had a chance to pass to warn of heart weakness. **Brian Callaghan** signed off and there they were, in the same 3♠ as their Canadian counterparts. Here, however, the defense slipped, Fergani starting with ♣A, then ♣K, North discarding the discouraging ♥6. Fergani switched to the ♦J, but when declarer covered there was no way for South to regain the lead to give his partner a club ruff. L'Ecuyer continued with ♦Q, diamond, but declarer ruffed and drew trumps; +140. 5 IMPs to England, 5-0.

Bd: 2	North		
Dlr: East	♠ 976		
Vul: N/S	♥ K865		
	♦ K1063		
	♣ AJ		
West		East	
♠ K108532		♠ Q	
♥ AJ3		♥ 97	
♦ 4		♦ AQJ875	
♣ Q95		♣ 6432	
	South		
	♠ AJ4		
	♥ Q1042		
	♦ 92		
	♣ K1087		
Open Room/Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
		3♦	All Pass

If both Easts opened 3♦ on the second deal of the match it's fair to say that this was an acceptable action. With only a six-card suit and a decent hand for defending, I think it's not clear-cut, but I suspect that having only three major-suit cards clinched the decision for our gladiators, who were left to rot. Fergani led a heart, ducked to the king, and L'Ecuyer cashed the ♣A before switching to the ♠6. Fergani won the ace, cashed the ♣K, and gave his partner a club ruff. A heart went to the queen and ace and Armstrong cashed the ♠K to discard his last club before taking the diamond finesse. L'Ecuyer got a trump trick for two down; -100.

Lambardi did better with his opening lead, the ♣8. Senior won the ♣J, cashed the ♣A, and switched to the ♥6 to the queen and ace. The ♣Q went to the king and Lambardi switched to the ♦9, ducked to the jack. Czyzowicz cashed the ♦A, and led the ♠Q, but Lambardi won, cashed the ♣10, and led the ♥10 through the jack. Senior still had two trump tricks coming so Czyzowicz was down four; -200. 3 IMPs to England, 8-0.



Not a bad payday, even in Australian dollars

Bd: 3	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K987		
Vul: E/W	♥ 103		
	♦ 982		
	♣ 10763		
West		East	
♠ Q		♠ 653	
♥ A8752		♥ 9	
♦ AJ75		♦ KQ1043	
♣ QJ4		♣ AK85	
	South		
	♠ AJ1042		
	♥ KQJ64		
	♦ 6		
	♣ 92		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			1♠
Dbl	3♠	Dbl*	Pass
4♥	Pass	5♦	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			1♠
Dbl	3♠	4NT*	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

With 6♦ virtually laydown, this deal will not make the highlight reel of either of the E/W pairs, but it is a difficult combination for them, with perfect fits in every suit. I'm not sure why Czyzowicz started with a responsive double and whether 4♥ was the right response to the double, the \$64,000 question being whether West shows a modest double with a modest five-card heart suit or a hand with big hearts, too strong for an overcall. I'd be pleased to have an agreement, one way or the other. If the second of these possibilities seems more attractive, West should bid 4♦ over the double. Here Czyzowicz's follow-up 5♦ did suggest a good hand, but only in context. I would expect less than this in high cards, but perhaps the partnership was on the same page.

Nor am I sure why Armstrong settled for a "minors" 4NT rather than cue-bid 4♠, but 4NT did make a statement about which suits East would deliver. I'm not sure slam is biddable with any confidence no matter what East does over 3♠.

The board was flat at E/W +620.

Canada scored its first IMP on Board 4 when Fergani cashed a trick against an easy 6♥ while Lambardi did not, and gained another on Board 5 when Fergani guessed the trumps better than Lambardi. It was 8-2 for England.

winners and England had an IMP, 9-2.

Bd: 6	North		
Dlr: East	♠ AK52		
Vul: E/W	♥ A7		
	♦ AK3		
	♣ AK52		
West			East
♠ Q3			♠ 10964
♥ K986			♥ J54
♦ Q109652			♦ 8
♣ 4			♣ 109863
	South		
	♠ J87		
	♥ Q1032		
	♦ J74		
	♣ QJ7		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	Pass
Pass	2♠	Pass	2♦*
Pass	3NT	Pass	2NT*
Pass		Pass	4♠
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	Pass
Pass	2♥*	Pass	2♦*
Pass	2NT	Pass	2♠*
Pass	3♠	Pass	3♣
Pass		Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Bd: 8	North		
Dlr: West	♠ A105		
Vul: None	♥ A9763		
	♦ A8		
	♣ AKJ		
West			East
♠ Q982			♠ 43
♥ Q1084			♥ KJ
♦ KQ			♦ J9754
♣ Q75			♣ 10983
	South		
	♠ KJ76		
	♥ 52		
	♦ 10632		
	♣ 642		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
1NT	Dbl	2♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	2♦	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Why did Senior rebid 2♠? Perhaps because he didn't want to rebid 3NT. "No," says Colkersan, "it's his four-card-major mind set." The sad part is that he may be right. Lambardi, with more than his share of the outstanding high cards, could not rule out slam, but had not yet shown spade support (perhaps 3♠ was unacceptable at his previous turn) so he felt he had to leave the safe haven of 3NT to show it. With nine top tricks in 3NT (L'Ecuyer made only two spade tricks by leading low to the jack), it was not such a good idea to try 4♠, which was not cold. Senior, however, made it so by winning the diamond lead in hand and cashing the ♠AK. When the queen dropped, he had ten

Senior, in 3NT, got the lead of the ♦5 to the queen and ace. He ducked a heart and the ♦9 went to the king. Wolpert returned the ♥Q, which Senior took to play another heart. Wolpert won and switched to the ♣7, which Senior won to clear hearts. Wolpert returned the ♣5 and Senior decided to rely on spades or an endplay. He won the ♣K, cashed his heart (♠8 from Wolpert, discouraging), and decided to play East for the ♠Q, taking a second round finesse. Wolpert won and cashed the onside ♣Q, which was not the card Senior was hoping to see. Two down; -100.

The auction was much more exciting in the other room, where Fergani decided to pass L'Ecuyer's 1♥ opening. Whether L'Ecuyer's double of 2♣ was systemically for takeout or penalty is probably not in the system notes, but it would appear that Fergani expected some spade length when he bid 2♠ rather than double 2♦ (which would have gone down at least 500). In 4♠, Fergani ducked the lead of

the $\diamond K$, won the diamond continuation, ducked a heart, won the heart continuation, cashed the $\clubsuit AK$, and led a heart, scoring the $\spadesuit 7$. He led a diamond through Callaghan, who discarded the $\clubsuit Q$ and permitted declarer to score the $\spadesuit 5$; another safe heart ruff followed, and another diamond was ruffed with the $\spadesuit 10$. Declarer had ten tricks now for +420. 11 IMPs to Canada, ahead 13-9.

Bd: 9	North		
Dlr: North	$\spadesuit AQ1074$		
Vul: E/W	$\heartsuit J62$		
	$\diamond 6$		
	$\clubsuit 9852$		
West	East		
$\spadesuit J982$	$\spadesuit K3$		
$\heartsuit K8$	$\heartsuit A10754$		
$\diamond KQ10987$	$\diamond J43$		
$\clubsuit 10$	$\clubsuit Q74$		
	South		
	$\spadesuit 65$		
	$\heartsuit Q93$		
	$\diamond A52$		
	$\clubsuit AKJ63$		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	$2\spadesuit$	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	$2\diamond^*$	Pass	$2\spadesuit^*$
All Pass			

In reply to the question, "Is the North hand a mandatory weak two-bid in first seat, neither vulnerable?" We expect all the finalist to yell "yes" at us. Czyzowicz led the $\clubsuit 4$ against Senior, who played the ace and led a spade to the ten and king. The diamond switch went to the ace and declarer played two high trumps, then took the marked club finesse when Czyzowicz followed with the seven; +140.

Fergani, declaring the same contract from the short side, was not treated to the same information about the clubs. When he won the opening lead of the $\diamond K$ with the ace and led a spade to the ten, Armstrong followed low painlessly. Fergani crossed to the $\clubsuit A$ and led a second spade to the *jack* (good man, Brian) and queen. Armstrong won and forced dummy with a diamond. Fergani ruffed and tried a club

to the king, but Callaghan ruffed and forced dummy again. Fergani drew the last trump and conceded a club, but the defenders had the rest for two down; -100, a three-trick difference from the Open Room result. 6 IMPs to England, back in front, 15-13.

Bd: 10	North		
Dlr: East	$\spadesuit A10986$		
Vul: Both	$\heartsuit A743$		
	$\diamond 104$		
	$\clubsuit J9$		
West	East		
$\spadesuit J54$	$\spadesuit KQ7$		
$\heartsuit K52$	$\heartsuit 6$		
$\diamond 6$	$\diamond QJ872$		
$\clubsuit Q107654$	$\clubsuit K832$		
	South		
	$\spadesuit 32$		
	$\heartsuit QJ1098$		
	$\diamond AK953$		
	$\clubsuit A$		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		$1\diamond$	$1\heartsuit$
Pass	$2\spadesuit^*$	Pass	$4\heartsuit$
Dbl	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
		$1\diamond$	$1\heartsuit$
Pass	$2\spadesuit^*$	Pass	$4\heartsuit$
All Pass			

Both North's advanced their partners' $1\heartsuit$ overcall with a fit-showing jump to $2\spadesuit$ and South did the rest. Callaghan passed and led his singleton diamond to the queen and ace. Fergani drew trumps and ducked a spade and could not be prevented from taking 12 tricks: +680.

Wolpert, opening the top buttons on his polo shirt, doubled $4\heartsuit$, aiming to alert his partner to the singleton diamond, with hopes of getting in with the $\heartsuit K$. Lambardi played the $\diamond 10$ from dummy at trick one, took the queen with the ace and ducked a spade. Now Wolpert got a diamond ruff, so Lambardi took only eleven tricks. Still, that was +990 and 7 IMPs to England, ahead 22-13.

Bd: 11	North		
Dlr: South	♠ KQ95		
Vul: None	♥ KJ97		
	♦ 8743		
	♣ 6		
West		East	
♠ J6		♠ 732	
♥ Q86532		♥ 4	
♦ J106		♦ A92	
♣ K10		♣ QJ8754	
	South		
	♠ A1084		
	♥ A10		
	♦ KQ5		
	♣ A932		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			1♠
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	DbI	5♦
Pass	6♠	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			1♣
2♥	Pass	Pass	DbI
All Pass			

Callaghan's weak jump to 2♥ ran into a takeout double and penalty pass, but he escaped for four down, Fergani breaking diamonds after winning the ♣A; -800.

Lambardi had a good hand in context after Senior's club splinter, but 6♠ needed more than a little luck to get home. Lambardi took the lead of the ♣K with his ace, ruffed a club, and led a diamond to the king. He crossed to a trump, led another diamond and found the ace onside with no diamond ruff forthcoming. He won the trump continuation in dummy, crossed to the ♦Q, ruffed another club, came to the ♥A, drew the last trump, and claimed, using the ♥K as the entry to discard his last club on the long diamond. Plus 980. Whew! 5 IMPs to England, 27-11.



"Which way's the gallows?"

Bd: 12	North		
Dlr: West	♠ Q85		
Vul: N/S	♥ A43		
	♦ 10653		
	♣ 642		
West		East	
♠ 743		♠ AJ1096	
♥ J1085		♥ Q2	
♦ Q8		♦ K42	
♣ AK105		♣ Q73	
	South		
	♠ K2		
	♥ K976		
	♦ AJ97		
	♣ J98		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♠*	DbI
Pass	3♦	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

Nice convention, Drury, especially if it stops West from having to make a bid as repulsive as 3♠. Armstrong made 3♠ without much difficulty; +140.

Czyzowicz's 2♠ was regressive, so Lambardi pre-balanced with a takeout double that managed to hit an eight-card fit. That was the good news. On the other front, Senior went down 300 on the lead of the ♥Q. 4 IMPs to Canada, 17-27.

Bd: 13	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A4		
Vul: Both	♥ K842		
	♦ J732		
	♣ K73		
West		East	
♠ QJ10852		♠ K96	
♥ 10753		♥ 9	
♦ 6		♦ AQ1094	
♣ 52		♣ AJ106	
	South		
	♠ 73		
	♥ AQJ6		
	♦ K85		
	♣ Q984		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	1♦	1♥
1♠	2♠*	Dbl*	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Dbl
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Dbl	4♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			

Both Norths led a heart against 4♠ doubled, L'Ecuyer the four, Senior the king. In the Closed Room, Fergani won the ♥A and switched to trumps, L'Ecuyer playing ace and another. Callaghan won in hand and led a diamond to the queen, a big favorite to win. It didn't, however, and Fergani switched to a club to the king and ace. Callaghan threw a club on the ♦A, and ran the ♦10 to the jack for one down; -200.

In the Open Room, Senior switched to the ♣3 at trick two. Wolpert won the ace, played ♦A, diamond ruff, heart ruff, diamond ruff, felling the king, heart ruff, ♦Q, ruffed and over-ruffed, heart ruff; +790. 14 IMPs to Canada, back in front, 31-27.

England recouped 2 IMPs on the next deal when Wolpert misguessed a key suit to go down an extra trick in a doomed 3NT, 29-31, but the next deal was more exciting...

Bd: 15	North		
Dlr: South	♠ A72		
Vul: N/S	♥ K		
	♦ K1096		
	♣ AKJ106		
West		East	
♠ Q8		♠ K1064	
♥ J1084		♥ 9752	
♦ J87543		♦ 2	
♣ 4		♣ 9752	
	South		
	♠ J953		
	♥ AQ63		
	♦ AQ		
	♣ Q83		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♣
Pass	7♣	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			1NT
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3NT*
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

Even if we can't tell you about all of the bids in the Closed Room, we can tell you that Senior/Lambardi outbid L'Ecuyer/Fergani to reach a very good 7♣. Unfortunately for England, there is an obligation to play out the hand, and in the course of doing so, after cashing two high trumps and unblocking the ♥K, Senior had to endure the disappointment of Czyzowicz ruffing the ♦Q. A fourth trump beat 7♣ two tricks; -200. Argghhh.

In 6♣ L'Ecuyer had 12 top tricks and did not try for a diamond ruff for 13; +1370. 17 IMPs to Canada, 48-29.

The last deal of the set was flat, so Canada took their 19-IMP lead into the second quarter without any visible feelings of guilt.



Our hard-working staff are waiting to serve you

The Final of the NEC Cup

by Rich Colker

At the end of the first quarter, Canada had a 19-IMP lead, 48-29. We pick up the action in quarter two.

Second Quarter (Boards 17-32):

Bd: 17	North		
Dlr: North	♠ Q10876		
Vul: None	♥ KQ42		
	♦ Q86		
	♣ 7		
West		East	
♠ K		♠ J542	
♥ AJ65		♥ 109	
♦ A954		♦ J3	
♣ J642		♣ AKQ109	
	South		
	♠ A93		
	♥ 873		
	♦ K1072		
	♣ 853		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	2♥(1)	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass
(1) Both majors, less than 10 HCP			

Both games suffered from similar deficiencies: a lack of tricks/too many losers. Czyzowicz ducked the ♦7 lead to the queen, won the diamond return, and played the ♠K, preparing for a crossruff. When Senior won and played a club, Czyzowicz was a trump short. Now he had to try the double diamond finesse and when that failed he ended two down; -100.

Armstrong received the ♠A lead and a diamond shift. he ducked to the queen and the ♦8 came back, jack, king ace. Now there was nothing left but to try the double heart finesse and when both lost, he finished down one; -50. 2 IMP to England, trailing 48-31.

The next board was a push at +120 all. Then...

Bd: 19	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K5		
Vul: E/W	♥ 54		
	♦ AJ8543		
	♣ Q82		
West		East	
♠ Q942		♠ AJ873	
♥ QJ1076		♥ A82	
♦ K72		♦ 96	
♣ 9		♣ K75	
	South		
	♠ 106		
	♥ K93		
	♦ Q10		
	♣ AJ10643		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	4♠	Pass
2♥(1)	Pass	4♠	All Pass
(1) Majors, 3-10 HCP			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			1NT(1)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
(1) 11-14 HCP			

Wolpert/Czyzowicz blew Senior/Lambardi right out of the auction with their "Majors light" 2♥ opening. Czyzowicz lost the obvious four tricks and ended one down; -100.

If you count points for your extra club length you could open an 11-14 notrump, as Fergani did here. Had Callaghan found a spade lead this would have been the same sad declarer story as at the other table, but who can blame him when he chose the ♥Q and now Fergani was home free, although he did not know it yet. Armstrong won the ♥A and returned a heart. Fergani won the king and set about diamonds, running six tricks as he pitched two clubs along the way. When the ♣Q was covered he had four clubs to go with his seven red-suit tricks to score a nifty +460. That was 8 IMPs to Canada who now led 56-31.

Bd: 20	North		
Dlr: West	♠ AJ96		
Vul: Both	♥ 108642		
	♦ K		
	♣ KQ7		
West		East	
♠ Q8754		♠ 10	
♥ K7		♥ A5	
♦ AQ2		♦ J1076543	
♣ 953		♣ 1082	
	South		
	♠ K32		
	♥ QJ93		
	♦ 98		
	♣ AJ64		

Both N/S pairs reached the good 4♥ from the North seat, but both Czyzowicz and Armstrong found the ♠10 opening lead, rose with the ♥A at trick two, and put their partner in with the ♦A to obtain their ruff for down one. Exciting, but no swing.

Bd: 21	North		
Dlr: North	♠ KJ3		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q8532		
	♦ Q764		
	♣ 10		
West		East	
♠ 942		♠ A65	
♥ A		♥ KJ96	
♦ AJ108		♦ 2	
♣ AJ876		♣ K5432	
	South		
	♠ Q1087		
	♥ 1074		
	♦ K953		
	♣ Q9		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠*	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	Pass	1♣*	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♥*	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠*	Pass
4♦*	Pass	4♠*	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	All Pass

Both Wests made an inverted club raise, although Armstrong's 1♣ opening could have been made on as few as two. We suspect the subsequent Canadian auction showed a game-forcing responding hand and the rest were cue-bids after which Wolpert judged well to bid the slam. The play was pretty straightforward and Czyzowicz emerged with 12 tricks; +920.

The Brits started out similarly, but somewhere along the way things got a bit off track. While we can't be sure, we suspect that 4NT was not interpreted the same way on the two sides of the screen. Armstrong may well have thought it a form of DI because of the cue-bidding auction while Callaghan might have intended it as RKCB and taken 5♣ as zero key cards. For whatever reason, the auction ended abruptly and the Brits scored up an unhappy +420. 11 IMPS to Canada, now leading 67-31.

Bd: 22	North		
Dlr: East	♠ KJ7		
Vul: E/W	♥ Q104		
	♦ 952		
	♣ AK82		
West		East	
♠ Q432		♠ A9	
♥ J6		♥ K9532	
♦ AKQJ86		♦ 73	
♣ 6		♣ J1093	
	South		
	♠ 10865		
	♥ A87		
	♦ 104		
	♣ Q754		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦	Dbf	1♥	1♠
2♦	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦	All Pass		

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦	Dbl	1♥	1♠
2♦	Pass	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Call us conservative, but after contributing 1♠ on the South hand on the first round it would not occur to rebid 2♠ over 2♦. Lambardi got away with it, however, when Czynowicz backed in with 2NT and the Canadian's came to rest in 3♦. With four obvious losers and nowhere to get rid of any of them, Wolpert scored up +110.

Fergani was not as fortunate as Lambardi as the Strong Armed one did not see fit to balance over 2♠. Callaghan led the ♦AKQ and Fergani was forced to ruff. A spade went to the jack and ace and back came the ♣J, won in dummy with the king. When the ♠K brought down the nine, fergani suspected that the suit was four-two and played a club to the queen. Callaghan ruffed, drew the remaining trumps with the queen, and ran his diamonds for three down; -150. 1 IMP back to England, 32-67.

Bd: 23	North		
Dlr: South	♠ AJ7652		
Vul: Both	♥ 7		
	♦ 3		
	♣ J6532		
West		East	
♠ 9843		♠ ---	
♥ AKJ43		♥ Q10962	
♦ 42		♦ A10985	
♣ 94		♣ K87	
	South		
	♠ KQ10		
	♥ 85		
	♦ KQJ76		
	♣ AQ10		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czynowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			1♦
1♥	1♠	3♠*	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	Dbl
Pass	5♠	All Pass	

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			1♦
1♥	1♠	3♠*	Dbl*
4♥	4♠	5♦	Dbl
5♥	Pass	Pass	5♠
Pass	Pass	6♥	Dbl
All Pass			

We prefer a fit-showing 3♦ over 1♠ with the East hand, but perhaps that action wasn't available to the players here. Both Easts showed their spade splinter and bid on to the five level over 4♠. Czynowicz was content to let it go at that and Senior had only the two red aces to lose in 5♠ and scored up an easy +650.

Armstrong showed his diamonds, then took the 6♥ "save" after his partner elected not to bid on. Justice was done when the diamonds failed to split and the defense was able to get in two rounds of trumps to hold declarer to nine tricks; -800. 4 more IMPs to Canada, 71-32.

Bd: 24	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 86		
Vul: None	♥ K87543		
	♦ 9		
	♣ J1085		
West		East	
♠ AQ4		♠ KJ1053	
♥ J		♥ A106	
♦ AQJ1064		♦ 873	
♣ KQ9		♣ 32	
	South		
	♠ 972		
	♥ Q92		
	♦ K52		
	♣ A764		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czynowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1♦	2♥	Dbl	3♦*
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
1♦	2♥	2♠*	3♥
4♥*	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Czyzowicz's 4♠ looks like a cue-bid in support of diamonds and Wolpert probably bid the slam thinking he was facing two key cards as well as the ♠K. Perhaps Czyzowicz thought spades was trumps (at least for RKCB purposes) since his 5♥ bid suggests two key cards. In any case, the Canadians have been living right up to now so why should anything change at this late date? Senior led the ♠8 and Wolpert won the ten to take the diamond finesse. A heart to the ace and another diamond finesse allowed him to claim 12 tricks; +920.

There's nothing on the Brit's convention card that suggests that Armstrong's 2♠ bid was non-forcing, but perhaps they don't require much to get into the fray. It's even possible that, because their 1♦ opening tends to show a five-card suit Armstrong was prepared to force his side to 3♦. Even so, it is hard to see how he could have any less for his 2♠ bid and, that being the case, how Callaghan could not make at least one more try for slam. On the heart lead he played safe for ten tricks and ended up taking 11 when he might have equally easily have taken 12. Plus 450 was 10 more IMPs to Canada, who increased their lead to 49 IMPs at 81-32.

But the tide was about to change.

Bd: 25	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 62		
Vul: E/W	♥ J10932		
	♦ AJ853		
	♣ 9		
West		East	
♠ 105		♠ AK84	
♥ K86		♥ AQ54	
♦ K62		♦ Q	
♣ A7632		♣ KJ104	
	South		
	♠ QJ973		
	♥ 7		
	♦ 10974		
	♣ Q85		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	2♥	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	2♦(1)	Dbf	2♥(2)
3♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♣	All Pass
(1) A weak two-bid in a major			
(2) Pass or correct			

If Czyzowicz seems a tad heavy for his 2NT bid his singleton diamond is not exactly a proven asset. Wolpert had extras for his 3NT but he had no real reason to expect any more than game facing a typical 2NT overcall. Lambardi led the ♠Q to the ace and Czyzowicz took the percentage line of ♣K, ♣J and let it ride. The play record does not indicate where the twelfth trick came from, but he scored up +690.

6♣ is not the best slam we've ever seen, but it's certainly far from the worst. The Multi-like auction enabled Callaghan to show his modest club suit naturally and now Armstrong, never the one to beat around the bush, rolled out "the tool" and drove the buggy right into the slam. Again with the help of North's opening two-bid there was no problem finding the ♣Q and the slam rolled home; +1370. 12 IMPs back to England, trailing now by 37 at 44-81.

Let's discuss hand evaluation...

Bd: 26	North		
Dlr: East	♠ K		
Vul: Both	♥ K82		
	♦ A8764		
	♣ AJ52		
West		East	
♠ Q7432		♠ A10	
♥ Q		♥ AJ109	
♦ K10932		♦ 5	
♣ Q7		♣ K98643	
	South		
	♠ J9865		
	♥ 76543		
	♦ QJ		
	♣ 10		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	Pass	5♣	Pass
Pass	Dbf	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	All Pass

I like the East hand. I'm not exactly enraptured by my clubs but I like the controls, texture and shape. Opposite ♣Axxx♥Kx I think I can make game while ♣Axxx♥x♠Kx(...) gives me a play for slam. Did I say I like the East hand? I do.

I don't like the West hand. Yes, if East has an off-shape strong notrump not suited to a jump shift or reverse (e.g., ♠Ax♥KJxx♦J♣AKxxxx) you might make game. But with such ugly soft values there will be many other hands where even the three level will be too high or where partner will move and...well, let's take a look.

Senior's double was of the "sporting" variety. Lambardi led the ♦Q, ducked, followed by the ♦J covered and ruffed. Czyzowicz cashed the ♥A and passed the ♥J to Senior's king. A third diamond brought the ♠10 from Czyzowicz and the ♣10 from Lambardi, who tried the ♠J to the king and ace. Trapped in his hand, Czyzowicz still had to lose two trump tricks and he finished three down; -800. Unlucky?

Callaghan/Armstrong somehow managed to stop in a sensible 2♣ and made an overtrick for +110. Win 14. Now England trailed by only 23, 58-81.

Two push boards followed. Then came...



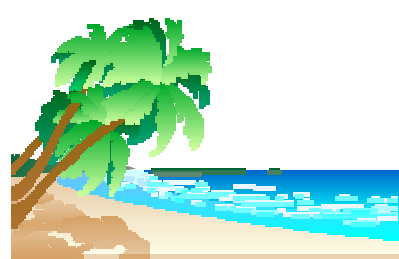
"No appeals!"

Bd: 29	North		
Dir: North	♠ J7		
Vul: Both	♥ 1093		
	♦ A8		
	♣ A76543		
West		East	
♠ 102		♠ KQ8653	
♥ AJ872		♥ 5	
♦ KQJ64		♦ 10952	
♣ Q		♣ J9	
		South	
		♠ A94	
		♥ KQ64	
		♦ 73	
		♣ K1082	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	2♦*	Dbf*
2♠*	3♣	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	3♣	Pass	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

Both Easts showed a weak two-bid in a major. Lambardi doubled, showing values, and Senior competed to 3♣ (only) over Callaghan's pass-or-correct 2♠, ending the auction. Czyzowicz led his singleton heart and 3♣ had four obvious losers; +110.

Even though L'Ecuyer was a passed hand, his 3♣ bid still wasn't chopped liver. So why didn't Fergani show any signs of life—ever? If one of North's spades had been a diamond (not exactly unlikely on the auction) 4♣ would have been cold, as would 3♠. Callaghan lost two spades and one trick in each minor for +140. 6 more IMPs to England, who closed to within 17 at 64-81.

The next board was a push in 4♥ making.



Bd: 31	North		
Dlr: South	♠ J		
Vul: N/S	♥ AK8654		
	♦ 874		
	♣ 1087		
West	East		
♠ Q1097432	♠ AK8		
♥ ---	♥ Q973		
♦ KQ95	♦ J6		
♣ 62	♣ KJ53		
	South		
	♠ 65		
	♥ J102		
	♦ A1032		
	♣ AQ94		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			1♦
3♠	Dbl	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

Third Quarter (Boards 33-48):

The third quarter started off quietly when both sides bid to 1NT and made it. The first swing came on board...

Bd: 34	North		
Dlr: East	♠ QJ932		
Vul: N/S	♥ K1076		
	♦ 52		
	♣ A6		
West	East		
♠ A64	♠ 1075		
♥ 43	♥ A92		
♦ Q3	♦ A986		
♣ J109843	♣ KQ7		
	South		
	♠ K8		
	♥ QJ85		
	♦ KJ1074		
	♣ 52		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		1♦	Pass
1NT	Dbl	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
		1♣*	1♦
2♠*	Dbl	3♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

Lambardi's jump to 4♥ when he had all the room in the world to invite seems precipitous. When Wolpert led the ♣J, Lambardi had four unavoidable losers; -100.

Armstrong's 1♣ might have been as few as two and Callaghan's 2♠ was a transfer to clubs. L'Ecuyer doubled to show spades and then balanced over 3♣ since he had learned that the hand was as likely to be his as the Brits'. In this case he was right. 3♥ just made and +140 was worth 6 IMPs to Canada, who led 93-64.

The Open Room auction seems like a sensible one and 4♠ had three inescapable losers for +420.

Once Lambardi opened the bidding one can't blame Senior for thinking the hand was his. Was Armstrong entitled to think so also? We'll leave it to the reader to judge. Against 5♥ John led the ♠AK. L'Ecuyer ruffed the second, cashed the ♥A getting the bad news, and led the ♣8 passing it when John ducked. The ♣10 came next, jack, queen and L'Ecuyer overtook the second heart and finessed the ♣9. One diamond went away on the fourth club so he ended up losing a spade, two hearts and a diamond for two down; -200. That was 6 IMPs back to Canada.

The final board was another push game.

The half came to a close with Canada leading by 23 at 87-64. Thirty-two boards left for the 2002 NEC Cup.



Bd: 35	North		
Dlr: South	♠ Q94		
Vul: E/W	♥ Q108		
	♦ AQ		
	♣ Q10653		
West		East	
♠ A8		♠ J1053	
♥ K432		♥ A7	
♦ 95432		♦ J76	
♣ AK		♣ J872	
	South		
	♠ K762		
	♥ J965		
	♦ K108		
	♣ 94		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
1♦	Dbf	Pass	1♠
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♥
Pass	2♠	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			Pass
1NT	All Pass		

But for the duplication in diamonds 2♠ might have been a perfectly acceptable spot. Wolpert led the ♣K, then the ♣A, Czyzowicz playing the eight then the seven, which must have seemed low to Wolpert as he shifted to the ♦5. Pablo rose with the ace and played the ♠Q. Wolpert won, led a heart to Czyzowicz's ace, and ruffed the club return as Lambardi pitched a heart. He then cashed the ♥K, led a heart for Czyzowicz to ruff, and with another trump still to lose Lambardi found himself three down; -150.

Against 1NT L'Ecuyer started with a low club. Callaghan won and played a diamond to the queen, won the ♥A, played the ♦J to the king and ace, won the heart return in hand to knock out the ♦10. The defenders could cash two hearts but Callaghan had seven tricks for +90. But that was still 2 IMPs to Canada, 95-64.

The next board was a flat 3NT. Then came another game decision.

Bd: 37	North		
Dlr: North	♠ AQ853		
Vul: N/S	♥ KJ83		
	♦ J5		
	♣ 95		
West		East	
♠ K62		♠ 10974	
♥ 107654		♥ AQ	
♦ K		♦ Q106432	
♣ KQ72		♣ 10	
	South		
	♠ J		
	♥ 92		
	♦ A987		
	♣ AJ8643		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	1♠	3♦	3NT
All Pass			

Senior/Lambardi did well to stop in 2NT—not that they had any particular reason to be even that high. Wolpert led a heart to queen and Czyzowicz returned a diamond, ducked to the king. A heart to the ace was followed by the ♦Q to Lambardi's ace. Pablo now made a great play by leading the ♣J from hand (unblocking the nine from dummy). Had the opposing clubs been reversed this would have established a tenace for him behind East's ♣H72. Alas, not today. Wolpert won the ♣Q and, not wishing to open up spades, led a third heart. Pablo won the jack, led a spade to the jack, ducked(?), and drove out the ♦10. Jasek exited with what figured to be a safe spade, but turned out to give up the contract. Pablo now cashed dummy's two spades and ♥K, then came to hand with the ♣A to take his eighth trick in the form of the ♦8; a fantastic +120.

Armstrong's 3♦ overcall somehow persuaded Fergani to overbid to 3NT—not that that figured to take much persuasion judging from the past 36 boards. Callaghan led the ♦K ducked, and shifted to a heart. Armstrong won the queen and exited with the ♦Q. Fergani won the ace and passed the ♥9 back to Armstrong's ace.

He cashed the $\diamond 10$ and exited with the $\spadesuit 10$, jack, king, ace. Fergani cashed the $\heartsuit J$, then led the $\clubsuit 9$ to the ten, jack, and queen. He won the spade return, cashed the $\heartsuit K$, and led dummy's last club hoping to find that East had started with the king-ten doubleton. But alas it was not to be. Two down, -200. 8 IMPs for England, trailing now by 23 at 72-95.

Bd: 38	North		
Dlr: East	$\spadesuit 987$		
Vul: E/W	$\heartsuit Q943$	$\diamond K102$	$\clubsuit 854$
West	East		
$\spadesuit K653$	$\spadesuit A42$		
$\heartsuit AK106$	$\heartsuit ---$		
$\diamond QJ6$	$\diamond 98743$		
$\clubsuit 73$	$\clubsuit AQJ106$		
	South		
	$\spadesuit QJ10$		
	$\heartsuit J8752$		
	$\diamond A5$		
	$\clubsuit K92$		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		$1\diamond$	Pass
$1\heartsuit$	Pass	$2\clubsuit$	Pass
$2\spadesuit^*$	Pass	$3\clubsuit$	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
		$1\diamond$	$1\heartsuit$
$1\spadesuit$	$2\heartsuit$	$3\clubsuit$	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Senior's $\spadesuit 8$ lead went to the jack and king. Wolpert played clubs from the top, Lambardi winning the second round to continue the $\spadesuit Q$. Wolpert won, cashed dummy's clubs (pitching two hearts and a spade), and led the $\diamond 9$ and passed it when Lambardi played low. Senior won the ten and tried a low heart to the jack and ace. The $\diamond Q$ drove out the ace and Lambardi cashed the $\spadesuit 10$ before exiting with a heart. But that was Wolpert's last trick and he ended one down; -100.

L'Ecuyer led his partner's hearts and Callaghan won the jack with the ace to play a club to the queen, which held. Next came a diamond to the queen and king and back came a diamond to

the ace. Fergani, instead of shifting back to hearts, tried the $\spadesuit Q$. Now Callaghan had the timing to establish his clubs and finished with nine trick; +600. That was 12 IMPs to England, who closed to within 11 at 84-95.

Bd: 39	North		
Dlr: South	$\spadesuit A87$		
Vul: Both	$\heartsuit 8$	$\diamond AK9854$	$\clubsuit 652$
West	East		
$\spadesuit 64$	$\spadesuit KJ10932$		
$\heartsuit 6532$	$\heartsuit Q$		
$\diamond QJ103$	$\diamond 62$		
$\clubsuit 1094$	$\clubsuit AKJ8$		
	South		
	$\spadesuit Q5$		
	$\heartsuit AKJ10974$		
	$\diamond 7$		
	$\clubsuit Q73$		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			$4\heartsuit$
Pass	Pass	$4\spadesuit$	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
			$4\heartsuit$
Pass	Pass	$4\spadesuit$	All Pass

Lambardi led the $\heartsuit AK$ as Czyzowicz ruffed the second round and deftly thumbed the $\spadesuit K$ on the table. Senior won the ace, cashed two rounds of diamonds, and continued with a third diamond, ruffed with the $\spadesuit 9$ and overruffed. Lambardi exited with a heart. Czyzowicz ruffed, cashed the $\spadesuit J$, and played the... $\clubsuit J$! When Lambardi ducked, Czyzowicz was out for two down; -500. Nice.

L'Ecuyer cannot have had any red cards in his bid box but even that does not explain his failure to double $4\spadesuit$ after Fergani's vulnerable $4\heartsuit$ opening. Fergani led the $\heartsuit K$ and shifted to a...club. When dummy's ten held Armstrong played a trump to the jack and queen and Fergani tried a diamond. L'Ecuyer won the king and shifted back to clubs. They say "what goes around, comes around," and it has never been truer than here. Armstrong inserted the jack and back came the defenders' club trick.

So when all was said and done Armstrong lost two spades, one heart, two diamonds and one club for three down, -300. Still, that was 5 IMPs to England, who trailed now 89-95.

On the next board Canada picked up 1 IMP on an overtrick, increasing their lead to 7 at 96-89.

Bd: 41	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A53		
Vul: E/W	♥ K9		
	♦ QJ9854		
	♣ 76		
West			East
♠ Q1064			♠ J2
♥ J8532			♥ AQ10764
♦ 763			♦ K
♣ 5			♣ AQ93
	South		
	♠ K987		
	♥		
	♦ A102		
	♣ KJ10842		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1♦	1♥	2♣
3♥	Pass	Pass	3♠
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
	1♦	1♥	1♠
3♥	Pass	4♣	Dbl
4♥	Pass	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	Dbl	All Pass

Mr. Senior. meet Mr. Lambardi. Senior opens the bidding, Lambardi makes a two-over-one (albeit in competition), then bids a new suit at the three level, and Senior passes. It's enough to drive a person to checkers. It's not surprising that 3♠ went down, but neither is it surprising that 5♦ is a lot closer to making than 3♣. Wolpert led the ♥2, king, ace, ruff. Lambardi played the ♦A and when the king fell he played a second diamond toward dummy. trying to tap the long trump hand. But Czyzowicz ruffed with the short trumps and now Lambardi was in trouble. Another heart was ruffed and two rounds of trumps drawn with the king and ace, revealing the bad news. One more diamond and the defense claimed down three; -150.

Oh, and the vulnerable 4♥ game is cold on the trump finesse and it's hard to imagine East not bidding it after West's preemptive heart raise.

In the Closed Room the Canadians sensibly, if unluckily, found their way to 5♦—even if as a save. (Note: the Brits found their 4♥ game and knew whose hand it was.) Armstrong started the ♠J and L'Ecuyer won in hand to lead a club up. John rose with the ace and continued a second spade to the ace. The ♣K was ruffed and the two high spades cashed, promoting East's ♦K; two down, -300. 4 IMPs to England, who drew to within 3 at 93-96.

Bd: 42	North		
Dlr: East	♠ J63		
Vul: Both	♥ 53		
	♦ AKQJ4		
	♣ 753		
West			East
♠ A82			♠ Q1075
♥ AQ8			♥ J1094
♦ 109532			♦ 7
♣ 84			♣ AKQ9
	South		
	♠ K94		
	♥ K762		
	♦ 86		
	♣ J1062		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1NT	All Pass

The rule is: never raise opener's second suit without four-card support. 4♥ was not a bad contract—it just didn't make. But that's what tends to happen when you play fast and lose with the odds. Lambardi led the ♦8 and was surprised to find that it was still his lead at trick two. This time he tried a trump and the ♥Q won in dummy. Czyzowicz played a spade to the ten and king and back came another heart, won in hand with the nine. But when Senior showed out on the third round of trumps, things were not

looking good. Czyzowicz ruffed a diamond, played two rounds of spades ending in his hand, cashed the ♣AK and then played the last spade. South ruffed but had to come to one more club trick for one down: -100.

The Brits' auction in the Closed Room was far more sensible: 12 opposite 10 with no eight-card fit belongs in 1NT. Fergani led a heart to the nine and a second heart went to the queen. A spade to the queen and king left Fergani on lead at trick four and he tried a low club—with even less success than his original heart lead. Armstrong won the nine, cashed three more clubs, played a heart to the ace, and exited with a diamond to endplay L'Ecuyer for the last two spade tricks; +150. 6 IMPs to England, 99-96.

The Brits were in the lead for the first time since the first quarter.

Both teams failed in a reasonable 4♠ game on the next board. Then...

Bd: 44	North		
Dlr: West	♠ AQ2		
Vul: N/S	♥ 53		
	♦ QJ8		
	♣ K10843		
West	East		
♠ KJ9863	♠ 104		
♥ 6	♥ AKQ102		
♦ 762	♦ K105		
♣ 762	♣ Q95		
	South		
	♠ 75		
	♥ J9874		
	♦ A943		
	♣ AJ		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Czyzowicz</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
3♠	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>L'Ecuyer</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Fergani</i>
2♦*	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	3NT	Dbl	All Pass

At favorable vulnerability, the West hand looks very much like a "book" weak two-bid: slightly undervalued, but acceptable. Kokish-san would cringe (though probably not be surprised) at his countryman's choice of 3♠. Still, in today's game to the aggressor go the spoils. 3♠ caught both opponents just a bit shy of what it takes to make an positive action. Senior led a heart and Wolpert cashed the ace-king-queen, pitching two clubs as Senior ruffed in. Now declarer only had to lose two diamonds, three trumps and one club for two down; -100.

The "always sensible" Callaghan opened more traditionally at the two level and Armstrong bid a pass-or-correct 2♥ (why not 2♠?). When that was corrected to 2♠ and passed back to South, Fergani protected with a double. Well, Senior couldn't take that lying down. "3NT" said L'Ecuyer. "I double you" said Armstrong. "Your lead" said L'Ecuyer. John started off with two top hearts, then shifted to the ♠10. Nicolas won in hand, played a club to the jack, unblocked the ♣A, and then led a low diamond to the queen and king. Had Armstrong not cashed out his third top heart Nicolas would have scored up an overtrick. As it was, he settled for nine tricks, +750, and 12 IMPs to Canada, regaining the lead 108-99.

The rest of the set was rather tame as Canada gained two 1-IMP pick-ups and England a 1-IMP swing. So the third quarter ended with Canada back in the lead, 110-100. It would be 16 more boards for the 2002 NEC Cup crown.

We'll take you through the exciting and gut wrenching final quarter in tomorrow's Daily Bulletin. Till then.

Good luck in today's
Asuka Cup