



NEC Bridge Festival

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England Wins 2003 NEC Cup Gold

In one of the most exciting finishes this event has ever seen, the defending team from England (Brian Senior, Brian Callaghan, Pablo Lambardi and John Armstrong) staged a remarkable comeback (they were down by as many as 50 IMPs late in the third quarter) to defeat the pre-tournament favorites, the team from Poland (Krzysztof Martens, Marcin Lesniewski, Michal Kwiecien, Jacek Pszczola, Witold Wasak and npc Radoslaw Kielbasinski), by .5 IMP—that's right, .5 IMP—to take the 2003 NEC Cup. The Poles will just have to settle for the silver this time. As if that weren't enough, you'll remember that England had to win a tie breaker against South Africa to even get into the knockout stage of this event. The tale of this remarkable comeback begins on p.4.



NEC Cup Final: Quarter-by-Quarter Results

Team	C/O	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Final
Poland	.5	31	39	33	7	110
England		2	21	40	48	111



NEC Cup Winners: England



NEC Cup Runners up: Poland

USA Takes 2003 NEC Cup Bronze

In the fiercely fought battle for third place, the USA team nosed out Japan's TAJIMA to win the bronze.



NEC Cup 3rd/4th Playoff

Team	Carry	1 st Qtr	2 nd Qtr	Final
USA	.5	46	33	79
TAJIMA		25	35	60



NEC Cup 3rd: USA



NEC Cup 4th: Japan Tajima

Roster of the 8th NEC Cup

Team		Members					
No.	Name/Country	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	England	Brian Senior	John Armstrong	Brian Callaghan	Pablo Lambardi	Chen Dawei	
2	Canada-IOC	Joey Silver	Fred Gitelman	Gordon Campbell	Peter Jones		
3	Canada-Commonwealth	Nicholas Gartaganis	Judith Gartaganis	John Duquette	Keith Balcome		
4	Hackett	Paul Hackett	Justin Hackett	Geir Helgemo	Hugh McGann		
5	South Africa	Wayne Chu	Craig Gower	Neville Eber	Bernard Donde		
6	Hungary	Peter Lakatos	Gabor Winkler	Geza Homonnay	Peter Gal		
7	Poland	Krzysztof Martens	Marcin Lesniewski	Michal Kwiecien	Jacek Pszczola	Witold Wasak	Radoslaw Kielbasinski (npc)
8	USA	Sharon Osberg	Mark Feldman	Bobby Wolff	John Sutherlin		
9	Sweden	PO Sundelin	Johan Sylvan	Peter Bertheau	Fredrik Nystrom		
10	Wales	Gary Jones	Peter Goodman	Adam Dunn	Daffyd Jones		
11	European Alliance	Benedicte Cronier	Philippe Cronier	Barbara Hackett	Katrin Farwig		
12	PABF Open	Yasuhiro Shimizu	Kenji Miyakuni	Yoshiyuki Nakamura	Ryoga Tanaka	Tomoyuki Harada	Kazuo Furuta
13	PABF Women	Sakiko Naito	Ayako Amano	Nobuko Setoguchi	Hiroko Ota	Makiko Hayashi	Yuko Yamada
14	KOREA	Sung Kyung Hae	Hyung In Ryung	Sohn Eun Sun	David Chu		
15	Hong Kong 1	K.F. Tung	Chris Wu	S. P. Chan	Samuel Chow		
16	Hong Kong 2	Jun Cheng	C. C. Mok	Sunny Lam	Elizabeth Cheng	Sachiyo Uenaka	Kunio Ueda
17	Hong Kong 3	C. C. Wong	Irene Ho	Shinko Ishikawa	Youko Fukuyama		
18	Chinese Taipei-Lin	Michael Ting(PC)	Chih-Mou Lin	Donny Chen	Walter Chen	Strong Huang	Peter Ho
19	Taiwan Amethyst	Violet Liu(PC)	Wong Choo Wai	Chuang Shun Ho	Tom Cheng		
20	TAJIMA	Tadashi Teramoto	Mitsue Tajima	Masayuki Ino	Tadashi Imakura	Ishmael Del'Monte	
21	HIRATA	Makoto Hirata	Nobuyuki Hayashi	Seiya Shimizu	Takehiko Nagahama	Kyoko Ohno	Akihiko Yamada
22	ESPERANZA	Haruko Koshi	Mieko Nakanishi	Hiroko Janssen	Youko Ohsako	Mizuko Tan	Misuzu Ixhihashi
23	GOING+MN	Robert Geller	Setsuko Ogihara	Hidenori Narita	Yoichi Ito	Akira Morozumi	Sei Nagasaka
24	Gryffindor	Hiroko Sekiyama	Michiko Iwahashi	Kumiko Matsuo	Youko Nenohi	Toshiko Kaho	Michiko Ohno
25	TONPUKU	Kyoko Toyofuku	Momoko Kumano	Midori Sakamoto	Yayoi Sakamoto	Koji Ito	Takahiko Hirata
26	SKOTII	Tsuneo Sakurai	Takahiro Kamiyo	Yoshiro Tsuji	Shiro Inoue	Atsushi Kikuchi	Takehiko Tada
27	Girasol	Sachiko Yamamura	Taeko Kawamura	Keiko Matsuzaki	Kimi Makita		
28	DARUMA	Natsuko Nishida	Chieko Nohtomi	Tomoe Nakao	Setsuko Moriyama	Megumi Takasaki	Miho Sekizawa
29	Ron	Hiroshi Kaku	Masaru Yoshida	Masaaki Takayama	Minoru Mizuta	Chizuno Saito	Hideki Takano
30	RHEIN	Minako Takahashi	Fumiko Kimura	Michiko Ono	Toyoko Saito	Sachiho Ueda	Betty Tajiri
31	Cactus	Toshiko Miyashiro	Yukiko Umezu	Etsuko Naito	Michio Goto		
32	Fairy Tale	Takao Onodera	Yukinao Homma	Ken Higashiguchi	Shunsuke Morimura	Ryo Okuno	Kazuo Takano
33	KIMURA	Osami Kimura	Kinzaburo Nishino	Kiyoko Fushida	Setsuko Kimura	Hiroko Kobayashi	Chizuko Sakamoto
34	MERRY QUEENS	Teruko Nishimura	Junko Nishimura	Toyoko Nakakawaji	Toshiko Hiramori		
35	Friends	Youko Saito	Etsuko Miyaishi	Chieko Ichikawa	Kuniko Saito	Mamiko Ohdaira	Takako Nakatani
36	SWAN	Minako Hiratsuka	Michiko Shida	Kotomi Asakoshi	Aiko Banno	Naomi Terauchi	Yuko Yoneyama
37	PS-JACK	Masako Ohtsuka	Masakatsu Sugino	Akiko Imai	Takako Fujimoto	Hiroya Abe	
38	Cosmos	Nobuko Wakasa	Masaharu Wakasa	Keiko Enomoto	Youko Takahashi	Kazuko Tsumori	Noriko Komiyama
39	My-Bridge	Masafumi Yoshizawa	Noriko Yoshizawa	Yoshitaka Agata	Kinuko Miyauchi	Shigeyuki Murano	
40	Kinki	Chizuko Sugiura	Sonoko Namba	Mimako Ishizuka	Tohru Tamura	Atsuko Katsumata	
41	Kacho-Fugetsu	Akiko Miwa	Kinio Kodaira	Akio Miyazaki	Makoto Nomura	Fumuko Nanjo	Koji Yamada
42	JAPAN YOUTH	Takeshi Niekawa	Shugo Tanaka	Hideaki Yoshimi	Hideaki Mimuro	Masaki Yoshida	Hiroyuki Taguchi

Hackett Takes Yokohama Swiss



Yokohama Swiss 2nd



Yokohama Swiss Winners



Yokohama Swiss 3rd

The team captained by Paul Hackett (Justin Hackett, Geir Helgemo, Hugh McGann) won yesterday's the Yokohama Swiss. In second place was Chinese Taipei-Lin (Michael Ting, Chih-Mou Lin, Peter Ho, Walter Chen) while in third place was the team from Sweden (P.O. Sundelin, Johan Sylvan, Peter Bertheau, Fredrik Nystrom). The top 20 finishers in the event are listed below:

1	HACKETT	190	11	SKOTII	155
2	Chinese Taipei-Lin	185	12	SETOGUCHI	152
3	Sweden	180	13	MIZUTANI	150
4	SAKAMOTO	176	14	Wales	149
5	Canada-IOC	170	14	CHEN	149
6	Ron	169	14	SUGINO	149
7	ENDO	162	17	MAKITA	146
8	ILLINGWORTH	160	18	South Africa	145
9	NANJYO	159	18	OHNO	145
10	Canada-Commonwealth	156	20	YAMADA	141



"They call us Brother Love's traveling salvation show.."

Images of Our Game



"...let's do the time warp, again..."



"I like Seabiscuit in the fourth..."



"When my fingers stop bleeding I will play a card—and not before!"



"Not much of a chance, but better than nothing."

The 2003 Nec Cup Final: Poland vs England

Although the scores in both semifinal matches don't really reflect it, the winners might well have been losers had a few critical deals gone the other way. Nonetheless, Poland and England were deserving winners and the 64-board final was expected to be a very good match.

In the Playoff for third place, USA and TAJIMA would play a 32-board match.

First Quarter (Boards 1-16):

Bd: 1	North		
Dlr: North	♠ AJ76		
Vul: None	♥ 87		
	♦ Q2		
	♣ QJ1043		
West		East	
♠ K98		♠ Q10542	
♥ KQ10		♥ J654	
♦ K9873		♦ J	
♣ 72		♣ A85	
	South		
	♠ 3		
	♥ A932		
	♦ A10654		
	♣ K96		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♦	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
	1♣*	1♠	Dbl*
Rdbl	1NT	Pass	2NT
All Pass			
* Covers balanced hands unsuitable for 1NT			

John Armstrong demonstrated immediately why he's such a good guy to have on your team when he opened the bidding in first seat.

After all, it's more fun to bid than to pass and staying loose and relaxed at the beginning of an important match is an underrated intangible. So, don't judge him harshly for the unlikely -100 he incurred after a low spade lead to the king and ace. When Jacek Pszczola ducked two rounds of clubs Armstrong tried the ♦Q, which held. He crossed to the ♦A and reverted to clubs but could take only the ♥A after that; two down. Not particularly important as E/W could make 2♠ easily enough. Note the leeway Michal Kwiecien gave his partner, refusing to double 2NT or compete to 3♠.

Although only real men would open the North hand in first position, even quiche-eaters would tend to open 1♦ in third seat. Only a lucky South would see his passed-hand partner respond 1♥ or 2♣. The rest of us would catch 1♠, as Krzysztof Martens did. Unable to pass that, South must choose from among 1NT, 2♦ and a fancy 2♣, the choice being based on style and personal belief but for my money both 1NT and 2♦ are so awful that 2♣ is a standout (here 2♣ would get you to at least 3♣ and nine tricks might prove difficult on a trump lead). I consider it appropriate that 2♦ attracted a raise, but nothing terrible happened to Martens, who was able to scramble 8 tricks after ducking Pablo Lambardi's lead of the ♥K: -50. 2 IMPs to Poland.

Bd: 2	North		
Dlr: East	♠ 3		
Vul: N/S	♥ K53		
	♦ 10864		
	♣ J9852		
West		East	
♠ J98765		♠ AQ	
♥ 82		♥ Q10	
♦ Q53		♦ KJ97	
♣ Q10		♣ AK764	
	South		
	♠ K1042		
	♥ AJ9764		
	♦ A2		
	♣ 3		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		1♣	1♥
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
		1♣*	Dbl
2♠*	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

I'm not sure why Brian Senior didn't try 2♦ over 1♠ or why Lambardi's 2♠ had to deliver a sixth spade, but it would have been difficult to stop short of 4♠ in any case. Nor can I explain why a player as sophisticated as Marcin Lesniewski wouldn't raise to 2♥ while the price was right. He led the ♥K against 4♠ and Lambardi finished three down, -150.

Not only did Brian Callaghan start with a takeout double on everyone else's normal 1♥ overcall, but he also followed through with 3♥ over West's preemptive 2♠ (nice pass by Kwiecien, who sensibly devalued his secondary honors on the auction). Armstrong had plenty in reserve for his raise to 4♥ and there they were, in a 16-point game with only three sure losers. As is so often the case three losers did not prove to be a direct translation of ten winners. Kwiecien led the ♣Q, won the trick, and switched to a trump. Callaghan called for the king to lead dummy's spade but Pszczola won the ♠A and returned his remaining trump and declarer could not come to a tenth trick: -100. 6 IMPs to Poland, ahead 8-0.



"Few people are aware of it but 3 out of 5 doctors have pronounced him 'deceased'."

Bd: 4	North		
Dir: West	♠ 63		
Vul: Both	♥ AJ854		
	♦ Q943		
	♣ 92		
West		East	
♠ K10975		♠ AJ82	
♥ 7		♥ 963	
♦ ---		♦ 1082	
♣ KQJ7654		♣ A83	
	South		
	♠ Q4		
	♥ KQ102		
	♦ AKJ765		
	♣ 10		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♣	1♥	Dbl*	4♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	5♥
5♠	Pass	6♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
2♦*	Pass	3♥*	Dbl
4♣*	Pass	4♠	All Pass
*2♦=5+M/%+m, 4-10			
*3♥=INV, support for ♥+♠			
*4♣=♣+♠			

Senior's 6♠ was a beautiful bid and deserved a better fate. Alas, Lambardi quite reasonably played North for queen-third of trumps and so went one down, -100. In the other room, Kwiecien's two-suited 2♦ opening made it difficult for his opponents to appreciate how well their hands fit and Pszczola bought the contract at 4♠; slam was never a consideration. Callaghan's lead of the ♦K was ruffed and declarer got the trumps right for +710, 13 IMPs to Poland, 21-0. Lambardi's play of the trump suit carried a 26-IMP price tag, which is more than anyone should have to bear in the morning. Bad luck indeed.



Bd: 5	North		
Dir: North	♠ KJ753		
Vul: N/S	♥ 105		
	♦ A98		
	♣ J32		
West		East	
♠ 64		♠ Q98	
♥ A9		♥ K84	
♦ K6532		♦ QJ1074	
♣ Q974		♣ K6	
	South		
	♠ A102		
	♥ QJ7632		
	♦ ---		
	♣ A1085		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	Pass	1NT	2♦*
Dbl*	2♥*	All Pass	
*2♦=6+♥ or 6+♠			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
	Pass	1♦	1♥
2♥*	2♠	Pass	4♦*
5♦	All Pass		
*2♥=Diamond fit, limit+			
*4♦=Splinter raise of spades			

Bd: 6	North		
Dir: East	♠ J54		
Vul: E/W	♥ K104		
	♦ Q952		
	♣ A74		
West		East	
♠ Q92		♠ AK1087	
♥ Q765		♥ AJ3	
♦ J108		♦ A64	
♣ 1095		♣ K2	
	South		
	♠ 63		
	♥ 982		
	♦ K73		
	♣ QJ863		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
		1♠	Pass
1NT*	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Both 1NT and 2NT were forcing and Kwiecien decided that nine tricks would often be easier than ten. After Armstrong's diamond lead to the king and a diamond return, Kwiecien took a safe heart finesse and cashed out for +600.

I'm surprised that Senior didn't try for 3NT, and his 4♠ required some play. The lead of the ♥8 ran to his jack and he tried ace-king of trumps, then ace and another heart, assisted in choosing his plan by the Polish lead style (low from two, middle from three). Lesniewski switched to a club and when the king won Senior had his tenth trick: +620. 1 IMP to England, now 22 IMPs behind.



4♥ is a decent spot for N/S and Martens took ten tricks on a diamond lead, the defenders never broaching clubs: +170.

4♠ would have been tougher to make than 4♥ but Kwiecien deprived us of the pleasure of watching Armstrong try. 5♦ escaped a double and lost four tricks after ♠A, spade to the king: -100. 2 IMPs to Poland, 23-0.



"So you think he forgot his methods?"

Bd: 10	North		
Dir: East	♠ A1094		
Vul: Both	♥ J86		
	♦ 74		
	♣ Q632		
West		East	
♠ KJ832		♠ Q7	
♥ 53		♥ Q1042	
♦ Q1098		♦ 6532	
♣ 84		♣ AKJ	
	South		
	♠ 65		
	♥ AK97		
	♦ AKJ		
	♣ 10975		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		1NT	Dbl
2♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
		1♣*	1NT
2♠	All Pass		

Martens' second double was for takeout. Lesniewski passed it and led a diamond, got his ruff, and switched to a heart, Martens taking the king and ace. Two trump losers later Lambardi was one down, -200.

It was less obvious for Kwiecien to bid 2♠ at his table and he bought the contract undoubled (Armstrong did not have a penalty double available). North led a heart to the ten and king, and after arranging a diamond ruff, the ♥J was led. Here too declarer went one down, but the penalty was only 100. 3 IMPs to Poland, 26-11.



"In your *dreams* that's a penalty double..."

Bd: 12	North		
Dir: West	♠ 4		
Vul: N/S	♥ A10964		
	♦ AK875		
	♣ AK		
West		East	
♠ A975		♠ Q1032	
♥ QJ32		♥ K75	
♦ J10		♦ Q643	
♣ Q63		♣ J2	
	South		
	♠ KJ86		
	♥ 8		
	♦ 92		
	♣ 1098754		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣*	All Pass	
*2♣=natural and minimum, or artificial, about 16-18			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	All Pass	

Martens saw a good chance to survive his light response by passing the potentially artificial 2♣ rebid and he came up roses this time. He managed an overtrick by guessing spades correctly and taking a third-round ruffing finesse in diamonds: +130.

Armstrong did well to rebid only 2♦ and Callaghan decided to give up before worse befell him. Pszczola did well himself to lead a trump, but Armstrong could take a heart ruff in dummy and his intermediate trumps enabled him to take four of those and the two top clubs in addition, for +90. 1 IMP to Poland, 27-11.



Bd: 13	North		
Dir: North	♠ A1075		
Vul: Both	♥ A32		
	♦ 8		
	♣ K8752		
West		East	
♠ K6		♠ 93	
♥ KJ974		♥ 1085	
♦ 76542		♦ AKQJ10	
♣ 6		♣ A43	
	South		
	♠ QJ842		
	♥ Q6		
	♦ 93		
	♣ QJ109		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	2♣*	2♦	2♠
3♥	3♠	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
	1♣	1♦	1♠
2♥	3♠	4♥	All Pass

Both E/W pairs got the hob done in fine style here, reaching a thin but worthwhile vulnerable game. Pszczola made five, Senior only four. 1 IMP to Poland, 28-11. Both pairs had reason to hope for a big gain. I was surprised to see Lesniewski settling for only 3♠ and to see Callaghan sell out to 4♥ after Armstrong's jump to 3♠. 4♠ doubled would have been a good sacrifice and might well have cost only 200, doubled, not that anyone had a legitimate double.



"Ya' see ya' gotta figure that..."

Bd: 14	North		
Dir: East	♠ AK743		
Vul: None	♥ 74		
	♦ J764		
	♣ J8		
West		East	
♠ J82		♠ Q105	
♥ K963		♥ AQ1082	
♦ K		♦ AQ105	
♣ AK954		♣ 2	
	South		
	♠ 96		
	♥ J5		
	♦ 9832		
	♣ Q10763		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		1♥	Pass
2NT*	Pass	4♣*	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass
*2NT=Heart raise			
*4♣=Shortness			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
		1♥	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT*	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♥	All Pass
*2♣=Natural, or artificial with ♥ support			
3NT=Slam interest, waiting			

While I much prefer Kwiecien's 2♣ to Lambardi's artificial heart raise, I'm less fond of Kwiecien's decision to go past game.



"It's just down there, at the end."

Bd: 15	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 7		
Vul: N/S	♥ K72		
	♦ Q872		
	♣ Q9752		
West			East
♠ A8			♠ KQJ6
♥ 109843			♥ AQ
♦ K3			♦ A1054
♣ J863			♣ AK4
	South		
	♠ 1095432		
	♥ J65		
	♦ J96		
	♣ 10		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			Pass
Pass	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	6NT	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>
			Pass
Pass	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Senior was expecting a bit more for 2♥ but 6NT was not hopeless. When South led a small spade declarer would have succeeded by calling for dummy's eight. The extra entry would have allowed him to finesse in hearts, cash the ace, return to the ♠A, concede a heart, and get back to dummy with the ♦K to cash the long hearts. Alas, Senior called for the ace and could no longer make the contract. He made a third club at the end when North was thrown in with the ♦Q, but -50 was not much of a triumph.

At the other table, on the same lead, Pszczola did put in the ♠8, so he came to 12 tricks for +490. 11 IMPs to Poland, 39-21.

The last deal was a flat slam. The first set had been very lively, and had Board 4 gone the

other way we would have had a different leader at the quarter pole.

Second Quarter (Boards 17-32):

Bd: 17	North		
Dlr: North	♠ AK1082		
Vul: None	♥ 7		
	♦ 985		
	♣ AQ54		
West			East
♠ Q743			♠ ---
♥ J982			♥ A63
♦ KQ3			♦ J1042
♣ 102			♣ KJ8763
	South		
	♠ J965		
	♥ KQ1054		
	♦ A76		
	♣ 9		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	1♠	3♣	4♣*
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♦
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Rdbl
Pass	6♠	All Pass	
* Spade fit			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1♠	3♣	3♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Martens' hand was much improved if Lesniewski's 4♥ showed the ♥A, but Lesniewski's 6♠ was a bit too much. As it happened, the 5♦ cue-bid had allowed Callaghan to direct the defense to the most effective lead, and Lesniewski was two down in 6♠ (East rose with the ♥A on the first round): -100.

At the other table, Lambardi's choice over 3♣ (note that both Easts were willing to risk 3♣ on a bad suit with a good hand) was 3♥, which more or less endplayed him into 4♠ at his next turn. Senior's hand had lost some of its luster

on the auction, so he passed. He won the diamond lead with the ace, led a spade to the ace and the ♥7. When Pszczola followed low, Senior misguessed, not unreasonably, putting in the ten. Kwiecien won the jack, cashed two diamonds, and switched to the ♣2. Senior won the ace, ruffed a club, and passed the ♥K to East's ace, discarding a club. An over-ruff in clubs was the fifth and final trick for the defense: -100. No swing, but a lost opportunity for England.

The South hand is best-suited for a fit-showing 4♥ over 3♣, but that treatment isn't particularly popular here.

Bd: 21	North		
Dir: North	♠ 65		
Vul: N/S	♥ KJ983		
	♦ KJ102		
	♣ A10		
West	East		
♠ AKQ10932	♠ 74		
♥ 10	♥ 72		
♦ 85	♦ AQ9763		
♣ 952	♣ J43		
	South		
	♠ J8		
	♥ AQ654		
	♦ 4		
	♣ KQ876		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	1♥	3♦	4♦*
4♠	Pass	Pass	5♣
5♠	Dbl	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1♥	3♦	4♦*
4♠	Pass	Pass	5♥
All Pass			

The late Eddie Manfield was the first to write that "the five level belongs to the opponents." He knew of what he wrote. Kwiecien passed 5♥ and the defense got two spades and a diamond for one down: -100. Callaghan took the push to 5♠ and his phantom sacrifice had three clubs

and a heart to lose for -300. 9 IMPs to Poland, a nice reward for better judgment. Poland, 49-21.

Bd: 22	North		
Dir: East	♠ AK92		
Vul: E/W	♥ ---		
	♦ AKJ2		
	♣ Q10642		
West	East		
♠ J875	♠ Q10		
♥ 93	♥ AKJ1084		
♦ Q8	♦ 1094		
♣ AKJ75	♣ 98		
	South		
	♠ 643		
	♥ Q7652		
	♦ 7653		
	♣ 3		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		2♦*	Pass
2♥*	Dbl	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	
*2♦=Multi			
*2♥=Pass or correct to 2♠			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Dbl	Pass	4♦
All Pass			

On a club lead and trump switch Martens went two down in 4♠, -100. It's not clear where it would have ended had Martens responded 3♦. Senior trapped over 1♠ at the other table but then entered a live auction at the three level to show what he had. Unfortunately, Lambardi had about as little as he figured to have on the auction and he eventually ran out of winners to finish one down in 4♦: -50. 2 IMPs to England, 23-49. It would have been better this time for Lambardi to pass the double.

Bd: 24	North		
Dir: West	♠ 108		
Vul: None	♥ KQ6		
	♦ K8		
	♣ AKJ972		
West	East		
♠ K943	♠ AQ76		
♥ 5432	♥ J8		
♦ AJ4	♦ Q10972		
♣ 64	♣ Q8		
	South		
	♠ J52		
	♥ A1097		
	♦ 653		
	♣ 1053		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
Pass	1♣*	1♦	Pass
2♦	3♣	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	1♣	1♦	Pass
1♥	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Lesniewski did not lose to the ♣Q: +130.

Senior's sporting 3NT could have been beaten off the top, but the defenders started with two rounds of diamonds. Now all Senior needed was to bring in the clubs. He misguessed, however, and so went three down: -150. 7 IMPs to Poland, 57-23.



"Look, we have three minus 100s in a row!"

Bd: 27	North		
Dir: South	♠ AJ754		
Vul: None	♥ 64		
	♦ 975		
	♣ 975		
West	East		
♠ K63	♠ 1098		
♥ A92	♥ KQ853		
♦ A102	♦ K83		
♣ AJ103	♣ 82		
	South		
	♠ Q2		
	♥ J107		
	♦ QJ64		
	♣ KQ64		
Open Room/Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Both E/W pairs did well to reach 3NT, which had none easy tricks on a low spade lead from North. 4♥ would have been played by West, avoiding the potential spade lead through the king, and it might well have made too, but +400 was a good result to bring back to the comparison.

Bd: 28	North		
Dir: West	♠ Q5		
Vul: N/S	♥ K9		
	♦ Q109832		
	♣ K53		
West	East		
♠ 9864	♠ 103		
♥ A875	♥ Q1062		
♦ 6	♦ 75		
♣ QJ108	♣ A9764		
	South		
	♠ AKJ72		
	♥ J43		
	♦ AKJ4		
	♣ 2		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦*	Pass	4♣*
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	4♣*
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

The best game for N/S is 4♠ but 5♦ is very good too, and at the table it made in comfort when East led a heart over to the ace. On the lie of the cards the defenders couldn't get West on play to underlead the ♥A. An honorable push.

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Callaghan needed some luck in one of the black suits to make 3NT on a heart lead, but he didn't get any and finished one down: -100.

Pszczola, in 4♠ because he depicted a six-card suit equivalent, got a club lead from Lambardi. He won the king in dummy, took a trump finesse and cashed the ace-king before unblocking the ♣A, crossing to the ♦A, and leading the ♣Q. North ruffed in as Pszczola discarded his heart loser. The heart switch went to the ace and a diamond from dummy brought the king: +650. 5♦, anyone? 13 IMPs to Poland, ahead now by 47, 70-23.

Bd: 29	North		
Dlr: North	♠ Q984		
Vul: Both	♥ K10764		
	♦ K10		
	♣ J9		
West	East		
♠ 7	♠ AKJ103		
♥ A32	♥ J8		
♦ A962	♦ Q853		
♣ KQ865	♣ A2		
	South		
	♠ 652		
	♥ Q95		
	♦ J74		
	♣ 10743		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥*	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Bd: 31	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K6		
Vul: N/S	♥ AJ9732		
	♦ QJ3		
	♣ 97		
West	East		
♠ Q103	♠ J97		
♥ 4	♥ Q108		
♦ 9764	♦ A1082		
♣ AQJ64	♣ K82		
	South		
	♠ A8542		
	♥ K65		
	♦ K5		
	♣ 1053		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			Pass
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3♣*
Dbf	3♦*	Pass	3♥
All Pass			
*2♦=Multi			
*3♣="Transfer into your major"			
*3♦=Hearts			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
4♣	All Pass		

Kwiecien, auditioning for the lead role in the impending movie, "The Man Who Knows No Fear," bought a nice dummy in 4♣, but he went three down nonetheless: -150. Fortunately for Poland, Martens was at the right level in hearts on the lie of the cards: +140. No swing.

The second quarter was not nearly as interesting as the first, but Poland had much the best of it, outscoring England 31-2. At the half, it was Poland by 47 IMPs, 70-23.

Third Quarter (Boards 33-48):

Bd: 33	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 3		
Vul: None	♥ J96		
	♦ KQ54		
	♣ AJ1083		
West		East	
♠ J107		♠ AQ862	
♥ K2		♥ A743	
♦ A10932		♦ J8	
♣ 954		♣ 62	
	South		
	♠ K954		
	♥ Q1085		
	♦ 76		
	♣ KQ7		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	1♦	1♠	Dbl
2♠	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1NT	2♣*	Pass
2♠	All Pass		
* ♥+♠			

Both E/W pairs bought the contract at 2♠. Callaghan got a diamond lead from Martens, won the ace, and tried a club. North went in with the ace to switch to his singleton trump, ducked to the king. A second trump went to the ten and Callaghan took a third-round heart ruff with dummy's jack before exiting with a diamond. Lesniewski won the queen and continued with the king. Callaghan discarded his club loser, but now a fourth round of diamonds promoted the nine of trumps: -50.

Pszczola also got a diamond lead and won the ace, but he started trumps himself, leading the jack. Lambardi won the king and switched to a heart to the nine and ace. Pszczola exited with the ♦J and Senior won to play the ♣3 to Lambardi's queen. Senior did not overtake the ♣K and Lambardi reverted to hearts. Pszczola won the ♥K, cashed the ♠10, ruffed a club with the ♠8, ruffed a heart with the ♠7, and had two high trumps coming for +110. 4 IMPs to Poland, 74-23.

Bd: 37	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 2		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q62		
	♦ 764		
	♣ KQJ1074		
West		East	
♠ Q1095		♠ J874	
♥ AK109		♥ 743	
♦ KJ1092		♦ Q83	
♣ ---		♣ 832	
	South		
	♠ AK63		
	♥ J85		
	♦ A5		
	♣ A965		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT
2♦*	2♥*	2♠	Dbl
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
*2♦=♥+♠			
*2♥=Heart stopper, game values			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	3♣	Pass	3NT
4♣*	Pass	4♦	5♣
5♦	Dbf	All Pass	

Martens soon claimed nine tricks in 3NT on the lead of the ♦J: +600. It looks as if Pszczola was playing his partner for a two-suiter and scrambling to find a fit while Kwiecien may have thought his partner had some genuine length in diamonds, but perhaps they knew what they were doing all along. The defense got two spades and a ruff and switched to a club. Declarer ruffed and knocked out the trump ace, but North got another spade ruff and there was still a heart to come. Four down, –800. 5 IMPs to England, 28-76.

Bd: 39	North		
Dlr: South	♠ J106		
Vul: Both	♥ J1095		
	♦ J		
	♣ A10543		
West		East	
♠ K52		♠ A843	
♥ Q2		♥ AK864	
♦ KQ1076		♦ A42	
♣ Q76		♣ K	
	South		
	♠ Q97		
	♥ 73		
	♦ 9853		
	♣ J982		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			Pass
1♣*	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦*	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♦	All Pass
*1♣ includes balanced hands outside the 1NT range			



Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT*	Pass
3♥	Pass	6♦	All Pass

At least it wasn't a grand slam. The Armstrong/Callaghan convention card lists a 2♣ puppet to 2♦ over opener's 1NT rebid but makes no mention of 2♦, which is most often treated as a game-forcing inquiry by pairs using this mechanism. Perhaps John played the wrong bidding card by mistake: +170.

Pszczola's sequence to 2NT was forcing to game and he knew Kwiecien's shape and that he held an honor in hearts. We can see that 6♦ can be made after the lead of the ♠J, but declarer does not want to choose a line that prevents him from discovering in time that South has jack-fourth of trumps. With that in mind, Kwiecien won the ♠K and cashed the ♦K, intending to go to the ♦A. When the jack of trumps appeared there was no guarantee that it was singleton so declarer played a second trump to the ace, then led a club. North led a second spade to knock out dummy's ace and it was no longer convenient to take a club ruff as the ♥Q was the only entry to the closed hand and drawing trumps would then be impossible. Accordingly, Kwiecien decided not to take his club ruff and instead took his remaining trumps and tried to run the hearts if his spade was not high. Pain. Misery. One down: –100.

Had Kwiecien won the first spade in dummy to lead a trump to the king, he might then have conceded a club and arranged his ruff with the entry position fluid. Indeed, even two rounds of trumps and then a club would have worked had the ♠K still been in the closed hand. Having spent a half hour on this deal already, I'm convinced it merits even more, but we can't see a sure trick line that deals with all the relevant options: pick up four-one trumps, take a club ruff, ruff out the hearts and get back to them and still take a club trick when trumps are four-one.

And so it was that England gained 7 IMPs where a loss of 13 seemed inevitable at first glance. Poland, 76-35.

Bd: 40	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 863		
Vul: None	♥ A2		
	♦ K4		
	♣ KJ8543		
West			East
♠ A102			♠ K954
♥ Q764			♥ K95
♦ 96			♦ AQJ85
♣ AQ96			♣ 2
	South		
	♠ QJ7		
	♥ J1083		
	♦ 10732		
	♣ 107		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♣*	2♣	Dbl*	All Pass
*1♣ includes balanced hands out of range for 1NT			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1♣	Pass	2♦*	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Although Armstrong might have had a doubleton club for his 1♣ opening, he was at liberty to have lots of them. Lesniewski's overcall with a balanced hand and near-minimum strength, was hardly safe, even non-vulnerable, and this time his opponents made him pay for his enterprise. Against 2♣ doubled Callaghan led a spade to the queen and ace and Armstrong switched to the ♦9 to the king and ace. Two high diamonds permitted Armstrong to discard a spade and when Lesniewski ruffed and led a second spade, Callaghan won and gave Armstrong his spade ruff. Lesniewski took the low heart switch with the ace and exited in hearts, but was tucked back in hand with a third heart. He lost two trump tricks for three down: -500.

That would be no great loss if Kwiecien brought home 3NT on a low club lead to the ten and queen. He took a successful diamond finesse and led a heart to the queen and ace. The ♣K held and Senior exited with a heart, ducked to the ten. A third heart went to the king and declarer led a spade to the jack and ace, cashed the ♣A, discarding dummy's last small spade and allowing South to release a spade himself, and led a diamond to the king and ace. South took the rest after declarer cashed the ♦J: -50. 11 IMPs to England, 46-76.

Bd: 41	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A9742		
Vul: E/W	♥ 10962		
	♦ J53		
	♣ 5		
West			East
♠ KJ5			♠ Q6
♥ KQ7			♥ AJ85
♦ A972			♦ KQ4
♣ 976			♣ QJ82
	South		
	♠ 1083		
	♥ 43		
	♦ 1086		
	♣ AK1043		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1♦	Dbl	Rdbl*	2♣
Dbl	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Callaghan downgraded his 15-count and opened 1♣ rather than a 15-17 notrump and when Lesniewski cavalierly came into the live auction he was playing with fire. The English pair decided to take what money there was on defense against 2♣ doubled. Declarer was able to scramble four trumps and the ♠A for three down, -500.

Once again Poland needed its Closed Room

pair to make a game to save the board. That was an easy assignment this time: +660. 4 IMPs to Poland, 80-46.

clubs, and came to three spades on an endplay: +630. 12 IMPs to Poland, 92-46.

Bd: 42	North		
Dlr: East	♠ K9		
Vul: Both	♥ J5432		
	♦ A93		
	♣ QJ5		
West	East		
♠ 1083	♠ Q542		
♥ Q10	♥ K87		
♦ KJ10762	♦ 4		
♣ 102	♣ K9863		
	South		
	♠ AJ76		
	♥ A96		
	♦ Q85		
	♣ A74		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		Pass	1♣
1♦	1♥	1♠	Dbl*
Pass	4♥	All Pass	
* Three-card heart support			

Bd: 43	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 107632		
Vul: None	♥ 7		
	♦ A5		
	♣ A6532		
West	East		
♠ K	♠ AQJ854		
♥ QJ8542	♥ 63		
♦ KJ	♦ Q103		
♣ KJ97	♣ 108		
	South		
	♠ 9		
	♥ AK109		
	♦ 987642		
	♣ Q4		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			Pass
1♥	2♥*	Pass	3♣*
Pass	Pass	Dbl*	All Pass
* 5+♠/5+m			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
1♥	2♥*	Dbl	3♣*
Dbl	All Pass		
* 5+♠/5+m			

Against Senior's 4♥ Pszczola led the the ♦4, declarer ducking West's ten. The ♣10 was covered all around and Senior did well to start hearts by leading low away from dummy. Kwiecien went in with the queen (a bravo) and played a second club to the queen. Now the ♥J to complete the intrafinesse would have seen Senior home but instead he led a trump to the ace. Although he later took the spade finesse to dispose of a minor-suit loser he was one down: -100.

Both Norths committed a Michaels Cue Bid and were picked off in 3♣ when East was willing to increase the stakes. Armstrong led a low heart, which ran to the nine, and the ♥A took care of the ♦5. Martens crossed to the ♦A and led a spade, East going in with the ace to lead the ♣8, queen, king, ace. A spade was ruffed in the closed hand and over-ruffed and the ♥J was ruffed by East with the ♣10. Declarer could take only six tricks: -500.

Against 3NT, Armstrong led the ♦J, which ran to the queen, and a low heart went to the ten, jack and king. The club switch went to the ten and jack and Martens led a heart to the nine for safety. He had three hearts, two diamonds, two

Kwiecien led a trump, usually a sound idea on this sort of auction. Here, however, it worked badly when it allowed Lambardi to score the ♣Q. A second trump went to the ace and East rose with the ace on the low spade lead from

dummy. He cashed the queen-jack of spades before exiting in hearts so declarer took one trick more than his counterpart: -300. 5 IMPs to England, 51-92.

Bd: 44	North		
Dlr: West	♠ K63		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q93		
	♦ A6		
	♣ A10863		
West			East
♠ 10852			♠ AQ97
♥ AJ42			♥ 87
♦ 832			♦ KQJ94
♣ 95			♣ 42
	South		
	♠ J4		
	♥ K1065		
	♦ 1075		
	♣ KQJ7		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
Pass	1♣*	1♦	1♥
Pass	1NT	Dbl	Pass
2♦	2♥	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♣
3♦	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Senior took the opening lead of the ♦K with the ace and led the ♥Q before the position was clear to the defenders. When Kwiecien ducked, Senior cashed out for +90. Had Kwiecien taken the ♥A he would have had to return a spade to defeat the contract; not so easy.

In 3♦ Callaghan held his losses to two clubs, a heart, a diamond, and a spade for -50. 3♣ would have been touch and go, but I would have put my money on Lesniewski. 1 IMP to England, 52-92.

After another IMP went the same way, came this dagger...

Bd: 47	North		
Dlr: South	♠ QJ1065		
Vul: N/S	♥ 74		
	♦ K74		
	♣ K95		
West			East
♠ 84			♠ 9732
♥ AQ3			♥ 1098
♦ Q10862			♦ AJ93
♣ J72			♣ Q10
	South		
	♠ AK		
	♥ KJ652		
	♦ 5		
	♣ A8643		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥*
All Pass			
*2♣ would have been artificial, strong (needs confirming)			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

In his awkward 2♥, Martens finished with eight tricks when the defense never led diamonds and allowed him to concede three trump tricks and a club to establish his side suit: +110.

In his awkward 4♠ Senior got a trump lead, won, and ducked a club. Pszczola won and returned a club to the king. Senior tried a heart to the jack and queen and Kwiecien dealt his partner a club ruff. Now a trump tucked dummy in and Senior had to lose all his plain cards for four down, -400. 11 IMPs to Poland, 103-53.



Bd: 48	North		
Dir: West	♠ 8762		
Vul: E/W	♥ A9		
	♦ KJ103		
	♣ J43		
West	East		
♠ AK1094	♠ Q53		
♥ Q104	♥ 87532		
♦ 76	♦ AQ		
♣ Q95	♣ K82		
	South		
	♠ J		
	♥ KJ6		
	♦ 98542		
	♣ A1076		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT*	Pass
2♣*	Pass	3♠	All Pass

However, just when it looked as if Poland would take a 50-IMP lead into the fourth quarter, England struck a parting shot on the way out to compare scores...

Against 4♥ Martens led the ♦8 to the ten and queen, A trump went to the ten and ace (it would have been better here for South to go in with the king to switch to his singleton spade) and North switched to a low club to South's ace. The hand was over now: diamond to the ace, trump: +620.

Hearts were never in the picture in the Closed Room and Senior led a trump to the jack and ace. Kwiecien took two more trumps ending in dummy and led a heart to the ten and ace. He won the diamond switch with the queen and led a second heart to South's king, won the diamond continuation, led a club to the king, drew the last trump, cashed the ♥Q, and tried the obligatory finesse in clubs, ducking in dummy. South had two club winners and declarer had nine tricks: +140. 10 IMPs to

England.

England won the third quarter 40-33 but after 48 deals, Poland was 40 IMPs ahead, 103-63.

Fourth Quarter (Boards 49-64):

Bd: 49	North		
Dir: North	♠ Q974		
Vul: None	♥ 86		
	♦ AKJ3		
	♣ J63		
West	East		
♠ A	♠ KJ63		
♥ KJ5432	♥ AQ109		
♦ Q8654	♦ 102		
♣ 10	♣ K42		
	South		
	♠ 10852		
	♥ 7		
	♦ 97		
	♣ AQ9875		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	Pass	1♣*	2♣
3♥*	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	
*1♣ includes balanced hands out of range for 1NT			
*3♥=Forcing			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1NT	Dbl*	3♣
4♥	All Pass		

4♥ was cold, doubled or not. It looks as if Lesniewski was counting on a bit more from Martens. England won the board 590 to 420 and gained 5 IMPs, 68-103.



"At least three..."

no longer part of our arsenal. It's just not intuitive to see the solution at the table.

Bd: 50	North		
Dir: East	♠ K98		
Vul: N/S	♥ 9876		
	♦ J1093		
	♣ K5		
West		East	
♠ Q7654		♠ AJ3	
♥ 5		♥ A2	
♦ AK876		♦ 542	
♣ 108		♣ AJ432	
	South		
	♠ 102		
	♥ KQJ1043		
	♦ Q		
	♣ Q976		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		1♣	2♥
2♠	3♥	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Bd: 51	North		
Dir: South	♠ 7		
Vul: E/W	♥ K762		
	♦ QJ3		
	♣ KJ1072		
West		East	
♠ 10862		♠ QJ93	
♥ 4		♥ 1085	
♦ 8654		♦ AK10	
♣ AQ83		♣ 954	
	South		
	♠ AK54		
	♥ AQJ93		
	♦ 972		
	♣ 6		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			1♥
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♥*
Pass	3NT*	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
*3♦=Any weak Splinter raise			
*3♥=Inquiry			
3NT=Spade shortness			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			1♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Lesniewski led a heart against Armstrong's 4♠. Declarer won and led a diamond and when the queen came up he took the ace, went to the ♠J and led a diamond through South, who released a heart. Now, when declarer conceded a diamond, a fourth round brought South's ten of trumps into play. Declarer lost to the ♠10, another trump to North, and a slow club for one down.

Although the play varied in the Closed Room on the lead of the ♦J, declarer could not find a way home after taking the first trick. No swing at E/W -50.

The winning line is not so easy to see. Declarer must duck South's ♦Q. Then he can play off the ♠A before reverting to diamonds and ruffing the fourth round safely with dummy's three. We believe that we've seen this textbook trump management position before but total recall is

At both tables West found the essential diamond lead. Both Easts took the queen with the king and had no clue that pointed to a club return. Declarer won the spade switch, discarded a diamond from dummy, and started clubs, and could no longer be defeated. No swing.



"And a one, and a two,..."

Bd: 52	North		
Dir: West	♠ Q6		
Vul: Both	♥ A10		
	♦ A983		
	♣ AJ972		
West		East	
♠ 32		♠ AJ985	
♥ KQ62		♥ J75	
♦ KQ1072		♦ 5	
♣ Q6		♣ K1053	
	South		
	♠ K1074		
	♥ 9843		
	♦ J64		
	♣ 84		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1♦	1NT	Dbl	2♦*
All Pass			
* Supposed to be ♦+♠ but intended as Stayman			

Armstrong did well to make 1NT (my reading of the play record does not reveal precisely how) which saved the board for England because Lambardi/Senior finished in Kwiecien's suit and went for 200. 3 IMPs to Poland, 106-63.

Bd: 53	North		
Dir: North	♠ Q10982		
Vul: N/S	♥ KJ8		
	♦ A10		
	♣ Q106		
West		East	
♠ K5		♠ J64	
♥ A973		♥ 64	
♦ 843		♦ KJ952	
♣ A982		♣ J74	
	South		
	♠ A73		
	♥ Q1052		
	♦ Q76		
	♣ K53		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	1♠	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3♠	All Pass	
*2NT=Three-card limit raise			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1NT	All Pass	

Against Lesniewski's 3♠ Callaghan led his doubleton heart, Armstrong playing ace and another. When he came in with the ♠K, Armstrong dealt Callaghan a heart ruff, but poor East had no safe exit and dummy's long heart would provide a discard for the minor suit that East did not lead: +140.

In 1NT Senior got a diamond lead around to his ten and drove out the ♥A. He won the diamond continuation and built a club trick for his seventh winner: +90. 2 IMPs to Poland, 108-63.

Bd: 54	North		
Dir: East	♠ K		
Vul: E/W	♥ 109		
	♦ AJ8432		
	♣ 9652		
West		East	
♠ Q6		♠ 743	
♥ KJ842		♥ A53	
♦ 95		♦ KQ76	
♣ AQ43		♣ KJ10	
	South		
	♠ AJ109852		
	♥ Q76		
	♦ 10		
	♣ 87		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		1♣*	3♠
Dbl*	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		1♣	3♠
Dbl All Pass			

The fact that N/S can't beat 3NT doesn't mean that E/W can find a reasonable excuse to get there, and as 4♥ can be beaten Pszczola's decision to pass his partner's negative double would appear to be the winner. On a diamond lead, declarer started hearts but had to lose three of those and two clubs for -100.

And the fact that 4♥ can be defeated doesn't mean that it shall be. Anyone could lead the ♠K against 4♥ after partner's preempt but real experts lead the ♦A and continue with the suit-preference eight to give their partner a ruff. Marcin Lesniewski, an expert's expert to the core, was pleased to see his partner ruff the second diamond. He was less pleased a moment later when he found himself on lead with the ♠K. Now declarer's second spade went on the ♦K after trumps were drawn and Armstrong recorded a neat +620 on the "we" side of his private score. 11 IMPs to England, 79-108.

If you think this couldn't happen to you, ask yourself how you'd like to defend if North had king-and-one spade and only five diamonds.

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
1♥	1♠	2♠*	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Both Norths led a club over to the ace; a spade through the king then led to two spades and a ruff for one down: -100. Perhaps you would have tried 3♣ over the fit-showing 2♠ cue-bid and reached 5♣. Well, good for you, then.

Bd: 56	North		
Dir: West	♠ 6		
Vul: None	♥ 8432		
	♦ Q108		
	♣ QJ1042		
West		East	
♠ K3		♠ AJ8542	
♥ Q9		♥ J6	
♦ K94		♦ 7632	
♣ AK7653		♣ 9	
	South		
	♠ Q1097		
	♥ AK1075		
	♦ AJ5		
	♣ 8		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1NT	Pass	2♥*	Dbl
Pass*	3♥	3♠	4♥
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1NT	Pass	2♥*	Dbl
Pass*	3♥	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			

Both Wests denied as many as three spades by passing when South doubled East's transfer response. When both Norths scraped together a "raise" to 3♥ and East competed to 3♠ the South players evaluated their hands rather differently but at both tables the stakes were fairly high.

Bd: 55	North		
Dir: South	♠ AQJ97		
Vul: Both	♥ ---		
	♦ 10543		
	♣ QJ42		
West		East	
♠ K85		♠ 1043	
♥ K87654		♥ AJ1093	
♦ AQ8		♦ K972	
♣ 9		♣ K	
	South		
	♠ 62		
	♥ Q2		
	♦ J6		
	♣ A1087653		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♥	1♠	2♠*	Pass
4♥	All Pass		Pass

Against 4♥ Callaghan led the ♣9 to the king and Armstrong played ♠K, spade, forcing the closed hand. Lesniewski took ace-king of trumps, ruffed a spade and passed the ♣K, discarding dummy's last spade. Armstrong won but had to lead a diamond from the king or a club to North's winners: +420 was an excellent result for Poland but it wasn't excellent enough.

Against East's 4♠ doubled Lambardi cashed two high hearts, Senior following upwards. South switched to ace and another diamond and Pszczola won the king to play ace-king of clubs, discarding a diamond. South ruffed, cashed partner's diamond, and waited for another trump trick. Three down, -500. 2 IMPs to England, 81-108.

With eight deals remaining, the Polish lead had been reduced to 27 IMPs, and the momentum was clearly in England's favor. Hold onto your seats, we're expecting some turbulence.

At both tables East found the effective lead of the ♠10, which held. Pszczola continued with the ♠2 to the king and Senior held up the ace until the third round. A heart to the jack held and a club to the king permitted declarer to lead a heart to the ten and ace. West returned a club, but with hearts coming in and the ♦A in West, the contract was cold: +400.

Callaghan, seeing a count card from Armstrong, decided to switch horses as he thought it unlikely that two spade tricks would be enough to defeat the contract. He tried the ♦5, seven, ace, three, and Armstrong reverted to spades, leading the king. Lesniewski elected to take the trick, which proved to be his undoing. When West came in with the ♥A he had a spade to lead to East. One down, -50. 10 IMPs to England, 91-108.

Hey, Harry, you might want to watch this on Vugraph...

Bd: 57	North		
Dir: North	♠ A73		
Vul: E/W	♥ 42		
	♦ QJ93		
	♣ KQ54		
West		East	
♠ K64		♠ Q1092	
♥ A98		♥ Q76	
♦ A10864		♦ 52	
♣ 109		♣ J872	
	South		
	♠ J85		
	♥ KJ1053		
	♦ K7		
	♣ A63		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	1♣*	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Bd: 59	North		
Dir: South	♠ 83		
Vul: None	♥ K5		
	♦ Q1087		
	♣ AJ983		
West		East	
♠ KQ752		♠ A6	
♥ A43		♥ J1072	
♦ AJ4		♦ 932	
♣ Q4		♣ K1052	
	South		
	♠ J1094		
	♥ Q986		
	♦ K65		
	♣ 76		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Lesniewski made the normal lead of the ♣8 against Armstrong's 3NT. The queen won and a second club went to dummy's ten. Declarer crossed to the ♠Q and led a low heart to the jack and queen, Martens returning a spade. A heart to the ace felled the king and Armstrong cleared spades for a rather spectacular nine tricks: four spades, two hearts, two clubs and the ♦A; +400.

I must remember to ask the inimitable Brian why he led a Marstonesque diamond and not a mortal's club but I'm afraid he might tell me, and then where will I be? The ♦K was permitted to hold and a second diamond went to the jack and queen, Senior clearing the suit at trick three. The ♣Q lost to the ace and Senior took the fourth defensive trick in diamonds before exiting with the ♣9. Declarer finessed successfully and played four rounds of spades, claiming the rest for one down, -50. 10 IMPs to England, within 7 IMPs now at 101-108.

6♦ is a reasonable slam because North may not lead a heart, and even if he does, there's a fair chance of avoiding a diamond loser. I'm a big John Armstrong fan but even as a tactical move his 4NT seems like an odd choice and in the end it told him nothing. Here hearts were unbid so Lesniewski led one: +400, another excellent result for England.

Things were looking positive for Poland, however, when the bidding was displayed on the Vugraph screen. Lambardi had not doubled Pszczola's 4♥ cue bid so Senior was likely to lead a spade. Right?

But, no. With his second-best heart so much better than his second-best spade, Brian's fingers settled on the ♥3. One down, -50, 10 IMPs to England, now ahead in the match by 3 IMPs, 111-108. Four boards remained.

Bd: 60	North		
Dir: West	♠ J862		
Vul: N/S	♥ J932		
	♦ K8		
	♣ J63		
West	East		
♠ ---	♠ AQ954		
♥ 8	♥ K10654		
♦ AQ1096542	♦ J3		
♣ AKQ4	♣ 8		
	South		
	♠ K1073		
	♥ AQ7		
	♦ 7		
	♣ 109752		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦*	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

Bd: 61	North		
Dir: North	♠ J9		
Vul: Both	♥ AJ62		
	♦ 42		
	♣ KQ874		
West			East
♠ AKQ103			♠ 86542
♥ K1054			♥ 93
♦ A			♦ J763
♣ A109			♣ 62
	South		
	♠ 7		
	♥ Q87		
	♦ KQ10985		
	♣ J53		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
	2♣	Pass	2NT*
Dbl	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠	All Pass
* Puppet to 3♣			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
	1NT	Pass	2NT*
Dbl	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		
* Diamonds			

There was nothing to the play, a push at E/W +620. Three deals left.

Bd: 62	North		
Dlr: East	♠ AQJ1053		
Vul: None	♥ K32		
	♦ A102		
	♣ Q		
West		East	
♠ 97		♠ K642	
♥ 5		♥ QJ874	
♦ K984		♦ 653	
♣ KJ10754		♣ 6	
	South		
	♠ 8		
	♥ A1096		
	♦ QJ7		
	♣ A9832		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠*	Pass	3♦*
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		Pass	1♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Lesniewski got a small heart lead from Callaghan, won the ten, had Armstrong cover the ♦Q, and sold a spade to Callaghan: +490.

Senior, in 4♠, got the lead of the ♣6 from Pszczola. He won the ace and lost a trick to the ♠K. East got out with a diamond and declarer eventually lost a heart for +450. 1 IMP to Poland, 109-111. Close enough for you? Two boards left.



Bd: 63	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K75		
Vul: N/S	♥ K8632		
	♦ J432		
	♣ A		
West		East	
♠ 1032		♠ AJ984	
♥ Q5		♥ 109	
♦ K106		♦ 5	
♣ QJ975		♣ K8643	
	South		
	♠ Q6		
	♥ AJ74		
	♦ AQ987		
	♣ 102		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♥
2♠	4♥	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♦*	2♥*	3♥
3♠	4♣	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
*2♦=Hearts			
*2♥=5+♠/5+m			

Callaghan led his singleton diamond against Lesniewski's 4♥. Declarer called for the ace, picked up trumps, and lost a diamond and a spade: +650.

Kwiecien led the ♠3 against Lambardi's 4♥. Pszczola judged correctly to take the ace to switch to the ♦5. Lambardi ducked to the king and ran into a diamond ruff, but now he could pick up trumps for +620. 1 IMP to Poland, 110-111. Close enough for you? Last board coming up. Watch closely now...



Bd: 64	North		
Dir: West	♠ 94		
Vul: E/W	♥ K1084		
	♦ QJ7		
	♣ A1096		
West		East	
♠ AK53		♠ Q762	
♥ 765		♥ AQ93	
♦ A		♦ 96	
♣ K8543		♣ QJ2	
	South		
	♠ J108		
	♥ J2		
	♦ K1085432		
	♣ 7		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♥	3♦
Dbl*	4♦	Dbl*	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♥	3♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
4♦	Dbl	Pass	Pass
Rdbl	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Both E/W pairs handled N/S's diamond interference beautifully, slipping into spades at the eleventh hour. The Easts will tell you that their sequence showed club support in case 4♠ did not hit a primary fit. Both Souths led the ♣7. Lesniewski took his ace and returned the ten for Martens to ruff. Callaghan had the rest with the aid of the heart finesse: +650.

It was going to be tough for Poland to gain an IMP on this deal. In the Closed room Senior put in the ♣9 at trick one. Pszczola won the jack, drew trumps ending in dummy (♦Q from North), led a club to the queen, and another club. Senior won cheaply and knocked out the ♦A and Pszczola ruffed out the ♣A, cashed the ♥A, ruffed a diamond, cashed the long club, and led a heart towards the queen. North had only hearts remaining and so Pszczola scored the ♥Q for his eleventh trick: +650. No swing.

And no more boards.

England had trailed by 50 IMPs with one deal remaining in the third quarter, their nadir in the match. They started the final set 40 IMPs behind, with a half-IMP carryover to help them lose if the teams were tied at the table after 64 boards. The defending champions showed strength and character by holding their powerful opponents to just 7 IMPs over the final 16 deals while scoring 48 themselves. The final score was 111-110.

The Polish team did not fall apart down the stretch. Indeed, they did many good things, but it's never easy to beat a team of destiny, England earning that label when they qualified for the knockout phase on IMP quotient to break a tie with South Africa. Although both teams could have avoided some of their soft results, it's fair to say that Poland did not lose this match but England won it.

A toast to the back-to-back champions and their opponents, two great teams that gave us everything we could hope for in a final.



"This is my bright side. What's it to you?"

The Commonwealth Games

by Simon Cocheme

The first Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship was held in Manchester, England, in July, one week before the Commonwealth Games—a parallel with the IOC Grand Prix event held just before the Winter Olympics at Salt Lake City.

Twenty-eight countries entered, including big guns Australia, Canada and England. Many of the other countries have bridge associations of fewer than 100 members but were there to compete fiercely and try and take a few scalps along the way. The numbers were augmented by the inclusion of a Sponsor's team (Maple Financial Group of Canada) and a Patron's team (Brigitte Mavromichalis), without whose financial help the whole event would not have been possible.

The play was from 10 am to 6 or 7 pm, with a variety of entertainment laid on for the evenings, including an opening reception, hosted by the Lord Mayor in the impressive Town Hall, a visit to Old Trafford and a superb Chinese closing banquet.

The 30 teams were divided into two groups, playing a three-day Round Robin of 9 board matches. The top two in each group would qualify for the semi-finals. South Africa faced Australia in the first round and Ismael Del'Monte showed why Australia was one of the pre-tournament favourites with his play on this hand:

West	North	East	South
<i>Gower</i>	<i>MarstonChu</i>		<i>Del'Monte</i>
	1♥(1)	Pass	1NT(2)
2♦	2♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
(1) At least four spades			
(2) Up to 11 points			

Gower avoided the fatal diamond lead and opted for the ♣2 (the jack is no better) to Chu's ace, and he switched to the ♦10. Del'Monte won with ace and played a heart to dummy's queen. He then ran the spades, reaching this pretty end position:

	♠ 3		
	♥ 97		
	♦ 7		
	♣ 7		
♠ ---		♠ ---	
♥ A		♥ J105	
♦ KJ		♦ 9	
♣ KJ		♣ 9	
	♠ ---		
	♥ K		
	♦ Q8		
	♣ Q8		

Declarer threw the ♥K on the last spade. West discarded his ♥A, and was then thrown in with a club to concede the last trick to the ♦Q. South Africa were one off in 3♠ in the other room, so that was 10 IMPs to Australia who won the match by 23 VPs to 7.

Zimbabwe met Jamaica on Vu-Graph in Round 3:



"Some days it just doesn't pay to get out of bed..."

Vul: E/W	♠ AKQ953		
Dlr: North	♥ Q97		
	♦ 73		
	♣ 75		
♠ J7		♠ 1062	
♥ A6		♥ J1054	
♦ KJ652		♦ 1094	
♣ KJ102		♣ A94	
	♠ 84		
	♥ K832		
	♦ AQ8		
	♣ Q863		

Vul: None	♠ 5		
Dir: West	♥ 97		
	♦ KJ976		
	♣ AKJ103		
♠ 943		♠ QJ1076	
♥ J54		♥ K8632	
♦ 1054		♦ A3	
♣ 7542		♣ 8	
	♠ AK82		
	♥ AQ10		
	♦ Q82		
	♣ Q96		

Vul: None	♠ AQJ9643		
Dir: East	♥ Q2		
	♦ Q1074		
	♣ ---		
♠ K1072		♠ 85	
♥ 64		♥ 953	
♦ J83		♦ 9652	
♣ QJ32		♣ 9875	
	♠ ---		
	♥ AKJ1087		
	♦ AK		
	♣ AK1064		

There are three making slam contracts and Michael Coore and Wayne Chai-Chong, in the closed room for Jamaica, bid to 6♣ without too much difficulty. Zimbabwe was not so successful on Vu-Graph:

Wales, Kenya, Singapore, England and the Patron's team all bid to 7♥, which needs the diamonds to break four-three if a trump is led. This was England's sequence in the closed room of their Vu-Graph match with Canada:

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	Dbl	Rdbl
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West	North	East	South
	<i>Price</i>		<i>Mossop</i>
		Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♥	Pass	5NT(1)
Pass	6♦(2)	Pass	7♥
All Pass			
	(1) Grand slam force		
	(2) One of the top three honours in hearts		

South had started with a redouble (because 1♠ would not have been forcing in his methods) and then tried one forcing bid too many. John Collings was on Vu-Graph commentary duty at the time and was urging South to bid 6NT on the second and the third round of bidding. When North, who assumed he was facing a hand that was at least five-five in the majors, produced his final pass card, the ever-excitable Collings knocked over his microphone, his water and most of the other items on the commentators' table. Zimbabwe's only consolation was that they were now in the lead for the prize for the contract with the worst trump fit.

The Canadian auction (which got slower and slower as it went along) was well received by England's supporters in the Vu-Graph audience:

This hand from Round 4 generated big swings in many of the matches:



"Beats me why they put us out in the hall here."

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♣(1)
Pass	1♦(2)	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦(3)	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♦(4)
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♥
Pass	6♠	All Pass	
	(1) Strong club		
	(2) 5-11 points		
	(3) Fourth suit forcing		
	(4) Alerted by North as agreeing spades, but not necessarily a diamond control		

One off in 6♠ was 17 IMPs to England, but Canada had the last laugh, winning the match 19-11.

Elsewhere the Australians played the board in 5♦ on a four-two fit, making seven when the ♦J fell on the third round. They got a lucky 10 IMPs for their trouble when Malaysia matched the Canadian result of 6♠ minus one. But Malaysia won the match 22-8—a scalp for them. The Sri Lankans, for whom former Test cricketer Asanthade Mel was appearing, also benefited from the trebleton ♦J, bidding and making 7NT.

Round 6 on the second day included another slam hand:

Vul: Both	♠ 32		
Dlr: East	♥ J103		
	♦ 953		
	♣ K10982		
♠ AKQJ97		♠ 10654	
♥ A95		♥ Q4	
♦ AQ		♦ KJ10872	
♣ A5		♣ Q	
	♠ 8		
	♥ K8762		
	♦ 64		
	♣ J7643		

The grand slam proved easiest to bid when East was able to open a weak 2♦ although the resulting final contract was often 'only' a safe 7♦. Fourteen of the 28 pairs got to a grand slam, but four pairs stayed in game. One educational sequence (after a pass by East) was 2♣-2♦; 3♠-3NT. East thought that 3NT showed values but denied an ace (with 4♠ being the weakest bid). West was on a different wavelength and passed.

Round 8 featured Bermuda v. St Lucia on Vu-Graph.



"Look Bob, PacMan just ate Godzilla!"

Vul: E/W	♠ Q85		
Dlr: North	♥ A62		
	♦ K10		
	♣ AQ954		
♠ 63		♠ AK1042	
♥ 10853		♥ KQ4	
♦ 952		♦ J	
♣ 10763		♣ KJ82	
	♠ J97		
	♥ J97		
	♦ AQ87643		
	♣ ---		

3♦ was the most popular contract, usually making exactly when West got his spade ruff. St Lucia went two off in 5♦ in the closed room for -100. The real interest was on Vu-Graph where Roman Smolski, who represented Britain many times in World and Zonal championships in the 80s and 90s, was South for Bermuda:

West	North	East	South
	1NT	Dbf	3NT
Pass	Pass	Dbf	4♦
All Pass			

What should South bid when North's strong 1NT opening has been doubled? Smolski tried an each-way 3NT, which would have made easily as the cards lie, but not surprisingly he ran to 4♦ when East doubled again. The defence started with king, ace and another spade (the ten, I believe). West ruffed and switched to the ♥10. Smolski called for dummy's ace and dropped the jack from hand (the card he was known to hold). Now he ran his diamonds, leaving the ♣AQ stranded in dummy. East of course discarded his ♥KQ, so that he could keep the ♣KJ. West did not realise that his ♥8 still had a part to play, and declarer made the last two tricks with the nine and seven of hearts.

At the end of the second day, with ten of the fifteen Round Robin matches played, Canada, the Sponsor's team and India were clear of fourth-placed England in Group A. Things were closer in Group B, with Australia leading the Patron's team, Bermuda, Pakistan and South Africa, with Wales a distant sixth.

England kept their hopes alive by beating Scotland 23-7 in the first match on the third day, but some indifferent results thereafter meant that they never really challenged the leading teams. Canada reinforced their own position with a 22-8 victory over India, and although India fought back strongly and won their last four matches, they had too much ground to make up.

Group B was far more exciting. Wales had had some excellent results and after three rounds had moved into third place, just ahead of Pakistan. Pakistan's last two matches, both on Vu-Graph, were against the leading teams, Patron and Australia. Good wins might help Pakistan into a qualifying spot but would also help Wales.

This board was instructive for the Vu-Graph audience.

Vul: None	♠ 865		
Dlr: East	♥ 42		
	♦ AKQ954		
	♣ 42		
♠ QJ10		♠ 97	
♥ AK87		♥ J63	
♦ J1063		♦ 87	
♣ A6		♣ KQJ1075	
	♠ AK432		
	♥ Q1095		
	♦ 2		
	♣ 983		

Both rooms reached 3NT by West. The Patron's team cashed their five top tricks to beat the contract in the closed room. Could Pakistan flatten the board on Vu-Graph? The Pakistani N/S were a scratch pair, formed when their team of six was reduced to four by illness and a sudden urgent business commitment. North led the ace-king-queen of diamonds, South discarding the four and two of spades. After an agonising trance, North played a fourth diamond. Eric Kokish, who was leading the Vu-Graph commentary team, felt the players should share the blame. North should have played the ♦Q at trick two, so that South would know he had three cashing tricks. South should have discarded the ♥Q on the third trick. With the ♥J visible in dummy, this would clearly call

for a spade. Despite this setback, Pakistan won the match 16-14. Meanwhile Wales had gained a maximum 25 VPs against Bermuda and were now close to the two leaders.

This was the crucial hand in the final round:

Vul: Both	♠ A6		
Dlr: South	♥ K2		
	♦ AQJ1094		
	♣ 942		
♠ K98754		♠ J3	
♥ 93		♥ AQJ8754	
♦ K653		♦ 82	
♣ 7		♣ 83	
	♠ Q102		
	♥ 106		
	♦ 7		
	♣ AKQJ1065		

When Australia were N/S on Vu-Graph they bid to 5♣ after East had pre-empted in hearts. West decided to lead a diamond rather than his partner's suit and declarer came to a comfortable 12 tricks. This was the bidding at the other table:

West	North	East	South
			1♣
1♠	2♦	2♥	3♣
Pass	3NT	Dbl	All Pass

East led the ♠J and declarer made 11 tricks for a score of +1150 and 11 IMPs. Pakistan won the match 23-7

In the their match against Wales the Malaysians reached an unambitious 4♦, while Wales, who needed their fifth big win in a row, bid to 6NT by North. East led ace and another heart. Adam Dunn won and cashed dummy's clubs, on the last of which West had to find a suicidal discard from ♠K9 ♦K65. The 16 IMPs helped Wales to a 22-8 win, enough for them to move ahead Australia into the second qualifying position.

The hand was also played in 6NT by Les Steel for Scotland in their match against Zimbabwe. West had bid a weak 2♠ over Willie Whittaker's 1♣ opening bid, so East led the ♠J. This was

covered by the queen, king and ace. Steel ran the clubs to reach this position:

	♠ 6	
	♥ K	
	♦ AQJ	
	♣ ---	
♠ 98		♠ 3
♥ ---		♥ AQ
♦ K65		♦ 82
♣ ---		♣ ---
	♠ 102	
	♥ 106	
	♦ 7	
	♣ ---	

Andrew Brooke in the West seat had had to discard his hearts to keep his stoppers in spades and diamonds. Now declarer finessed the diamond, came back to his hand with the ♠10 and threw Brooke in with the ♠2. The forced diamond return gave Steel his 12 tricks. Well played? Yes indeed, but Brooke could have saved the day by not covering the ♠Q at trick one, not an easy play to find.

The leading results of the Round Robin were as follows:

Group A

- 1 Canada (Judith & Nicholas Gartaganis, Gordon Campbell & Keith Balcombe)—315
- 2 Sponsor (Boris Ewart & Gary Hyett, Bernard Goldenfield & John Holland, Bill Hirst & John Hassett)—297
- 3 India—284
- 4 England—246
- 5 Scotland—228

Group B

- 1 Patron (John Armstrong & Tony Forrester, Justin, Jason & Paul Hackett, NPC John Williams)—277
- 2 Wales (Gary & Dafydd Jones, Tim Rees & Filip Kurbalija, Peter Goodman & Adam Dunn, NPC Jim Luck)—274
- 3 Australia—266
- 4 Pakistan—258
- 5 Northern Ireland—257

The conditions of the tournament were that neither the Patron's team nor the Sponsor's

team could win medals, so the 48-board semi-final between Canada and Wales would decide who got Gold and Silver, and the top Commonwealth team in the consolation event would win the Bronze.

The Welsh had built a small but useful lead towards the end of the first stanza, but Canada got nearly all of it back with this board:

Vul: Both	♠ 765432
Dir: East	♥ 8
	♦ K86
	♣ A93
♠ 9	♠ AKQ10
♥ AKQ972	♥ 654
♦ Q107542	♦ 3
♣ ---	♣ J8765
	♠ J8
	♥ J103
	♦ AJ9
	♣ KQ1042

In the closed room it was an inter-family affair, with Wales E/W.

West	North	East	South
<i>Gary J</i>	<i>Nick G</i>	<i>Dafydd J</i>	<i>Judith G</i>
		Pass	1NT
2NT	Pass	3♣	Dbl
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

North did not find a trump lead, so Wales scored +680. The Canadian E/W were more ambitious on Vu-Graph:

West	North	East	South
<i>Campbell</i>	<i>Kurbalija</i>	<i>Balcombe</i>	<i>Rees</i>
		Pass	1♣
1♥	1♠	2♣(1)	Pass
5♣(2)	Pass	5♥(3)	Pass
6♥	All Pass		
(1) Good raise in hearts			
(2) Exclusion Roman KC Blackwood			
(3) One key card (not the ♣A)			

North might have had more reason to lead a trump on this sequence, since he knew

declarer was almost certain to have a diamond suit and would not be throwing a losing spade on dummy's clubs. On the actual spade lead Campbell was able to ruff two diamonds in dummy and bring home the slam. That was 13 IMPs to Canada who had reduced the deficit to 4.

Canada had moved into a small lead in the second quarter when this monster appeared:

Vul: Both	♠ 32		
Dir: West	♥ QJ1087		
	♦ ---		
	♣ AQ7632		
♠ AJ865		♠ KQ1097	
♥ 932		♥ K65	
♦ AK976		♦ J105	
♣ ---		♣ 105	
	♠ 4		
	♥ A4		
	♦ Q8432		
	♣ KJ984		
West	North	East	South
<i>Gary J</i>	<i>Nick G</i>	<i>Dafydd J</i>	<i>Judith G</i>
1♠	2♠(1)	4♠	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	Pass
5♠	Pass	Pass	6♣
Dbl	All Pass		
West	North	East	South
<i>Campbell</i>	<i>Goodman</i>	<i>Balcombe</i>	<i>Dunn</i>
1♠	2♠(1)	4♠	4NT
Dbl	5♣	Pass	Pass
5♠	All Pass		
(1) Michaels			

Both Souths found out that their partner's second suit was clubs and then had to decide what to do over 5♠. Adam Dunn passed for Wales and when Peter Goodman chose the textbook lead of the ♣2, rather than the mundane ♥Q, Gordon Campbell was able to wrap up 12 tricks for +680.

Judith Gartaganis chose to sacrifice over 5♠ but, when her husband produced the perfect dummy, 6♣ proved not to be a sacrifice at all and was worth +1540 and 19 IMPs to Canada, who led by 27 IMPs at the halfway stage.

Amazingly, the two scores on this board were duplicated in the other semi-final, the Patron's team gaining the same 19 IMPs to lead the Sponsor's Manchester-based team by 45 IMPs at half-time.

The Patron's team pulled away in the third quarter and, 53-145 down, the Sponsor's team conceded. Canada also built up a big lead and at one stage were over 60 IMPs ahead, but a fightback by Wales saw them go into the last quarter 37 IMPs behind.

Wales continued their recovery with aggressive bidding and good play. The margin was down to 19 IMPs when they overbid to 7♠, going one off, with Canada stopping in 5♠, plus one. Wales bounced back immediately:

Vul: Both	♠ J652		
Dir: North	♥ 4		
	♦ KQ98		
	♣ J986		
♠ A		♠ K3	
♥ J987653		♥ AKQ	
♦ J4		♦ A10632	
♣ A73		♣ 1054	
	♠ Q109874		
	♥ 102		
	♦ 75		
	♣ KQ2		
West	North	East	South
<i>Campbell</i>	<i>Kurbalija</i>	<i>Balcombe</i>	<i>Rees</i>
	Pass	1♦	1♠
2♥	2NT	Dbl	3♠
4♣	Pass	4♥	All Pass
West	North	East	South
<i>Gary J</i>	<i>Nick G</i>	<i>Dafydd J</i>	<i>Judith G</i>
	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣(1)	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♦	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♥	All Pass		
(1) Checkback			

Canada stopped in 4♥ in the open room, making 12 tricks. There was a mighty cheer from the Welsh supporters in the Vu-Graph room when the closed room result was displayed. The Jones father and son combination had bid and made 6♥ on a spade lead. Canada ahead by 17 IMPs with four boards to go. Wales picked up another 6 IMPs on the next board, but the set finished with three part score hands and Wales ran out of time, losing by 7 IMPs, 137-144.

For Canada it was a notable double; the three men on the team had won the Gold medal in the Men's event at the IOC Grand Prix at Salt Lake City. Judith Gartaganis had not been eligible for the Men's team there, but the Commonwealth have a more enlightened attitude and had a single open event in Manchester.

For Wales, too, it was a triumph. This was their first ever medal in international competition and the team and their many supporters were absolutely delighted.

The final between Canada and the Patron's team on the final day was closely fought. There were no medals at stake, but both teams wanted to win the competition.

This board caught my eye on Vu-Graph:

Vul: None	♠ J986		
Dir: West	♥ Q76		
	♦ AQ4		
	♣ 1073		
♠ K532		♠ AQ104	
♥ AJ108		♥ 432	
♦ K72		♦ 1086	
♣ K9		♣ A42	
	♠ 7		
	♥ K95		
	♦ J953		
	♣ QJ865		
West	North	East	South
<i>Nick G</i>	<i>Forrester</i>	<i>Judith G</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
1♦*	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

The Patron's team in the other room bid 1NT-3NT for +400; 4♠ was not so straightforward. A club was led, won by the king in dummy. Judith Gartaganis played a spade to hand and led a heart. Armstrong made the fine entry-destroying play of the king. Declarer cashed the ♠K, discovering the four-one break, and played a heart. Forrester won with the queen (to avoid being endplayed with it later on) and exited with a third heart. It seemed that declarer would have to find the ♦A onside, or North with ace-queen-jack (since a man good enough to play the ♥K could hardly fail to insert the ♦9). But declarer showed there was a better line. She played a spade to the ten, cashed the ♣A, ruffed a club and led the last heart. Forrester ruffed with his last trump, but Judith Gartaganis declined to over-ruff, discarding a losing diamond. North now had to open up the diamonds and the contract was made. Well played all round.

The match was fairly even until the last few boards, when the Patron's team drew away and won 102-75. Wales built up a good lead in the other match, then held off a late charge by the Sponsor's team to win by 6 IMPs, 69-63.

The expanded consolation event (other UK teams had joined in) produced the winner of the Bronze medal.

- 1 India (C. R. Bandrinath, K. R. Venkataraman, P. Sridharen, R. Krishnan, Sunit Chokski, S Sundarraman)—151
- 2 Manchester CBA—131
- 3 Northern Ireland—109
- 4 Singapore—91

Such a successful and well-run event should not go by without tribute being paid to all the Manchester-based helpers, EBU workers and, in particular, Jeff Morris (whose brainchild the tournament was), Paul Hackett, Denis Robson, chairman of the organising committee, and Paul Bowyer, editor of the daily bulletin. Everyone who attended hopes that Australia will host the second Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championships in Melbourne in 2006.





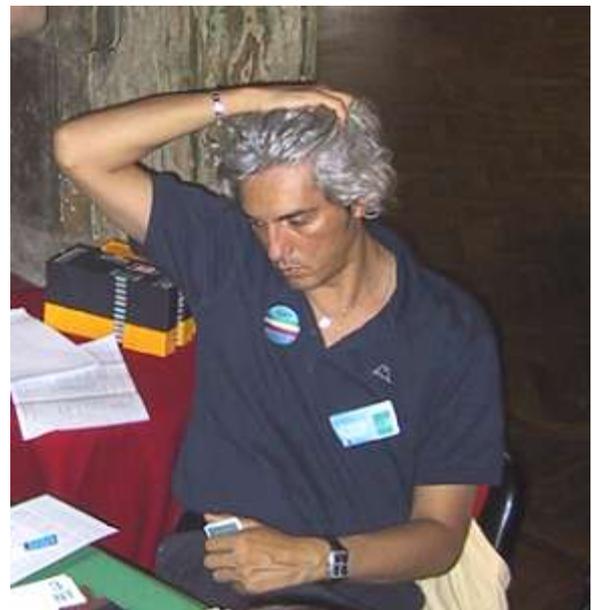
Bridge is music and you're tone-deaf!
by
Norberto Bocchi

I have to admit that my first steps in the bridge world were not particularly glorious, but even then were quite profitable. In fact at age thirteen I acted as caddy at the bridge club where my father played, collecting the boards and taking them to the tables, for the princely sum of four thousand lira (about two euros today). Between one delivery and the next I would cast a glance and overhear snippets of conversations ... but in those days bridge was a bit of a mystery to me. However, with cards in general I had already struck up a friendship and after school I would amuse myself by ripping off my friends in games of all kinds played in the bars in my neighbourhood.

My weekly income was then further supplemented by a marketing operation which seemed very smart to me and involved my sister, Mabel, a famous basketball player, although she remained completely unaware of my actions: every morning I got her to sign some autographs which I would then sell to my schoolmates or swap for break-time snacks...in short in those days I was a real businessman rather than a bridgeplayer, a quality which has diminished considerably over the years.

Leaving behind the bars and snacks, I was then promoted to kibitzer in the club where I'd worked as caddy, and after a long period during which I never even held any cards, I finally threw myself into playing rubber bridge and then proper tournaments. Right from the start it was clear that I had quite a talent for bridge and so when I was 18/19 I decided to make a change in my life, making the following choices in this order:

- a) play with a professional
- b) leave school...I'd had more than enough!
- c) hang up my basketball shoes...I'd been playing in the premier league



In fact I'd clearly realized that it was far better to enjoy myself more and sweat less...it was unfortunate then that once thrown into this new world, about which I knew very little from the inside, I found myself being brought up by the most difficult, demanding, cantankerous, BRILLIANT, partner to be found in Italy: Arturo Franco. And here are two anecdotes about this experience.

After Arturo had given me an extremely messy (or so it seemed to me then) system to study, He summoned me for a training session to check if I'd been diligent.

Right at the first hand, after a bidding full of

relays?, it was up to my teacher to have the last word on the final contract. The cards were as follows:

	ME	
♠	K Q x	
♥	A Q xx	
♦	K xx	
♣	A xx	
		
♠	A 10 9 8 x	
♥	K J	
♦	A Q xx	
♣	K Q xx	
	ARTURO	

He came close to me and said very calmly: "You see, Norberto, the whole world, having the information I have, would bid 7♠, but I would go further and bid 7NT and I'll explain why. If the spades are split 4-1, I definitely go down, but if the player with the four spades also has four diamonds then I can squeeze him and make my 7NT".

What was incredible was that he said all this having only seen his own cards. I don't think I've ever felt so disheartened: I felt like getting up and leaving. I didn't, but at that precise moment I realised that if I wanted to become a real bridgeplayer, I still had a long way to go.

The second episode took place during the Italian Team Championship. We found ourselves at the table with two gurus, Belladonna and Garozzo, while behind, beside, around us, in fact everywhere, were at least three hundred avid spectators. I remember that I was as nervous as a child before his first Christmas concert. Thanks to some divine intervention, given the circumstances, I played the right cards up till the 19th deal. The spectators were right behind us as the leaders. Despite the good score and the

euphoric atmosphere, I noticed however that hand after hand and for no apparent reason Arturo was getting more and more down. Then at last (for him!), during the 20th hand when by this point I was extremely stressed, I let the opponents make an insignificant overtrick. What on earth had I done!

He insulted me in the most imaginative ways including: "Bridge is music and you are definitely tone-deaf...you can't seriously think of being a professional if you make such terrible blunders." He went on ranting and raving for at least five minutes in front of the dumbfounded opponents and the throng, so much so that it seemed like being on "Candid Camera."

The year passed and the partners changed: from Mosca to Belladonna, from Cedolin to Ferraro and Versace, ending up with Giorgino Duboin, my partner for the past twelve years.

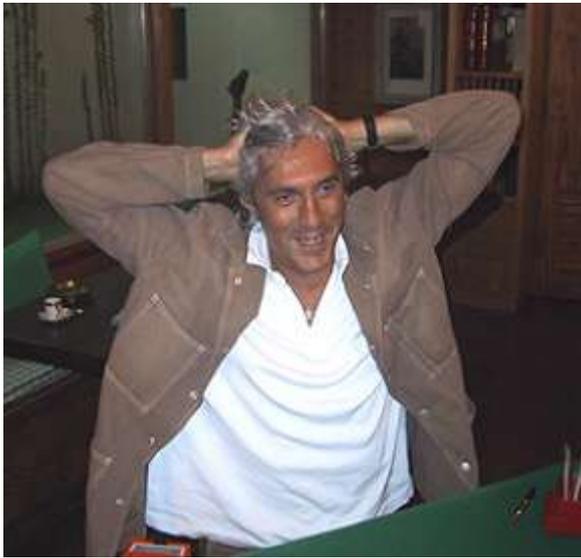
But let's take a step back in time to 1987 when I was returning by plane from China, where I'd been playing for ten days with Guido Ferraro.

Not content with this and being real bridge addicts, we took advantage of a stopover in Paris to participate in the Cino Del Duca tournament which happened to start that very day.

During the very last board of the tournament, after a rather flat performance, we found ourselves at the table with a French couple, probably lovers rather than husband and wife...and I'm sure that from what follows you'll agree with me. The auction goes like this:

Norberto	Him	Guido	Her
2♥	Pass	3♥	3NT
All Pass			

2♥ = preemptive



In one of the first tournaments we played with this new system we bid in this way:

Norberto	Giorgino
1♣ (could be strong)	1♥ (=4 or more ♠)
2♣ (GF or other hands)	2♦ (relay)
4♣ (cue bid + spades fit)	4♠ (please stop)
5♣ (odd number of aces + first round club cue)	5♥ (doubleton or queen of hearts)
6♣ (grand slam try but I need some help in clubs)	7♠

I led the Queen of hearts and then to my great surprise I saw Ferraro grinning like a Cheshire cat. After having quickly cashed the King and Ace of hearts, Guido exited with his last heart. To cut a long story short: my remaining four hearts were all good. In the meantime, while we calmly took all there was to take, from the third trick onwards, i.e. eleven times, the Frenchman, who was aware that his partner never had a heart stopper, started asking her in a very friendly and polite manner: "No more hearts, dear?" After each and every trick the lady, increasingly more ashamed and almost under the table, replied in a feeble and equally polite voice: "No, dear."

After every "no," he diligently and carefully ripped his card into four identical pieces.

Guido and I were absolutely astonished and about to burst into hysterics. Finally he got up from the table with a little bow, but with an expression like Jack Nicholson in "The Shining" and left us saying": Cette jeux est magnifique!" (this game is magnificent!).

A few years later my partnership with Giorgino Duboin began, and as you can imagine over these years we've seen it all and I could go on forever. But perhaps one of the funniest occurred when after having played Blue Club for some time we switched to Natural, even if it wasn't very natural with the numerous gadgets we added.

Both in a cold sweat—me because five times I'd bid clubs I didn't have and I was terrified that Giorgio would pass; him because he was respecting all the rules but knowing how anarchic I am he feared that I had completely forgotten the system. Finally his trust in me was rewarded as the contract was made, but be sure that Giorgino's lifetime was most certainly shortened by at least three years by that hellish club bidding.

Dulcis in fundo my captain, sponsor and friend, Maria Teresa Lavazza, who has put up with me for 21 years. Also with her there are a few stories to tell, including one which happened recently in Viareggio, where Maria Teresa played together with Ferraro.

After a rather difficult auction, our teammates reached a 4♠ contract. After the lead, Maria Teresa laid down her cards as dummy and Guido, with his 'notorious kindness' said to her: "Thank you, little one." How had he dared. Maria Teresa, interpreting "little one" as a reference to her, got annoyed and replied angrily: "That's what you'd say to your dog."

Obviously Ferraro meant a small heart from dummy.

Enough said. I'll sign off with just one wish: that Menton will be great fun for us all.

COME TOGETHER IN MENTON

FORMAT

The championship will include:

- Mixed Teams
- Mixed Pairs
- Open, Women=s and Senior Teams
- Open, Women=s and Senior Pairs
- Side Games

RIGHT OF ENTRY

Bridge players (registered members of WBF NBOs) from all WBF zones, in good standing with their Federation, are entitled to participate. All events will be **TRANSNATIONAL** and there will be no restrictions on numbers of entries per NBO.

VENUE

Palais de l=Europe, Menton, Côte d=Azur, France

REGISTRATION

Must be made through your own Federation before **30th April 2003** and sent to:

European Bridge League
Gianarrigo Rona B President
Via Ciro Menotti 11/C
20129 Milano B Italy
Tel. +39 02 7000 0333
Fax +39 02 7000 1398
E Mail: ebl@federbridge.it

Non-European players may also register by internet as from October 2002.

ENTRY FEES

To be paid in cash (Swiss Francs, Euros, and US Dollars) at the Tournament Reception and Registration Desk in Palais de l=Europe in Menton:

Mixed Teams - Swiss Francs 1200
Mixed Pairs - Swiss Francs 400
Open Teams - Swiss Francs 1400
Women's Teams - Swiss Francs 1400
Senior Teams - Swiss Francs 1200
Open Pairs - Swiss Francs 700
Women's Pairs - Swiss Francs 700
Senior Pairs - Swiss Francs 500

HOTEL ACCOMODATION

Please contact:

Syndicat des Hoteliers de Menton
Tel. +33 4 9335 9803
Fax +33 4 9357 1010
E-mail: info@hotelmenton.com

HOW TO REACH MENTON

- By plane: Nice Côte d=Azur Airport (30 mins.)
- By train: Menton Railway Station

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact:

Christina MacEachen B EBL
Via Ciro Menotti 11/C
20129 Milano B Italy
Tel. +39 02 7000 0333 / 7000 0022
Fax +39 02 7000 1398

E-mail: ebl@federbridge.it

INFORMATION ON INTERNET

<http://www.eurobridge.org>
<http://www.worldbridge.org>
<http://bridge.ecats.co.uk/>

PROGRAMME & SCHEDULE OF PLAY

Saturday 14th - Opening Ceremony
- Mixed Teams (Qualifying round)
Sunday 15th - Mixed Teams (Qualifying round)
Monday 16th - Mixed Teams (16- & 8- Final/
Consolation Swiss)
Tuesday 17th - Mixed Teams (4- & Semi-final)
- Mixed Pairs (Qualifying 1st & 2nd
Sessions)
Wednes. 18th - Mixed Teams (Final)
- Mixed Pairs (Qualifying 3rd & Final 1st
Sessions)
Thursday 19th - Mixed Pairs (Final 2nd & 3rd Sessions)
Friday 20th - Men, Women & Senior Teams
(Qualifying Sessions)
Saturday 21th - Men, Women & Senior Teams
(Qualifying Sessions)
Sunday 22nd - Men, Women & Senior Teams
(Qualifying Sessions)
Monday 23rd - Men, Women & Senior Teams
(16- & 8- Final / Consolation)
Tuesday 24th - Men, Women & Senior Teams (4- &
Semi-final)
- Men, Women & Senior Pairs
(1st & 2nd Qualifying Sessions)
Wednes. 25th - Men, Women & Senior Teams
(Final)
- Men, Women & Senior Pairs
(3rd Qual. & 1st Semi-final)
Thursday 26th - Men, Women & Senior Pairs
(2nd & 3rd Semi-final)
Friday 27th - Men, Women & Senior Pairs
(1st & 2nd Final & Consolation)
Saturday 28th - Men, Women & Senior Pairs
(3rd Final Session)
- Closing Ceremony & Prize-Giving at
7.30 p.m. followed by Victory Banquet

Play will start at 10/10.30 a.m. and finish at 8/8.30 p.m. each day, except for Saturday 14th June, when play will start in the afternoon after the Opening Ceremony.

AWARDS

Gold, silver and bronze EBL Medals will be awarded. Winners will receive the title of European Open Champion. Honour prizes will be presented to the best ranking pairs and teams in each category. MasterPoints will also be awarded.

**COME TO MENTON
TO ENJOY TOGETHER
THE FIRST EUROPEAN
OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP**

Play 'Em Like You Bid 'Em

In yesterday's Yokohama Swiss, John Probst found himself in an ambitious 4♥ contract after his partner, Makoto Wakabayashi, invited him to the prom and he accepted. This was the layout:

<p>North ♠ KQ ♥ QJ109x ♦ xxx ♣ Kxx</p>			
West	East		
♠ Axx	♠ xxxx		
♥ Kxxx	♥ x		
♦ AJx	♦ Qxx		
♣ Qxx	♣ J10xxx		
<p>South ♠ J10xx ♥ A87 ♦ K10xx ♣ Ax</p>			
West	North	East	South
	<i>Makoto</i>		<i>John</i>
			1NT(1)
Pass	2♦(2)	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) 12-14 HCP			
(2) Transfer to hearts			

The Canadian West started a low heart. Probst won the queen and immediately attacked spades, playing the king to West's ace. Back came a second heart. Probst won in hand cheaply (East pitching a club), unblocked the ♠Q, played ♣A, ♣K, ruff a club with the ♥A and then cashed the ♠J (pitching a diamond from dummy). When West ruffed the third spade low, Probst over-ruffed and found himself in dummy in the following four-card end position:

♠ ---		♠ ---	
♥ J10		♥ ---	
♦ xx		♦ Qxx	
♣ ---		♣ J	
♠ ---	♠ ---	♠ ---	♠ ---
♥ K	♥ ---	♥ ---	♥ ---
♦ AJx	♦ K10xx	♦ ---	♦ ---
♣ ---	♣ ---	♣ ---	♣ ---

He judged accurately to exit with a heart, endplaying West for his tenth and game-going trick. This turned out to be a super result since N/S stopped in 3♥ at the other table and took nine tricks for +140.

If you're gonna bid 'em like this, you'd better play 'em this good.

8th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Location
Sunday (Feb. 9)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup	F203-206
	18:00-19:00	Closing Ceremony	F201-202

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 8th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

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

– or –

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