



# NEC Bridge Festival

Sunday, February 15, 2004  
Bulletin Number 7

Editors: Eric Kokish, Richard Colker, Pietro Campanile

## Fu-Zhou Win Asuka Cup for Second Straight Year Itano-Itano Victors in JCBL Cup



Asuka Cup Winners: Fu Zhong–Zhou Jie



JCBL Cup Winners: Sadao & Terue Itano

## Top Ten Finishers in Asuka Cup

Rank	Pair	Score
1	Fu Zhong–Zhou Jie	3896.5
2	R. Trendafilov–K. Karaivanov	3751.0
3	Doron Yadllin–Israel Yadin	3667.5
4	Garey Hayden–Simon Kantor	3628.0
5	Chen Dawei–Takahiko Hirata	3568.5
6	Chia Hsin Wu–Chih Kuo Shen	3566.0
7	Shunsuke Morimura–Kyoko Shimamura	3519.5
8	Zhao Jinlong–Akiko Yanagisawa	3509.5
9	Yoshinori Kurachi–Ayako Matsubara	3494.4
10	Jerry Stamatov–Ivan Tsonchev	3474.5

## 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 9<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

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

– or –

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

# NEC Cup Bridge Festival 2004

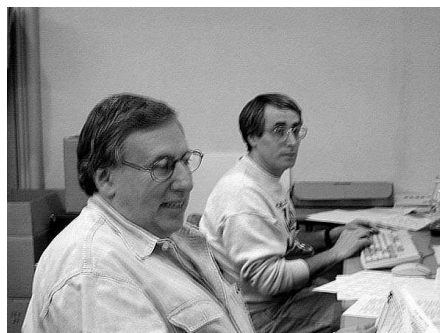
## Domo Arigato

On behalf of all the participants, we would like to congratulate our corporate sponsor **NEC** for once again joining with **JCBL** to produce a bridge event of the highest quality and competitiveness. As we have mentioned before, the **NEC Bridge Festival** now regularly attracts the interest of the best players in the world. Many of the participants consider the NEC tournament one of their best bridge experiences. Once again, congratulations to the sponsors and especially the **JCBL** staff.

Yokohama, and especially the Pacifico, are wonderful places and the Exhibition Hall has again proved itself to be a first-class playing venue. The weather was pleasant again this year and the people warm and friendly, as always. It is our continuing great pleasure to be reunited each year with our many friends and to share once again the happy times, the fun and the excitement of this tournament. Your kindness and generosity warm our hearts.

The significant prizes and broad participation have made the **NEC Bridge Festival** an important event on the bridge calendar, one which continues to grow in size and prestige. This year's expanded field of 52 teams for the NEC Cup was the largest ever in this event, and the teams that contested for the top spots in both the Swiss and knockout stages proved that every team deserved to be here.

The Bulletin Editors are grateful to those who helped us with deals, stories and other material to keep you informed. Many thanks to *Nakatani-san*, for his peerless leadership and enduring friendship. To *Richard Grenside*, tormented director, who as always dealt with the thorny problems accompanying a tournament of this scope and surmounted them all. To *Omasa-san*, who this year went beyond the usual call of duty in providing us remarkable technical and computer support—even well into the wee hour of the morning. To *Nakamura-san and Wantanabe-san*, for their wonderful pictures (which as usual we subjected to our peculiar sense of humor). To *Suzuki-san* for his help with many things, both technical and otherwise. To the many who brought us gifts, especially the food which was especially welcomed during our late-night work sessions. Thanks also to the many other volunteers who performed the myriad functions critical to this tournament's success, while we were hopelessly absorbed in our work. We consider all of you part of our extended family here in Japan. And finally, our thanks to the players who produced a rich source of exciting, top-level bridge for us to write about.



Warmest regards, *Eric, Rich and Pietro*

# Snapshot from the Asuka Cup

by Pietro Campanile

**Brian Senior**, who has built a wide reputation as the “Overtrick Dark Reaper” when declaring harmless looking contracts in pairs events, made his mark again in this deal from the Asuka Cup. Playing with **Kumiko Ishii**, Brian was declarer in his favorite spot, 3NT.

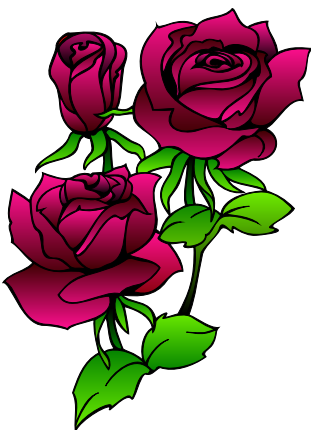


Brian Senior

The hand was obviously made for Brian: First he managed to open a weak notrump with one of his trademark, top heavy 11 counts and then he was presented with a chance to extract the overtrick he craved for once two rounds of diamonds revealed that the suit was coming in. The average player would cash the diamonds and then try a club finesse for his tenth trick. Not Brian, though. After noting that West followed to both top diamonds, he played a third round of the suit as both opponents pitched a club, then cashed two top clubs. When West followed low, he knew that he was either 2=6=2=3 or 3=5=2=3 and an overwhelming favorite to hold the ♠K. Senior continued by cashing the rest of the diamonds and with five cards remaining, exited with a heart to West’s ten, who was now forced to gift declarer with a spade trick after cashing his last heart. 3NT, +630, was a well-deserved top and another notch on the Reaper’s belt.

Bd: 12	♠ Q1064	
Dir: East	♥ 8	
Vul: N/S	♦ A652	
	♣ AKJ9	
♠ KJ9		♠ 853
♥ AQJ102		♥ 9763
♦ 94		♦ Q3
♣ 872		♣ Q1053
	♠ A72	
	♥ K54	
	♦ KJ1087	
	♣ 64	
(Board rotated for convenience)		

West	North	East	South
	<i>Ishii</i>		<i>Senior</i>
		Pass	1NT
2♣(1)	Dbl	Pass	Pass
2♥	3♥(2)	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
(1) Cappelletti, Undisclosed one suiter			
(2) Four Spades without a heart stopper			
Lead: ♥Q			



## A Special Thank You

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# NEC Cup Final: The Second Half

by Eric Kokish

## Third Quarter (Boards 33-48):

Bd: 33	North	
Dir: North	♠ AK963	
Vul: None	♥ 54	
	♦ AKJ6	
	♣ 84	
West		East
♠ QJ10874		♠ 5
♥ K87		♥ A632
♦ 105		♦ Q982
♣ 52		♣ AK109
	South	
	♠ 2	
	♥ QJ109	
	♦ 743	
	♣ QJ763	

Bd: 34	North	
Dir: East	♠ A732	
Vul: N/S	♥ ---	
	♦ KJ82	
	♣ A10974	
West		East
♠ 10854		♠ KQ6
♥ AKJ9653		♥ Q1082
♦ 3		♦ Q10964
♣ 8		♣ 5
	South	
	♠ J9	
	♥ 74	
	♦ A75	
	♣ KQJ632	

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	1♠	Dbl	All Pass

The standard lead on this auction is a trump but Lu cashed ♣AK and exited with the ♦2 to the ten and jack. When Doron led a heart up Lu went in with the ace to play a second heart, Hou winning the king to return her remaining diamond. As the defenders had extracted all of declarer's safe exit cards, Doron tried ♦AK. Hou ruffed low and led the ♠Q, which declarer took with the ace to exit with his diamond loser, Lu winning as Hou parted with her last plain card, Doron could take only the king-nine of trumps for two down, -300.

On Campanile's trump lead, Zhu took the ten with the ace and led a club up. East won and switched to the ♦2. Declarer won her jack and continued clubs, East playing a diamond to knock out the ace. When Zhu led a heart Campanile ducked and Barel won to play trumps. Zhu ducked the queen, then won her nine to lead a second heart, which Campanile took with the ace to play another diamond. Barel could discard and allow the ♦K to win or ruff a loser to allow declarer to come to trump parity and score either the ♦K or an extra trump trick. One down, -100, 5 IMPs to China, 98-80.

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
		Pass	1♣
3♥	Dbl*	4♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	5♣
5♥	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
			2♣(1)
4♥	6♣	6♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

The West hand looks a lot more like a 4♥ overcall than the 3♥ chosen by Hou. Perhaps she realized that at her second turn when she more-or-less violated captaincy to compete to 5♥. The defenders took three aces for one down, -100, and 5♣ would have made easily. Well done by Hou.

Zhu's leap to 6♣ forced a decision on Campanile and it was difficult not to bid 6♥, the safe insurance action. On this layout there were two unavoidable losers in 6♣ and 6♥ doubled cost 300. 5 IMPs to China, 103-80.



Bd: 35	North	
Dir: South	♠ K1087654	
Vul: E/W	♥ A76	
	♦ K103	
	♣ ---	
West		East
♠ QJ		♠ 9
♥ Q		♥ J10854
♦ Q76542		♦ J8
♣ KJ54		♣ A8762
	South	
	♠ A32	
	♥ K932	
	♦ A9	
	♣ Q1093	

Bd: 36	North	
Dir: West	♠ Q9	
Vul: Both	♥ KQ9	
	♦ QJ65	
	♣ 9864	
West		East
♠ J1082		♠ 7643
♥ 75		♥ 103
♦ A8		♦ 1097
♣ AQJ107		♣ K532
	South	
	♠ AK5	
	♥ AJ8642	
	♦ K432	
	♣ ---	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
			1♣
1♦	1♠	Dbl(1)	Rdbl(2)
2♦	4♠	All Pass	
(1) Hearts			
(2) Three-card spade support			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
			1♦(1)
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣(2)	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Dbl	Pass
Pass	Rdbl(3)	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
(1) Precision, 2+♦			
(2) Inquiry			
(3) First round club control			

6♠ is a wonderful contract and Zhu/Dong nearly got there. Doron made no attempt to investigate slam, and was fortunate that his counterparts didn't bid it.



Band on the run

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
2♣(1)	Pass	2♦(2)	2♥
2♠	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) Limited, 6+♣ or 5♣/4M			
(2) Inquiry			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠	2♥
2♠	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

If you liked 6♠ on the last deal, you'll love 6♥ on this one, but thanks to the larceny perpetrated by Lu and Campanile, getting there was almost impossible. No swing at N/S +680.



"Come now, is he really your partner?"

Bd: 37	North
Dlr: North	♠ QJ10742
Vul: N/S	♥ AQJ
	♦ KQ
	♣ J5
West	East
♠ K85	♠ A96
♥ K4	♥ 10952
♦ 3	♦ A107642
♣ AKQ10764	♣ ---
	South
	♠ 3
	♥ 8763
	♦ J985
	♣ 9832

Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
		2♣(2)	Pass
2♦(1)	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♦	All Pass		
	(1) Strong, artificial		
	(2) At least a little something		

4♥ doubled went down two, -500. The spade competition by the Yadlins creating a bit of discomfort.

Barel's 5♦ was a fragile affair. Zhu led the ♦2 and Barel won the ace, played ♥A, heart ruff, ♣Q to the king and ace, club to the nine, spade to the ace, heart ruff, spade ruff, heart. Dong ruffed in with the ♦Q and Barel threw his spade. Dong returned a trump but Barel had two of the last three tricks for +600. 15 IMPs to Israel, back within hailing distance, 95-103.

Open Room/Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	1♠	Pass	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Both declarers took their ten top tricks once the ♣J came down, +430. No swing, China, 103-80.

Bd: 38	North
Dlr: East	♠ QJ86
Vul: E/W	♥ K10432
	♦ 92
	♣ K8
West	East
♠ 1053	♠ A
♥ 5	♥ AQ9876
♦ J10876	♦ AK4
♣ QJ94	♣ A52
	South
	♠ K9742
	♥ J
	♦ Q53
	♣ 10763

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
		1♣(1)	1♠
Pass	2♠	4♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	
	(1) Strong, artificial		

Bd: 39	North
Dlr: South	♠ KJ96
Vul: Both	♥ J8
	♦ 87
	♣ KQJ62
West	East
♠ Q732	♠ A4
♥ Q104	♥ AK973
♦ K106	♦ AQ532
♣ A84	♣ 5
	South
	♠ 1085
	♥ 652
	♦ J94
	♣ 10973

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	Dbl	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
2NT(1)	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

(1) Three-card limit raise

Slam is worth bidding because the red-suit tens and ♡9 make it better than just two three-two breaks, but it's not spectacular. Lu's sequence did not suggest her distribution, so it was difficult for Hou to fully appreciate her diamond holding. As Campanile's 3♦ started out being a game try, Barel's apparent unsuitability for *game* discouraged her from trying for slam. No swing at +680.

Bd: 40	North		
Dlr: West	♠ J732		
Vul: None	♡ AJ8		
	◇ A		
	♣ AQ973		
		West	East
		♠ A984	♠ KQ
		♡ 632	♡ K954
		◇ Q32	◇ J94
		♣ J104	♣ K865
			South
			♠ 1065
			♡ Q107
			◇ K108765
			♣ 2

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	2♦(1)

All Pass

(1) Weak

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
Pass	1♣(1)	Pass	1♦(2)
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

(1) Strong, artificial

(2) Negative

With diamonds three-three, Israel Yadlin made 2♦: +90. In 1NT, Zhu could not take advantage of the good break in diamonds after a low heart lead and finished down two, -100. 5 IMPs to Israel, 100-103.



Bd: 41	North		
Dlr: North	♠ KQJ43		
Vul: E/W	♡ J10		
	◇ J103		
	♣ J73		
		West	East
		♠ 85	♠ A976
		♡ K764	♡ A9532
		◇ 4	◇ 76
		♣ A108642	♣ K9
			South
			♠ 102
			♡ Q8
			◇ AKQ9852
			♣ Q5

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
	Pass	1♡	1NT
4♡	Dbl	Pass	5♦

All Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	Pass	1♡	2♦
3♦*	3♠	Pass	5♦
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

Where Hou's 4♡ needn't have shown much defense, Barel's cue-raise convinced Campanile to double 5♦. That was a good strategy here as declarer was off five top tricks. Israel gained 8 IMPs for E/W +500 vs +150, and reclaimed the lead, 108-103.



"I hate it when people read over my shoulder."

Bd: 42		North	
Dir: East		♠ K83	
Vul: Both		♥ AQ3	
		♦ Q65	
		♣ A1074	
West		East	
♠ A107		♠ QJ95	
♥ J102		♥ 76	
♦ A1098		♦ K732	
♣ J52		♣ Q86	
		South	
		♠ 642	
		♥ K9854	
		♦ J4	
		♣ K93	

Bd: 44		North	
Dir: West		♠ Q85	
Vul: N/S		♥ AJ76	
		♦ 976	
		♣ K87	
West		East	
♠ 76		♠ KJ9432	
♥ Q1092		♥ 43	
♦ K83		♦ J4	
♣ AQ54		♣ 1063	
		South	
		♠ A10	
		♥ K85	
		♦ AQ1052	
		♣ J92	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♦(1)
		All Pass	

(1) Hearts

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
All Pass		Pass	2♥

Barel led a costly club to allow two overtricks: +170. Lu led a spade, which was best, but later Hou did not cover the ♦J from dummy, allowing Doron to build a diamond trick to pitch a club from South: +140. 1 IMP to China, 104-108.



"Now, now, dear, there's always next year."

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hou</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
Pass	Pass	2♦(1)	Dbf
2♥(2)	Dbf	2♠	All Pass
(1) Multi			
(2) Pass-or-correct			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Israel Yadlin's double of the Multi 2♦ opening showed diamonds and values. He thought Doron was likely to bid again, but as the situation was not forcing it might have been better for him to double 2♠ for takeout if that was their agreement. The Yadlins defended 2♠ accurately and set it two for -100, but that proved to be nowhere near good enough to save the board.

Barel's light opening bid created a scenario in which Dong could mention her suit at the two level, and when Zhu tried for game, she accepted the invitation although she lacked a sixth diamond and significant extra values. That seems more than reasonable to me, vulnerable at IMPs, because there's no way to tell how useful the ♠10 and ♣9 will be. Campanile led the ♣3 over to the ace and Barel switched to the ♥10. Although Zhu could have taken four tricks in the suit now by following low, she put in the jack and led the ♦9, covered all around. She had



nine tricks now and made a tenth when Barel led a club away from his queen in an attempt to set the contract: +630. 11 IMPs to China, 115-108.

The last four deals of the set were of minor interest. Israel won the third quarter 30-24, and with 16 deal remaining in the NEC Cup, China was 7 IMPs ahead, 117-110.

**Fourth Quarter (Boards 49-64):**

With China leading by 7 IMPs in a match that had been close all the way, both teams saddled up for the last roundup with a chance to realize their karma as the 2004 team of destiny.

For China **Wang Yanhong** and **Yan Ru** replaced Hou/Lu for the last 16 deals.

Bd: 49	North		
Dlr: North	♠ J7		
Vul: None	♥ KQ9543		
	♦ 7		
	♣ KQ87		
West		East	
♠ Q98		♠ K103	
♥ 86		♥ J1072	
♦ J10632		♦ AKQ84	
♣ 543		♣ 10	
	South		
	♠ A6542		
	♥ A		
	♦ 95		
	♣ AJ962		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
	1♥	2♦	2♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	1♥	2♦	2♦
4♦	4♥	All Pass	

In order to reach 6♣ someone has to bid the suit. Wang's tactical pass over 2♠ gave Doron a chance to introduce clubs. Having opened largely because of the six-card heart suit, however, Doron rebid that suit. Whether 4♣ by Israel would have been natural or an advance

cue-bid for hearts is a matter so far reserved for them and their therapist, but the upshot was +450 rather than +920.

Barel's straightforward 4♦ more-or-less finished off his opponents, and +450 was just another push but a lost opportunity for the trailing team to regain the lead.



Michael Barel

Bd: 50	North		
Dlr: East	♠ 107654		
Vul: N/S	♥ J7		
	♦ 98		
	♣ 10987		
West		East	
♠ Q2		♠ 83	
♥ AQ43		♥ K10962	
♦ 32		♦ K107654	
♣ K6542		♣ ---	
	South		
	♠ AKJ9		
	♥ 85		
	♦ AQJ		
	♣ AQJ3		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
		2♥(1)	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			

(1) Hearts and a minor, weak

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
		2♥(1)	Dbl
4♥	4♠	Pass	5♥
Pass	5♠	All Pass	

(1) Hearts and a minor, weak

The money contract for N/S is 4♠, not so much because they might make it but because they're not getting much from 4♥ doubled. Whether the Law of Total Tricks should point Doron towards 4♠ or passing Israel's "second" double would be worth writing about, but the truth is that Israel's double of 4♥ was his *first* positive action on the deal and was, by agreement, a *penalty* double. Why did he not double 2♥? Because he was distracted and forgot to do so, although later, when the bidding tray came back to him, he was surprised to learn that he had passed. The defense got two spades and two diamonds for -100.

Zhu's voluntary 4♠ over 4♥ was a courageous effort, but Dong took her seriously and tried for slam, choosing 5♥ rather than 5♠, which would have focused on trump quality. Barel did not double 5♥ because he didn't want to give his opponents a chance to pass or double to convey extra information, but by not doing so, he left it open to East to consider alternative lead options. Convinced that her opponents would not have two heart losers, Campanile led the ♦4. Declarer finessed, cashed ace-king of trumps, came to the ♠10, took another diamond finesse, threw a heart on the ♦A and lost only a heart and a club for +650. 11 IMPs to China, 128-110.

Bd: 51	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K82		
Vul: E/W	♥ 1073		
	♦ J753		
	♣ J85		
		West	East
		♠ J1095	♠ A4
		♥ AQ6	♥ 8542
		♦ Q84	♦ K9
		♣ 1094	♣ AK762
			South
			♠ Q763
			♥ KJ9
			♦ A1062
			♣ Q3

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
			1♦
Pass	Pass	2♣	All Pass

Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
			1♦(1)
Pass	Pass	2♣	All Pass
(1) Precision, 1+♦			

3NT is a decent contract for E/W, but only if East is declarer. Had West advanced 2♣ with 3♣ East might have bid 3NT, but if West stretches to bid, 2NT might be the choice, with a diamond lead defeating the contract. One way for E/W to reach 3NT is for East to reopen with 1NT rather than 2♣ and for West to try for game, but range agreements would affect both of these decisions. Another aspect of this deal is North's decision to pass 1♦, which might be considered questionable in both a natural system or Precision, albeit for different reasons. 2♣ made four at both tables. No swing at +130.

Bd: 52	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 842		
Vul: Both	♥ K7		
	♦ A104		
	♣ AKJ54		
		West	East
		♠ KQ97	♠ 1053
		♥ J	♥ AQ53
		♦ KJ97	♦ Q85
		♣ 7632	♣ Q108
			South
			♠ AJ6
			♥ 1098642
			♦ 632
			♣ 9

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦(1)
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

(1) Hearts			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Dbl	Pass	2♠	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

It was difficult to double 4♥ in the Open Room

but as Doron went three down, Wang/Yan were not disappointed with their +300. The lead of the ♠3 was ducked to the queen and Doron took Wang's low diamond shift with the ace to lead a spade to the jack with some hope. Alas, it lost to the king and the defenders took two diamonds and waited for two trump tricks.

In the Closed Room, where Dong/Zhu were in partscore mode before reconsidering their decision, Campanile might have doubled 4♥ on general principles, but somehow contracts reached this way by good players are often cold, and East decided not to double out of spite. On Barel's ambiguous lead of the ♠K East was obliged to give *count*. Here an attitude signal would have been better because when declarer ducked, West had no idea who had the jack and continued with a second spade. Dong won the jack and led a club to the jack, playing for the contract. No luck there, but she discarded diamonds on high clubs and lost only two trump tricks for -100. 5 IMPs to China, 133-110.

Bd: 53	North		
Dir: North	♠ A76532		
Vul: N/S	♥ 1082		
	♦ 6		
	♣ QJ4		
		West	East
		♠ 10	♠ J84
		♥ A543	♥ J76
		♦ AK75	♦ QJ109
		♣ K982	♣ A107
			South
			♠ KQ9
			♥ KQ9
			♦ 8432
			♣ 653

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
	2♦(1)	Pass	2♥(2)
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	3♦	All Pass
(1) Multi			
(2) Pass or correct			

Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦	1♠	2♦	2♠
3♦	3♠	All Pass	

The fact that Israel Yadlin did not bid 3♠ over 2♠ or over 3♦ gives you some idea of how filthy their vulnerable weak two-bids can be, but that sort of reticence in the bidding strikes me as losing tactics regardless. 3♦ made four when declarer had time to build a third club trick for a hearty discard: +130. 3♠ turned on the heart guess, which was straightforward after East turned up with the ♦QJ and the ♣A: +140. 7 "team" IMPs to China, ahead now by 30, 140-110.

Bd: 54	North		
Dir: East	♠ J76		
Vul: E/W	♥ 976		
	♦ AK74		
	♣ 1042		
		West	East
		♠ K32	♠ A10
		♥ A83	♥ Q104
		♦ Q63	♦ 10985
		♣ Q853	♣ AJ76
			South
			♠ Q9854
			♥ KJ52
			♦ J2
			♣ K9

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
		1♦(1)	1♠
1NT	2♠	All Pass	
(1) Precision, 1+♦			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	2♣(1)	Pass
All Pass			
(1) Limit raise			

Israel Yadlin misguessed the ♠10 to go down in 2♠: -50. Dong split her heart honors to allow Barel to make 2♣: +90. 1 IMP to Israel 111-140.

Bd: 55	North
Dlr: South	♠ 7
Vul: Both	♥ 10974
	♦ Q1074
	♣ 10542
West	East
♠ KQ10	♠ 98653
♥ Q652	♥ A8
♦ AJ6	♦ 98
♣ Q73	♣ KJ96
	South
	♠ AJ42
	♥ KJ3
	♦ K532
	♣ A8

Bd: 56	North
Dlr: West	♠ Q5
Vul: None	♥ A2
	♦ 983
	♣ K96532
West	East
♠ K63	♠ 9742
♥ KQ873	♥ J96
♦ 10764	♦ AJ
♣ 10	♣ QJ87
	South
	♠ AJ108
	♥ 1054
	♦ KQ52
	♣ A4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
			1NT

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
			1♣(1)
Pass	1♦(2)	Pass	1NT

All Pass

(1) Strong, artificial

(2) Negative

Both West players led the ♥2 against 1NT. Campanile won the ace and switched to the ♣J, catering to queen-third or ace-queen-third in South. Dong won the ace and went after diamonds, neutralizing West's jack. Barel won the ♦A and switched to the ♠K, East discouraging. When South ducked Barel played ♣Q, club, and Campanile switched back to hearts after taking her club tricks. One down: -100.

Yan followed to the first heart with the eight, an interesting play. Israel won the ♥J, played ♦K, diamond to the jack and queen, and a heart down. Yan won her ace and returned a low club, but Israel won and knocked out the ♦A and had seven winners for +90. 5 IMPs to Israel, 116-140.



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♣(1)	Pass	3NT

All Pass

(1) Invitational

Israel's notrump was ostensibly 15-17, Dong's 13-15. Both declarers went two down on a low heart lead in their very pushy game contract.

Bd: 57	North
Dlr: North	♠ AK
Vul: E/W	♥ AKQ843
	♦ J9864
	♣ ---
West	East
♠ Q10	♠ J943
♥ 7	♥ 965
♦ A107	♦ K5
♣ AKJ7542	♣ Q986
	South
	♠ 87652
	♥ J102
	♦ Q32
	♣ 103

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
	1♥	Pass	Pass
3♣	4♥	5♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	1♣(1)	Pass	1♦(2)
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
2♣	3♥	Pass	4♥

All Pass

(1) Strong, artificial

(2) Negative

Barel passed initially because direct action would have been weak, but even if he had reopened 1♥ with 3♣ it's not likely that Campanile would have saved against 4♥, which might easily have been going down. Yan's winning decision (-200 vs +450) gained China 6 IMPs and extended the Chinese lead to 30 IMPs with seven deals remaining. Perhaps the South players will not pass 1♥ next time.



Yan Ru

Bd: 58	North		
Dlr: East	♠ Q109742		
Vul: Both	♥ Q2		
	♦ 6		
	♣ J932		
		East	
West		♠ ---	
♠ A63		♥ KJ1065	
♥ 98743		♦ Q742	
♦ AKJ3		♣ Q875	
♣ K			
	South		
	♠ KJ85		
	♥ A		
	♦ 10985		
	♣ A1064		

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
		Pass	1♣
1♥	1♠	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
		Pass	1♦(1)
1♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

(1) Precision

N/S can make 4♠ unless East leads a club and West underleads in diamonds to get a club ruff. When Zhu passed over 1♥, there was no chance for her side to get there, but the Yadlins were alive and in the running after Doron's free 1♠. Whether either of them could logically bid 4♠ over 4♥ is a matter of partnership philosophy and perhaps also of whether 1♠ promised at least five.

On the lead of the ♦6, Dong did not give her partner a diamond ruff when she won the trump ace, instead underleading the ♣A: +680. The Yadlins got both of those tricks to hold Wang to +620. 2 IMPs to Israel, 118-146.

Bd: 59	North		
Dlr: South	♠ AK1042		
Vul: None	♥ ---		
	♦ QJ93		
	♣ K762		
		East	
West		♠ Q753	
♠ J9		♥ 1076	
♥ KJ9843		♦ A107	
♦ K4		♣ AQ5	
♣ 943			
	South		
	♠ 86		
	♥ AQ52		
	♦ 8652		
	♣ J108		

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D. Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I. Yadlin</i>
			Pass
2♦(1)	2♠	3♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

(1) Multi

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
			Pass
2♦(1)	2♠	Dbl(1)	Pass
3♥	All Pass		
(1) Pass only with a weak 2♠			

Although Yan made 3♥ doubled with an overtrick, it's difficult to blame the Yadlins for doing what they did. Maybe I'm becoming a soft marker in my old age. Plus 730 for Yan, +170 for Barel, 10 IMPs for China, 156-118. With five boards to play, it looked very grim for Israel.

Bd: 60	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 93		
Vul: N/S	♥ 93		
	♦ QJ753		
	♣ KQ62		
West		East	
♠ K52		♠ AJ74	
♥ 864		♥ J107	
♦ 10842		♦ AK96	
♣ J95		♣ A4	
	South		
	♠ Q1086		
	♥ AKQ52		
	♦ ---		
	♣ 10873		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣(1)	2♣(2)
Pass	2♦(3)	Pass	2♥(4)
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

- (1) Strong
- (2) Diamonds or majors
- (3) To play opposite diamonds
- (4) Majors

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♣(1)
Pass	2♦(2)	Pass	2♥
All Pass			
(1) Majors			
(2) Equal length in the majors			

In 2♥ the opening lead was a trump and Israel

had time to work on clubs and make two spade plays from dummy for +110.

Both Yan's double of 2♥ and Wang's 2♠ were dangerous actions, but as no one doubled, the cost was only 150, so Israel gained only 1 IMP, 119-156.

Bd: 61	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 964		
Vul: Both	♥ J2		
	♦ Q94		
	♣ AQJ95		
West		East	
♠ KJ8		♠ A102	
♥ 943		♥ 876	
♦ AK732		♦ J5	
♣ K10		♣ 87432	
	South		
	♠ Q753		
	♥ AKQ105		
	♦ 1086		
	♣ 6		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
2♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
All Pass			

Dong lost the first six tricks in 2♥ for -100. In 2♦ Wang eventually lost a third-round spade ruff and a slow trump trick to go with three heart losers and two club losers: -200. 7 IMPs to Israel, 126-156. Israel was still in miracle territory with three boards to play.



"It's only a flesh wound, but thanks for asking."

Bd: 62	North		
Dlr: East	♠ AK107		
Vul: None	♥ 85		
	♦ KQ76		
	♣ 642		
West		East	
♠ J964		♠ 853	
♥ AQ6		♥ J32	
♦ 42		♦ A105	
♣ AQ83		♣ KJ97	
	South		
	♠ Q2		
	♥ K10974		
	♦ J983		
	♣ 105		

Bd: 63	North		
Dlr: South	♠ AQ1032		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q82		
	♦ 64		
	♣ J74		
West		East	
♠ 764		♠ KJ5	
♥ J963		♥ 1075	
♦ KQJ53		♦ A	
♣ 6		♣ AK10982	
	South		
	♠ 98		
	♥ AK4		
	♦ 109872		
	♣ Q53		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦(1)	1♠	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

(1) Precision

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	1NT	Pass
Pass	2♦	All Pass	

I'm surprised that Zhu didn't risk an overcall of 1♦ or 1♠ but was willing to reopen in a four-card suit in a dangerous situation. She picked the right suit but went down one just the same: -50.

Yan was clearly expecting a "real" hand of some sort from Wang, but was soon disappointed. West was two down, -200. 4 IMPs to Israel, 130-156.



"Checkmate in 3 moves but don't tell him."

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
			Pass
Pass	Pass	2♣(1)	Pass
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

(1) Limited, 6+♣ or 5♣/4M

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	1♠	3♣	All Pass

Dong/Zhu took their four major-suit tricks on the go and waited for their trump trick: -50.

The defense was accurate too against Doron's 2♠ and he was -200 without having a chance to do better. 6 IMPs to China, 162-130.



"It's a long way to Reykjavik but we're going to walk if it kills us!"

Bd: 64	North	
Dir: West	♠ 10753	
Vul: E/W	♥ J973	
	♦ 9532	
	♣ 3	
West		East
♠ K962		♠ AJ4
♥ K10		♥ A542
♦ A106		♦ KQ74
♣ K765		♣ 84
	South	
	♠ Q8	
	♥ Q86	
	♦ J8	
	♣ AQJ1092	

led a second spade to the ace, catering to doubleton ten or queen in addition to the three-three breaks. The ♠J was her new ninth trick: +600.

The defense against Wang's 4♠ started with a club to the ace and the ♣Q. Declarer covered and North ruffed, exiting with a heart to the queen and king. A spade to the jack lost to the queen. Wang won the heart return in dummy, ruffed a heart, overruffed a club, came to the ♠K, led the ♦10 to the king and the ♦4 to his ace before leading the ♠9, squeezing North in the red suits for +620. 1 IMP to China, who won the final stanza 46-20 and the 2004 NEC Cup 163-130.

It was evident to anyone who had been watching that China was indeed the team of destiny this year. Although they allowed about 2 IMPs a board, their bridge was practical, enterprising, and technically quite good. They are worthy winners of this great event.

The Israeli team played well for the most part too and certainly enjoyed the worst of the luck at the table. With China consistently doing the right thing on the "big" deals it was going to be difficult for Israel to win.

We hope to see both teams back in the future, for they have made many new friends and earned the respect of the players here and at home, who have read about their exploits in these pages.

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>D.Yadlin</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>I.Yadlin</i>
1♦(1)	Pass	1♥	2♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Dbl
Pass	Pass	4♠	All Pass

(1) Precision  
Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Zhu</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Dong</i>
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Dong led the ♣J against Campanile. Declarer ducked, then ducked the ♣10, losing her ninth winner. Dong switched to the ♦J and declarer won the ace, cashed the ten, cashed the ♠K and

### Images of Our Game



"That's Acol, Pablo—when I bid clubs it's safe for you to raise me with six of them."



"Now see here, you can't just stop and play cribbage in the middle of a bridge hand!"



## Honor Thy Partner Revisited

by Eric Kokish

There are deals every session in which your partner could have done the right thing on defense but didn't. On some of those deals you could have helped him. In yesterday's Yokohama Swiss Teams, **Bill Jacobs** of Australia made a play that ensured his expert partner would not give declarer a chance to make a game contract that was supposed to fail.

West	North	East	South
<i>Fruewirth</i>		<i>Jacobs</i>	
	1♥	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

**Rob Fruewirth** led the ♣K against 4♠ and continued with the queen. How should East signal on this trick?

Bill signaled not at all. He overtook the ♣Q and switched to the ♥6, ensuring that Rob would not think of ducking smoothly when (and if) declarer led a heart towards dummy. Not to mention the alternative doomsday scenario in which declarer owns the ♦Q and takes heart discards immediately.

Thanks to Brian Senior for sharing this deal with us.



"Yes little one, we bid too much."

Dir: North	North		
Vul: E/W	♠ 3		
	♥ KJ9742		
	♦ AKJ10		
	♣ J5		
West		East	
♠ 74		♠ A8	
♥ A103		♥ Q6	
♦ Q9764		♦ 832	
♣ KQ6		♣ A108743	
	South		
	♠ KQJ109652		
	♥ 85		
	♦ 5		
	♣ 92		

## Snapshots Of Monte Carlo: The Art Of Finding A Fit

by Eric Kokish

Bd: 16	♠ A10983		
Dir: West	♥ QJ7		
Vul: E/W	♦ 96542		
	♣ —		
♠ J654		♠ KQ2	
♥ 54		♥ AK962	
♦ —		♦ 107	
♣ J1097542		♣ KQ6	
	♠ 7		
	♥ 1083		
	♦ AKQJ83		
	♣ A83		

West	North	East	South
<i>Groethem</i>	<i>Wildavsky</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Doub</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣(1)	Pass
1♦(2)	2♣(3)	All Pass	

(1) Strong, artificial

(2) Negative

(3) Hearts and clubs, or spades and diamonds

This explains how USA2's Doug Doub and Adam Wildavsky played their 5♦ game in their three-zero club fit. Those nasty Norwegians were unkind enough not to double.

Everyone knows about four-three fits, named after Sonny Moyse, late editor of *The Bridge World*. Now we know what to call a three-zero fit: "Doubious" or "Doubian."

In the Bermuda Bowl Bronze Medal Playoff, this was the auction at one table:

## Under-Aggressive Slam Bidding

by Zar Petkov

Again a board from the last World Championship in Montreal, Canada. The Lavazza Team is represented this time by Bocchi-Duboin.

Italy vs. Indonesia:

♠ 6	♠ AKJ93
♥ AQ	♥ J963
♦ A8763	♦ ---
♣ AJ764	♣ Q1095

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>		<i>Bocchi</i>	
		1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

The ♣K is onside and the diamonds are four-four so there is no problem for the contract. The bad news is that Manoppo-Lasut in the other room bid and made 6♣.

The question is, “Is it reasonable to go beyond 3NT?” So let’s count: East has 14 DP (9+5 for the 5-4-4-0 distribution), 3 controls and 11 HCP for a total of 28 Zar Points—a comfortable 1♠ opening. He would still have his opening with 9

HCP if we get rid of the two jacks in the hand. West has 14 DP (10+4 for the 5-5-2-1), 6 controls, and 15 HCP for a total of 35 Zar Points. This means that after Bocchi’s opening, Duboin has a 9-point surplus (to game level) before any adjustments for additional information from the bidding. After the 3♣ bid (a very strong action showing a new suit at the three level with no fit established so far), East has for the first time the opportunity to name a realistic candidate for main fit—clubs—with the two additional points collected for the queen and ten of clubs, bringing his count up to 30 Zar Points (28+2). In other words, the moment a fit is established, West bids the slam directly since he gets points for the additional trump (his bid promises four and he has five), bringing his “surplus” to 10.

And as a matter of fact, this is exactly the way the bidding went at the other table: after the 3♣ bid, East bid 4♣ and West jumped to 6♣.

Both slam-boards (this one and the one in the previous issue) were bad for the great Italian Team, losing double-digit-amounts of IMPs in each case. In the first they went too high, in the second too low. But since they won the title, maybe this is the way to go!

### Oops!

In the profile of the China Ladies Team that appeared in today’s first bulletin (p. 32) we mistakenly got the pictures of Yan Ru and Wang Yan Hong reversed (actually, we were given the wrong names; that’s our story and we’re sticking to it). Our apologies to these two lovely ladies and now NEC Bridge Champions for the error. And now, for their many admirers and to set the record straight, here are their pictures, this time with their correct names.



Yan Ru



Wang Yan Hong

## USA Team Profile



Jim Robison

**Jim Robison** Jim is a professional bridge and poker player from Las Vegas, Nevada (surely the right place for that kind of vocation). He has a reputation as an outstanding bridge theorist and is married to Carol Picus, also a top-class bridge player. He has many national titles to his credit. His hobbies include movies and golf.



Mark Itabashi

**Mark Itabashi** Mark is a full-time bridge professional, who began playing in college at the renowned University of California at Berkeley. After a brief spell in the aerospace industry, he decided to take up bridge full time and has never looked back since, winning several national titles. He lives in Murrieta, in California, 100 km north of San Diego, with his wife and his two daughters, Christina, 12, and Michelle, 9. He loves skiing, tennis and traveling to exotic destinations.



Garey Hayden

**Garey Hayden** He is the doyen of bridge pros, having been in the game for 34 years. He is a twice-winner of the World Senior Bowl, a seven-time national champion, and has countless regional wins to his credit. He raises and shows Samoyeds (the dogs with the lovely white fur) and is desperately keen to get back home to check on his six new puppies. He is married with a daughter and a son and is a grandfather.



Simon Kantor

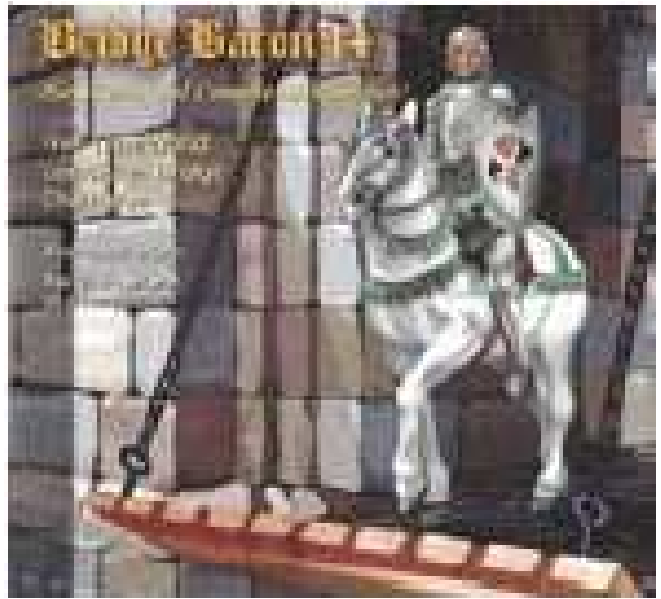
**Simon Kantor** Simon is from Aganaw, Massachusetts. He is a retired Professor of Polymer Sciences from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA. He has a PhD in Chemistry from Duke University and worked in research at GEC, eventually becoming VP of Research for GAF Corporation. He has been much more active in ACBL tournaments since his retirement. Overall, he has won in excess of 150 Flight A Regionals events and has a number of top places in US National events.

# Bridgeware 2004: A Review of Bridge Playing Software

by Pietro Companile

We have all read, heard or experienced in first person the computer revolution which has changed so completely the way we communicate, work and spend our spare time. We are not surprised anymore hearing about computers playing chess better than 99.99% of mankind, nor by the ever-growing world of online gaming. Until a couple of years ago this all-conquering cyber-army had encountered only a few areas which did not or could not master and one of them was bridge. The few attempts at tackling our elusive game had turned up products whose competence was barely stretching to a weak intermediate player. The energies (and the money) dedicated to improve the quality of the bridge playing software has been considerable and, thanks also to similarly huge advances in the speed and power of the average PC, most of the products are now capable of a much better performance. In this review we will analyze the best that is currently available on the market in their latest version: Bridge Baron 14, GIB 6.1, Jack 2, Micro-Bridge 10 and Q-Plus 7.5. All these programs come with a lot of useful basic features: it is possible to enter, edit and save hands, either manually or in PBN format (Portable Bridge Notation); they can be configured for network and/or online play. They offer hints during bidding and play, they can generate hands according to set criteria of distribution and/or points; they all have extensive system libraries from which to make up the convention card of our dreams, both for the human and the computer player; they all offer English as main language but the issue of localization has become more and more of a selling point, so much so that quite a few of them provide alternative languages. Let us introduce them one by one.

**Bridge Baron 14.** This is the latest version of a program which started off 15 years ago with a new graphic interface which is extremely easy to navigate. The program has an extensive selection of systems to choose from, its bidding and play levels are quite competent with the occasional black out especially in defense (sounds like I am writing about myself!) and



there is an ample choice of tournaments, taken from recent US National championships, which the player can enter and where his score is matched against the original field. The unique feature which sets Bridge Baron apart from the rest is the attention given to learning tools for players wishing to understand and practice conventions: appropriate deals will be selected on demand from the vast library to let the player practice its poison of choice in a monitored environment. In addition to that, Bridge Baron (like GIB) comes with a very useful add-on for beginners: the excellent ACBL "Learn To Play



*Bridge Baron gets to the top contract of 6♠ matching Bocchi-Dubois' result in the last session of the Bermuda Bowl Final (Mackintosh-Rodwell stopped in 4♠). Unfortunately it also matched the Italian declarer to the final score: 6♠-1.*

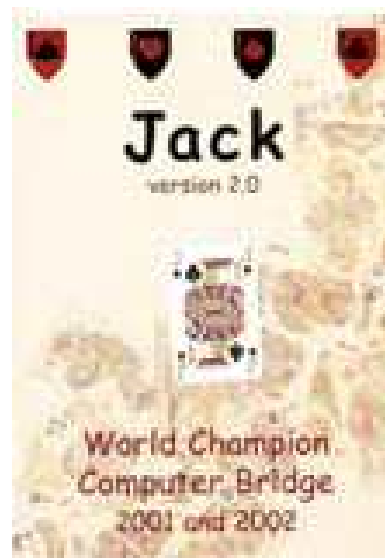
Bridge” will be an invaluable tool to understand the basics of the game. The budding experts among us have not been overlooked either: the 144 hands contained in the “Blackwood challenges” will represent a very tough nut to crack for most players. An excellent choice for those who are looking for a “complete” program, able to assist them in learning the game as well as playing it, Bridge Baron 14 is available online for \$60.

annoying feature I noticed was the inability to “switch seats” when declaring a hand after your computer “partner” has won the auction: it feels rather weird to declare the hand while seated in dummy. Its latest version contains the ACBL “Learn To Play Bridge” software, already mentioned earlier. An excellent choice for those who are looking specifically for a strong play/analysis program and for its huge deals library, GIB is available from online merchants for \$80.



**GIB 6.1.3** GIB (Ginsberg’s Intelligent Bridge program) has the largest selection of languages (ever fancied playing bridge in Finnish?) and comes in a CD case with a rather concise manual. Matt Ginsberg has

always prided himself in privileging the quality of play over graphic frills and this latest version does him proud, the level of defense in particular is as good as I have seen from all the programs reviewed. Mainly targeting the USA and UK market, it includes a selection of systems consistent with such an objective: 2/1, SAYC, ACOL and a few variations on the theme with “Moscito” being the “odd one out”. Another huge plus is the amazing library of deals from all the main world competitions of the last decade or so, available to be replayed and scored against the actual results achieved at the table. The only



**Jack 2** The brainchild of Dutch programmer Hans Kuijf, Jack has won the last three World Computer Bridge Championships and that is a great testimonial for its excellent level of bidding and play. It comes in a nice box with a well written 20 page manual. The

graphics and the controls are very clear and the program offers a large number of tournaments (mostly Dutch events) for the player to test himself on. Clearly developed with the Dutch market as its main objective, with local star Berry Westra as the “friendly genie”, its increasing popularity should probably suggest a more international look to broaden its appeal to those who are not familiar with the Dutch bridge scene, for instance it would be a good idea to include some more systems like Precision, UK Acol,

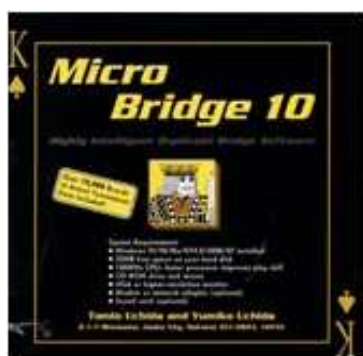


*GIB has a steady action to the normal spot of 3♣. In the Bermuda Bowl, Bocchi-Duboin bid to the unbeatable 3NT on the E/W cards, while Hamman-Soloway played in 4♣.*



*Jack stops in 4♥ in this board from the last Bermuda bowl final, matching the result of Hamman-Soloway. Bocchi-Duboin got to 5♥, one too many as the cards lie.*

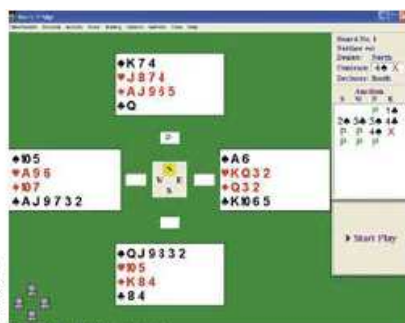
French 5-card major and Standard Italian. All in all a very good all-round performer which sells on the Internet for 86 Euros.



### Micro-Bridge 10

This is a Japanese program developed by Tomio Uchida, but, fear not, it has a complete English version too! Its graphic interface is simply excellent and all its many features are easily controlled

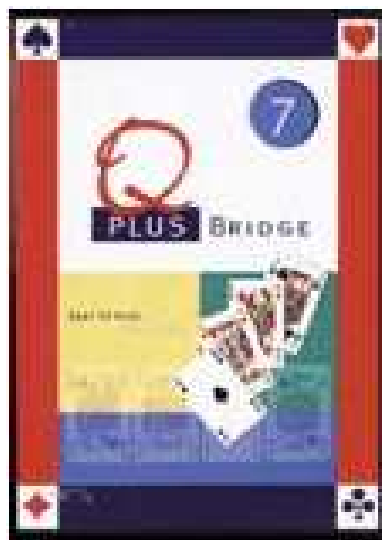
through a very user-friendly layout. The quality of bidding and play is quite good and there is an additional plus for the system-freaks among us: the possibility to create and enter a system from scratch, so for those of you who want to practice their unusual methods or devise the best defense against them this is certainly the feature you will be toying with. Just a couple of minor niggles: there are many tournaments supplied but they are all from Japanese events (which may or may not be the kind of field you want to test yourself against) and the scoring is the US style numerical MP version as opposed to the European percentage which we are used to. A



*A nicely contested auction with N/S getting to 4♠, will the Micro-Bridge declarer guess the diamonds like Versace did when he made the contract against Hamman-Soloway, or will the defenders take their 4 tricks first?*

good choice for those looking for a great performer and an easy, user-friendly program, Micro-bridge is currently available from online merchants for \$70.

**Q-Plus Bridge 7.5** Hans Leber is the mind behind this superbly packaged program, which comes in an elegant box with a very detailed 60 page manual. Q-Plus has a rather unique graphic look which takes a little time to get used to but is quite stylish in its own way. It performs at a good level in all the areas of the game but it



is particularly strong in the bidding and offers a large library of tournament deals from recent international and online events. Another important advantage for those playing a strong club systems or wishing to practice against them is that Q-Plus, as well as

Bridge Baron 14, has ready-made Precision systems for their use. The only quirk I noticed was the bidding box featuring the strange order of East-South-West-North as opposed to the traditional West-North-South-East. The excellent manual and its versatility make Q-Plus a good option to choose. Q-Plus 7.5 is currently available from online merchants at around \$80.



*The Q-Plus West understandably upgrades its hand to a 1NT opening and both sides have an exciting auction to 4♠. In Israel-France, the Israeli pair played in 3NT-3, while the French were in 4♥-1X in N/S.*

**Conclusions:** There is often very little to choose from the programs we reviewed: the level of play has now reached a skill level comparable to that of a good club player, often with very refined bidding tools turning out rather elaborate sequences. The defense seems to be the area where most of the attention of the software developers should be concentrated in the near future: most of the programs have a remarkable tendency to be very active in situations where passive defense should be fairly obvious. There

again this is a weakness common to many intermediate-advanced players so it should not come as a surprise. The most intriguing feature, which has quickly spread across all the different platforms, is the inclusion of tournament deals which allow a player to “compete” and match his results with the best in the world. It is a very addictive and clearly popular option which is usually complemented by the possibility to add more tournaments, downloaded from the Internet in PBN format. The final choice on which program to purchase is not straightforward and will depend on a careful analysis of what our premium requirements are, which graphic interface we are most comfortable with and the

price/value ratio. A final word to say that all the programs have been tested at their highest skill level for an average of 6 hours play on each and when assessing the review it is important to remember that setting each program at the highest skill level can slow down play considerably (but no more than in a board played at a real life table) and that most users will still enjoy playing by adopting a medium skill setting. The bidding and play test computer players on 12 boards chosen from the Israeli-France match at the 2002 European Championships in Salsomaggiore and the last 6 boards from the unforgettable Bermuda Bowl Final between Italy and USA.

Program	Packaging & Manual	User friendliness	Choice of Systems and Settings	Bidding	Declarer Play	Defense	Tournament Deals Library	Learning Tools for Beginners
Bridge Baron 14	7	8	9	8	6	6	8	YES
GIB 6.1	7	7	7	8	7	7	10	YES
Jack 2	8	8	7	8	7	7	8	No
Micro Bridge 10	6	9	9	8	6	6	7	No
Q-Plus 7.5	9	8	9	8	6	6	8	No



“This is how I feed him at home, too.”



“Finally I get to play!”



“No Mark, Sabine had the squid and I had the Lasagne.”



## BRIDGE CLUES

PROVIDING CLUES TO WINNING BRIDGE

with Daily Hands by Mike Lawrence



### Get a Clue

Mike Lawrence, famous bridge champion, writer and Internet bridge maven, is supporting a new Internet bridge site at [www.bridgeclues.com](http://www.bridgeclues.com). The site contains two bridge hands every day. The hands come with questions which readers can answer if they wish.