



NEC Bridge Festival

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Welcome to the 11th NEC Cup Bridge Festival

This year's 11th NEC Cup once again boasts a very strong international field, including many of the world's top players. Stage One will be an 8-round Swiss Teams consisting of 20-board matches, IMPs converted to Victory Points using the 20-VP WBF scale, qualifying eight teams for the KO phase. The 42-team field has been divided into top and bottom halves. The initial pairings match each top-half team at random against a bottom-half team; subsequent pairings will be based on current VP totals. The quarter-finals and semi-finals will consist of 40-board matches; the final 64 boards.

The Daily Bulletin Office/Secretariat and the Chief Director

As always, we need your help to keep everyone informed of what's happening at this tournament. Please don't make us beg. Report anything amusing, challenging, or skillful that happens in your matches (bridge or otherwise) to the **Daily Bulletin Office, a.k.a. The Secretariat** (E206). If we're not there, leave a note on one of our computers (they're on the tables along the opposite wall at the far right—nearest the LaserJet 4000 printer—as you enter the room). The **Secretariat** will open each day at 10:00 am. You can contact the Secretariat via a house phone from the hotel (Ext. 7639), or dial 228-6599 (from the Yokohama City area), or 045-228-6599 from outside the city area or +81 45 228 6618 from overseas. If you're trying to reach someone you can't find you can leave a message with us and we'll do our best to get it to them. The **Chief Tournament Director** for this year's **NEC Bridge Festival** is once again the witty, urbane, unflappable and occasionally immovable **Richard Grenside**. Just be aware that if you call him you do so at your own risk.

Players Welcomed at Opening Ceremony

At yesterday evening's opening ceremony emcee **Haruko Koshi** introduced **Fujita Kimio**, JCBL President, and **Suzuki Hitoshi**, NEC representative, who each welcomed this year's contestants.



Fujita Kimio, JCBL President



Suzuki Hitoshi, NEC Corporation

NEC Cup 2006: Conditions of Contest

An 8-round Swiss, qualifying the top 8 teams to the Knockout phase; no playbacks.

V.P. Scale WBF 20-board scale (a copy can be found in the score book provided in your NEC Bridge Festival bag).

Seating Rights Blind seating 10 minutes before the start of match.

KO-Phase Seating The winner of a coin toss has the choice of seating in either of the two 20-board segments. In the four 16-board segments of the final, the choices will alternate over segments.

Swiss Pairings First round Swiss matches were made by randomly pairing each team in the top half with a team from the bottom half.

Home and visiting 1st numbered team sits N/S in open room, E/W in closed room.

Tie-Breaks At the end of the Swiss, ties will be broken by IMP quotient. If more than two teams are involved, WBF 2005 Conditions of Contest procedures will apply.

In the Knockout Phase, the team with the higher position from the Swiss will be assumed to have a ½-IMP carryover.

Systems No HUM or Brown Sticker methods will be permitted in this event.

Length of Matches 2 hours and 50 minutes will be allotted for each 20-board segment (or 2 hours and 20 minutes for each 16-board segment of the final). In addition a 5-minute grace period will be allotted to each team. Overtime and slow play penalties as per WBF 2005 Conditions of Contest.

Appeals The WBF Code of Practice will be in effect. The Chief Director will have 12C3 authority. Appeals which are found to be without merit may incur a penalty of up to 3 VPs.

Match Scoring Pick-up slips are to be completed and all match results are to be verified against the official result sheet (posted at the end of each match); score corrections and notifications of appeals will be permitted up until the start of the next session.

KO Draw The team finishing 1st in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 4th-8th. The team finishing 2nd will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 4th-8th group. And so on.

In addition, before the start of the Knockout Phase and after all quarter-final draws have been determined, the team that finishes 1st in the Swiss chooses their semi-final opponent from any of the other three quarter-final matches.

Smoking No player may leave the Annex Hall during play without permission due to security concerns arising from the Bridge Base Online broadcast.

Today's VuGraph Match = FISK vs SKOTTI

The 11th NEC Cup Guest List

Konichi wa to all of you this fine morning, but especially to all the *gai jin* participating in their first NEC Cup or visiting Japan for the first time. We are delighted to see everyone else again too (this is especially true for Rich, who missed his flight and arrived only moments before last night's opening ceremony). The 2006 NEC Cup has an entry of 42 teams, but the field does not include China, which had to withdraw at the last moment due to visa problems.

Once again, every session of the NEC Cup will be covered on Bridge Base Online, the world's leading Online Bridge site (hi Fred, Sheri, Uday, world), with live VuGraph broadcasts starting with this morning's Round One match between FISK and SKOTII. It's a tradition at this tournament that it's not only the favorites who are still playing for the championship on Thursday evening, so don't despair if you start badly; keep your spirits up, and play with heart until someone tells you that you can't play any longer.

We're thrilled to see an Italian team here for the first time—the new-look Lavazza team, featuring reigning Bermuda Bowl, Olympiad, and Rosenblum champions **Norberto Bocchi/Giorgio Duboin** and the new partnership of **Guido Ferraro/Agustin Madala**, the latter the young Argentine star who has moved to Italy to further his bridge career. Captain **Maria Teresa Lavazza** and coach **Massimo Ortensi** might play a bit, but are here for their strategic expertise and moral support.

It's wonderful, too, to have with us the freshly minted Venice Cup champions from France—Catherine d'Ovidio/Daniele Gaviard, Benedicte Cronier/Sylvie Willard—their win in Estoril was the first women's world title for France.

The defending champs from Israel are back intact. **Michael Barel/Migry Campanile** and the **Yadlin Brothers (Doron and Israel)** were also second in 2004, so they're comfortable here in Yokohama and will be the team to beat in 2006.

Pablo Lambardi has made his mark in the NEC with two wins as a member of English teams, but this year he can resolve his identity crisis by joining forces with fellow Latin Americans **Alejandro Bianchedi, Diego Brenner**, and **Frankie Frontaura**. If they don't win, they will surely make a big impression for their friendliness and personalities...but they plan to win.

Australia is represented by two teams carrying the banner of OzOne, an exciting new project not unlike the Dutch Team Orange venture, aimed at bringing Australia into the ranks of the bridge elite in the next few years. One of the teams includes **Ishmael Del'Monte/Rob Fruewirth, Sartaj Hans/Tony Nunn**. The other is comprised of **Bruce Neill/Ron Klinger, Keiran Dyke/David Wiltshire**. Is there any rivalry between these teams? What d'you think, mate?

For the first time in many years, the Hackett team contains only one of that ilk—Papa **Paul** himself, playing with "Uncle" **John Armstrong, Andrew "Tosh" MacIntosh/Jack Mizel**. Despite the absence of Jason and Justin, any Hackett team is sure to be a contender.

We have three American teams this year. The Kastle team includes **Gaylor Kastle/Garey Hayden, John Onstott/John Sutherlin**. The Mori team features **Larry Mori/Venkatrao Koneru, Paul and Linda Lewis**. The Mahaffey team is a six-man squad: **Jim Mahaffey/Barnet Shenkin, Mark Lair/Gary Cohler**, and Polish stars **Michal Kwiecien/Jacek "Pepsi" Pszczola**.

Korea has two four-man teams. CACTI (more than one cactus) is made up of **Ilsob Chung, Jungyoon Park, Kyunghae Sung, Youngjoon Lee**. HYLII (but not Selassie) includes **Han Sunhee, Yoo Kyunwong, Lee Hyunja, Im Hyun**.

Among the top Japanese teams are YOI: **Dawei Chen/Kazuo Furuta, Masayuki Ino/ Tadashi Imakura, Yoshiyuki Nakamura/Yasuhiro Shimizu**; Yamada: **Akihiko Yamada/Kyoko Ohno, Makoto Hirata/Takahiko Hirata, Kazuhiko Yamada/Hiroya Abe**; Hana: **Takashi Maeda, Noboyuki Hayashi, Seiya Shimizu, Takeshi Hanayama, Sei Nagasaka**; Tajima: **Mitsue Tajima, Tadashi Teramoto, Kyoko Shimamura, Hideki Takano, Hiroshi Kaku, Masaaki Takayama**; Slam Dunk: **Kenji Miyakuni, Keisuke Akama, Ryoga Tanaka, Tomoyuki Harada**.

As every year, we're hoping to publish profiles of as many teams as possible, including those of teams in the second half of the entry list. We're looking for not so much about bridge achievements but a closer look at personalities without getting too serious. The sooner you submit your team's story the better the chance that we'll get them published before the tournament ends.

We'd also like to hear about anything you think others will be interested in reading, from the brilliant to the bizarre. Come see us in E206 any old time.

As some of you may know, the soon-to-be legendary **Tadayoshi Nakatani** retires this year as majordomo of JCBL, with the erudite **Tadashi Yoshida** succeeding him as Secretary General. Although Tadayoshi will still be around for the next few years, this may be the last time we hear him say: "Please enjoy yourselves and play well. But if you can't play well, please play quickly."

JCBL Smoking Policy

NEC Cup:

Once play in a qualifying-round match or a knockout-round session has started, smoking is prohibited (including when a player leaves the playing room to go to the bathroom) until ALL tables in the match or session have finished.

Other events:

Once a session has started, and until all tables have finished, smoking is prohibited at ALL times other than a single designated smoking break, to be announced by the Director.

Smoking area:

Please do not smoke in the area immediately outside the playing room (to avoid second-hand smoke entering the room). Players may smoke outside the building or in smoking areas with ashtrays well away from the playing room.

Penalties for violations may be assessed by the Director.

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 11th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://bridge.cplaza.ne.jp/necfest.html> – or – <http://www.jcbl.or.jp>

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

Team Rosters: 11th NEC Cup

#	Name	Members
1	Israel: Israel Yadlin, Doron Yadlin, Michael Barel, Migry Campanile	
2	South America: Frankie Frontaura, Alejandro Bianchedi, Pablo Lambardi, Diego Brenner	
3	FISK: John Carruthers, P. O. Sundelin, Philippe Cronier, Subhash Gupta	
4	USA/Kasle: Gaylor Kasle, Garey Hayden, John Onstott, John Sutherlin	
5	OzOne-Del'Monte: Ishmael Del'Monte, Robert Fruewirth, Tony Nunn, Sartaj Hans	
6	WBF Women (France): Bénédicte Cronier, Sylvie Willard, Catherine d'Ovidio, Daniele Gaviard	
7	Italy: Maria Teresa Lavazza, Noberto Bocchi, Giorgio Duboin, Guido Ferraro, Agustin Madala, Massimo Ortensi	
8	Paul Hackett: Paul Hackett, John Armstrong, Andrew McIntosh, Jack Mizel	
9	USA/Mori: Larry Mori, Venkatrao Koneru, Paul Lewis, Linda Lewis	
10	USA/Mahaffey: Jim Mahaffey, Barnet Shenkin, Michal Kwiecien, Jacek Pszczola, Mark Lair, Gary Cohler	
11	OzOne-Neill: Ron Klinger, Bruce Neill, Kieran Dyke, David Wiltshire	
12	CACTI(Korea): Isub Chung, Jungyoon Park, Kyunghae Sung, Youngjoon Lee	
13	HYLII(Korea): Han Sunhee, Yoo Kyunwong, Lee Hyunja, Im Hyun	
14	YOI: Chen Dawei, Kazuo Furuta, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Yasuhiro Shimizu	
15	TAJIMA: Tadashi Teramoto, Mitsue Tajima, Kyoko Shimamura, Hideki Takano, Hiroshi Kaku, Masaaki Takayama	
16	JAPAN YAMADA: Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Makoto Hirata, Takahiko Hirata, Kazuhiko Yamada, Hiroya Abe	
17	Happy Koro: Nobuko Setoguchi, Hiroko Ota, Koji Ito, Tadashi Jomura, Midori Sakamoto, Natsuko Nishida	
18	HANA: Takashi Maeda, Nobuyuki Hayashi, Seiya Shimizu, Takeshi Hanayama, Sei Nagasaka	
19	Estrellas: Yoko Nenohi, Hiroko Sekiyama, Kyoko Toyofuku, Kumiko Matsuo, Toshiko Kaho, Makiko Sato	
20	ESPERANZA: Haruko Koshi, Mieko Nakanishi, Yoko Oosako, Hideyuki Sango, Nobuko Matsubara, Misuzu Ichihashi	
21	GIRASOL: Sachiko Yamamura, Taeko Kawamura, Kimi Makita, Keiko Matsuzaki	
22	SLAM DUNK: Kenji Miyakuni, Keisuke Akama, Ryoga Tanaka, Tomoyuki Harada	
23	Kimura-Yokohama: Osami Kimura, Hiroko Kobayashi, Chizuko Tsukamoto, Kinzaburo Nishino, Mamiko Odaira, Akio Yamasuge	
24	NAITO: Yoko Maruyama, Sakiko Naito, Ayako Amano, Miho Sekizawa, Haruyo Iiyama, Megumi Takasaka	
25	SKOTII: Tsuneo Sakurai, Kenichi Izaki, Kunio Ueda, Atsuhiko Kikuchi, Takehiko Tada	
26	PS-Jack: Masakatsu Sugino, Ryoji Fujiwara, Teruo Miyazaki, Akiko Miwa, Masako Otsuka	
27	Sweet Brier: Toyohiko Ozawa, Terumi Kubo, Kazuko Kawashima, Kazuko Takahashi	
28	MERRY QUEENS: Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura, Toyoko Nakakawaji, Toshiko Hiramori, Michiko Shida, Kotomi Asakoshi	
29	Makko: Yukiko Umezu, Makiko Hayashi, Michio Goto, Mark LaForge, Etsuko Naito	
30	BIRD: Emiko Tamura, Yasuko Kosaka, Yasuyoshi Toriumi, Yoko Saito, Harue Iemori, Ikuko Arai	
31	XYZ: Chieko Ichikawa, Junko Den, Kuniko Saito, Atsuko Kurita, Kei Nemoto, Kazuhisa Kojima	
32	Fairy Tale: Yukinao Honma, Kazunori Sasaki, Takeshi Higashiguchi, Ryo Okuno	
33	SunFlowers: Takako Nakatani, Masaru Naniwada, Sachiko Ueda, Hisako Kondo, Betty Tajiri, Etsuko Hasegawa	
34	LBH: Natsuko Asaka, Hideko Shindo, Kiyoko Fushida, Miyako Miyazaki, Sachiko Ueno, Kumiko Umehara	
35	Magnolia: Yasuyo Iida, Atsuko Katsumata, Misae Kato, Shoko Somemiya, Tomoko Sakai, Reiko Fukumaru	
36	SARA: Kumiko Sasahira, Zhao Jinlong, Jiang Yi, Liu Zheng, Ruri Ote, Shugo Tanaka	
37	MY-Bridge: Masafumi Yoshizawa, Noriko Yoshizawa, Yoko Fukuyama, Aiko Nabeshima, Iwao Oishi, Takashi Sumita	
38	Japan Charade: Shunichi Haga, Akiko Kawabata, Sumiko Sugino, Kazuo Takano, Misako Fukazawa	
39	Solaris: Naomi Terauchi, Akiko Miura, Fumiyo Matsukawa, Reiko Kawakatsu, Fumiko Kubo, Yuko Yoneyama	
40	KinKi: Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka, Sonoko Namba, Chizuo Sugiura, Noriko Takami	
41	Japan Youth: Hiroki Yokoi, Motoaki Shiga, Satoshi Imai, Hiroaki Miura, Yuichi Ikemoto, Ken Inagaki	
42	Kuzuum Karas: Yoko Mitsunashi, Sachiko Kunitomo, Michiko Furumoto, Keiko Inoue, Yuko Kimura, Hiromi Inomoto	

1st-round match-ups: 1v31, 2v40, 3v25, 4v39, 5v29, 6v36, 7v26, 8v35, 9v23, 10v41, 11v30, 12v22, 13v24, 14v34, 15v33, 16v27, 17v37, 18v43, 19v28, 20v38, 21v32

Good luck today, everyone!

The 2005 NEC Cup: Russia/Poland vs Israel

Entering the KO phase of last year's NEC Cup, the top-qualifying Poland was expected to take a close one from fifth-qualifying Japan Open, and the second-qualifying Japan Hana team was expected to bow to heavily favored USA, who finished the Round Robin in fourth place. The third-place qualifiers, USA/Egypt, were slightly favored over the last-place qualifiers from Israel while the match between the sixth- and seventh-placed teams from Russia/Poland and The Netherlands figured to be a toss up.

In the quarterfinals, Poland led Japan Open by 9imps at the half, but the gritty hometowners hit their stride in the second half to advance to the semifinals, 74-50. Japan Hana surprised USA, 67-54. Israel dispatched USA/Egypt by a mind-numbing 135-43. And Russia/Poland overcame a 16-imp half-time deficit to easily dispatch The Netherlands, 105-71.

In the semifinals both Japanese teams bowed to their opponents. Japan Hana was overpowered by Russia/Poland, 128-49, while Japan Open finally yielded to Israel, 86-70, in a match that went right down to the wire. So the 2005 NEC Cup final featured the two powerhouses, Israel vs Russia/Poland.

First Quarter (Boards 1-16):

The two finalists arrived in the final having taken very different routes in their semifinal matches. Russia/Poland (Andrei Gromov, Alexander Dubinin, Adam Zmudzinski, Cezary Balicki) dispatched Japan Hana quite handily while Israel (Israel Yadlin, Doron Yadlin, Michael Barel, Migry Campanile) struggled against Japan Open (86-70). But past is past (although perhaps prelude as well), and it was time to get down to the business at hand.

**We know a bridge player with
a photographic memory...
unfortunately, it was
never developed**

The fireworks started immediately.

Bd: 1	North			
Dir: North	♠ 10			
Vul: None	♥ 75			
	♦ A1092			
	♣ A109532			
	West		East	
	♠ AQ9842		♠ J7653	
	♥ 10		♥ KJ986	
	♦ K4		♦ Q86	
	♣ KQ84		♣ ---	
	South			
	♠ K			
	♥ AQ432			
	♦ J753			
	♣ J76			
	Open Room			
	West	North	East	South
	<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		Pass	Pass	1♥
	1♠	1NT	3♠	Pass
	4♠	All Pass		
	Closed Room			
	West	North	East	South
	<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		Pass	2♥(1)	Pass
	2♠(2)	3♣	Pass	Pass
	Dbl	All Pass		
	(1) ♥+another suit; (2) Pass-or-correct			

Whether Gromov was uncharacteristically trying to throw sand in the Israeli's eyes with his 1NT bid or whether he was systemically showing clubs (or the minors?) only his shrink may know. But whatever the motive, the Yadlins had no trouble reaching their cold 4♠ and Doron took twelve tricks when Gromov led the ♥7 to the queen and Dubinin tried to cash the ♥A at trick two. Plus 480.

At the other table the wheels came off for the Poles. Kokish-san thinks the blame lies with the hopeless 2♥ convention: 2♠ could be based on three small if responder is short in hearts, so East cannot risk competing with 3♠ over 3♣.

Colker-san thinks that obstructive methods such as these come with a price: much of the time they confuse the opponents but occasionally they confuse the users. If one is philosophically wedded to their use, one must be prepared to pay the piper when called to do so and get on with life. In this case the ticket to getting on was -470 when Barel scored up 3♣ doubled: spade to the ace, ♦K to the ace, club to the jack and queen, diamond to the queen, diamond ruff, claim. 14 IMPs to Israel.

Bd: 4	North		
Dlr: West	♠ Q874		
Vul: Both	♥ J10		
	♦ AKJ2		
	♣ 532		
	West		East
	♠ K53		♠ A1096
	♥ Q98742		♥ 53
	♦ 54		♦ Q10763
	♣ A4		♣ Q6
		South	
		♠ J2	
		♥ AK6	
		♦ 98	
		♣ KJ10987	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣(1)
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
All Pass			
(1) Natural			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

The North hand doesn't look like an opening bid to us, but we weren't raised in the cauldron that is Israel. "The best defense is a good offense," said the Israeli Army veteran, and it's hard to argue with him looking at his result. Balicki led the ♠10 which rode around to the queen, and Barel guessed the clubs by playing low to the jack and ace. The defense cashed their three

spade tricks but Michael had the rest; +600.

The Russians' auction seems more normal considering each of the N/S hands in isolation, but we'd all like to be in 3NT given a view of the two hands together. Gromov had only three losers in 3♣, +130, but that was 10 more IMPs to the Israelis, ahead now 24-0.

Bd: 8	North		
Dlr: West	♠ J8763		
Vul: None	♥ 7653		
	♦ A92		
	♣ J		
	West		East
	♠ 9		♠ K4
	♥ QJ1092		♥ A
	♦ KJ765		♦ Q103
	♣ A6		♣ Q1098542
		South	
		♠ AQ1052	
		♥ K84	
		♦ 84	
		♣ K73	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♣	All Pass

In the Open Room 2♣ created a game force. Even so, East should have been in no hurry to rebid notrump, which should show a more balanced hand—not to mention better/stronger spades. Had he rebid 3♣, as in the other room (though there 3♣ was non-forcing—the only rebid that was), E/W would have had a better chance of landing in a makeable contract. After 3♣ West would rebid 3♦, after which East could have bid 3NT suggesting less in spades. West, looking at his singleton spade, might then remove to 4♣, though that would not guarantee that East would not press on to the five level. As

it was, Dubinin led a spade against 3NT and when Israel knocked out the $\diamond A$ the defense cashed out for one down, -50.

In the Closed Room Campanile led the $\diamond 8$ against the unbreakable $3\clubsuit$, five, nine, queen. Seeing the handwriting on the wall Balicki tried playing a second diamond to the jack and ace. But Barel was not fooled and gave Campanile her ruff. Campanile got out with ace and a spade, and Balicki safety played the trumps (to guard against an original holding of king-jack-fourth with South) by passing the $\clubsuit 10$ to the jack. Nine tricks, +110, and R/P was finally on the scoreboard, trailing 25-4.

$\diamond Q$, ducked, then led a heart to the jack followed by a low diamond toward dummy. Israel rose with the ace and played the killing $\spadesuit K$, promoting a trump trick for Doron when Gromov ruffed with the $\heartsuit K$; -50. (It would not have helped Gromov to ruff low as Doron could either pitch his last diamond or overruff, as he wished. The culprit was Gromov's premature spade ruff at trick six.) At the other table Barel led a diamond to the queen at trick six, then a heart to the jack, and the $\diamond K$ to Balicki's ace. Balicki played a fourth club, $\heartsuit 7$, $\heartsuit 9$, $\heartsuit Q$. Barel ruffed a spade, crossed to the $\diamond J$, and claimed the last two tricks on a high crossruff; +420. 10 more IMPs to Israel, leading 35-4.

Finally, some double-digit blood was about to flow to Russia/Poland...

Bd: 9	North		
Dlr: North	\spadesuit Q643		
Vul: E/W	\heartsuit AQJ63		
	\diamond K75		
	\clubsuit Q		
	West		East
	\spadesuit A85		\spadesuit KJ102
	\heartsuit 10954		\heartsuit ---
	\diamond 1094		\diamond A63
	\clubsuit K109		\clubsuit J76532
		South	
		\spadesuit 97	
		\heartsuit K872	
		\diamond QJ82	
		\clubsuit A84	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
	1 \heartsuit	Pass	2NT(1)
Pass	4 \heartsuit	All Pass	
(1) Limit raise (\heartsuit)			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	1 \heartsuit	1NT(1)	2 \spadesuit (2)
Pass	4 \heartsuit	All Pass	
(1) 4 \spadesuit /5+ m; (2) Limit raise (\heartsuit)			

Both Easts led the $\clubsuit 5$ against $4\heartsuit$. Both declarers won dummy's ace, ducked a spade, ruffed the club return, ducked another spade, and ruffed another club return. At trick six Gromov ruffed a spade in dummy, played the

Bd: 11	North		
Dlr: South	\spadesuit Q976532		
Vul: None	\heartsuit 108		
	\diamond 104		
	\clubsuit QJ		
	West		East
	\spadesuit AJ1084		\spadesuit ---
	\heartsuit J		\heartsuit AK97432
	\diamond 86		\diamond 7532
	\clubsuit K9872		\clubsuit A6
		South	
		\spadesuit K	
		\heartsuit Q65	
		\diamond AKQJ9	
		\clubsuit 10543	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
			1 \diamond
1 \spadesuit	Pass	2 \heartsuit	Pass
2 \spadesuit	Pass	3 \heartsuit	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			1 \diamond
1 \spadesuit	Pass	4 \heartsuit	All Pass

Against the Yadrins' $3\heartsuit$ contract Dubinin cashed the $\diamond AK$, then got out with the $\spadesuit K$ to dummy's ace, declarer pitching a diamond. Israel crossed

to the ♣K, ruffed his last diamond, Gromov pitching his remaining club, and tried to return to hand by ruffing a spade with the ♥4, but got overruffed with the ♥5. Dubinin now led the ♣10, suit preference for spades, as Gromov ruffed out dummy's ace. Gromov dutifully returned a spade promoting Dubinin's ♥Q into the setting trick, -50. Though it goes without saying, we'll say it anyhow: declarer could have made the contract by simply cashing both club honors ending in hand before ruffing his last diamond.

But that's not all, folks...

In the Closed Room E/W were in 4♥ and the defense began the same way, ♦AK, ♠K. At trick four Balicki ruffed a spade off dummy as South overruffed and got out with the ♥Q. But now declarer ran his remaining trumps, squeezing South in the minors. Plus 420, 10 IMPs to R/P, trailing now 36-14.

Bd: 12	North		
Dlr: West	♠ J1054		
Vul: N/S	♥ J63		
	♦ 4		
	♣ A8543		
West		East	
♠ Q97		♠ 32	
♥ 52		♥ AKQ1098	
♦ 8753		♦ QJ10	
♣ Q1062		♣ K7	
	South		
	♠ AK86		
	♥ 74		
	♦ AK962		
	♣ J9		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	Pass	1♥	Dbl
Pass	1♠	2♥	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♠	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	Pass	1♥	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♥	2♠
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

Had the ♠Q been onside with the opener this would have been a very different story, but with the cards lying as they were the Russians had to lose two hearts, one club and a trump; -100. The Israelis must have been happy to discover that trumps were not located favorably. Plus 140 was a handy 6-IMP pickup. Israel led 42-14.

Bd: 14	North		
Dlr: East	♠ ---		
Vul: None	♥ AJ654		
	♦ KJ1075		
	♣ 1043		
West		East	
♠ 6432		♠ A105	
♥ Q92		♥ 107	
♦ 32		♦ AQ84	
♣ AJ92		♣ K875	
	South		
	♠ KQJ987		
	♥ K83		
	♦ 96		
	♣ Q6		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
2♣	2♥	1♣	1♠
		All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	2♥	1♣(1)	1♠
All Pass		Pass	3♥
(1) Polish club (weak notrump or various strong)			

Bridge is such a fickle game. South had a more than reasonable 1♠ overcall and an even better hand once North bid hearts. North had a nice five-five hand, the only drawback being a void in partner's suit. Yet N/S were not safe even at the three level. Both Easts led a club and both E/W pairs cashed two clubs and two diamonds before leading a third diamond to promote a trump trick. Down one, -50, for Israel. Making two, +110, and 4 IMPs to R/P. Israel 42, R/P 18.

Bd: 15	North		
Dir: South	♠ J962		
Vul: N/S	♥ K86		
	♦ K1097		
	♣ Q6		
West		East	
♠ K73		♠ 1084	
♥ QJ1074		♥ 32	
♦ 2		♦ J854	
♣ K983		♣ J1074	
	South		
	♠ AQ5		
	♥ A95		
	♦ AQ63		
	♣ A52		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
			1♣(1)
Db1(2)	1NT(3)	2♣(4)	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass	Db1
All Pass			
(1) Precision; (2) ♣+♥ or ♦+♠; (3) Nat.; (4) P/C			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

The Russians began a Precision Club auction but stopped off along the way to double the Yadrins in 3♣. Dubinin led a low club and Israel rose with the king to lead the ♥Q. Gromov stepped up and played a spade to the queen and king. The ♥J went to the ace and Dubinin cashed the ♠A and played a third spade. Gromov won the jack, cashed the ♦K and played his last spade, Israel ruffing with the ♣10 and Dubinin judging correctly to pitch a heart. The defense still had two trump tricks to come for three down, -500. Campanile managed to take 10 tricks in 3NT for +630. 4 more IMPs to Israel, leading 46-18.

Bd: 16	North		
Dir: West	♠ K63		
Vul: E/W	♥ AKQ2		
	♦ KJ7652		
	♣ ---		
West		East	
♠ 10987		♠ J42	
♥ 83		♥ 1095	
♦ 10		♦ A98	
♣ AQ8432		♣ J975	
	South		
	♠ AQ5		
	♥ J764		
	♦ Q43		
	♣ K106		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	1♣(1)	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣(2)	Pass	2♠(3)
Pass	4♣(4)	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) Polish club (weak notrump or various strong); (2) Relay; (3) Hearts; (4) Splinter			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♣(1)	Pass	4NT
Pass	6♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			
(1) Splinter			

Both N/S pairs had a splinter auction, the Russians judging to stop in game with the wasted ♣K opposite shortness, the Israelis blasting into slam. (In fairness, Barel's 4♣ bid seemed a bit of an overbid, though it could have worked out well. 3♥ is more the value bid.) Both Wests led the ♦10 and quickly received their ruff. Plus 450 for the Russians, -50 for the Israelis. 11 IMPS to R/P, who ended the session on an up-note, but trailed 46-29.

Second Quarter (Boards 17-32):

Bd: 17	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A43		
Vul: None	♥ AKQ96		
	♦ Q		
	♣ KJ84		
	West		East
	♠ Q85		♠ K2
	♥ 7		♥ J85432
	♦ K108432		♦ 96
	♣ A52		♣ Q76
		South	
		♠ J10976	
		♥ 10	
		♦ AJ75	
		♣ 1093	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	1♣(1)	Pass	1♦(2)
2♦	2♥(3)	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
(1) Polish, F1; (2) Usually 0-7; (3) Strong, nat., unrelated to clubs			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	1♥	Pass	1♠
2♦	Db1(1)	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	
(1) Three-card spade support			

Doron led his singleton heart against Zmudzinski's 4♠. Declarer won in dummy, led the ♦Q to his ace, and ran the ♠9. Israel won his king and played a diamond to force dummy. Zmudzinski, who had been playing Doron for short spades from the outset, cashed the ♠A. With no good news there, he reverted to hearts, discarding a diamond. Doron ruffed, cashed the ♦K, and continued diamonds, but then rose with the ace when Adam led the ♣10. One down, -50.

Dubin led the ♦3 against Campanile, the queen holding the trick. She played ♥AK,

discarding a club, and West ruffed, cashed the ♣A, and continued clubs. Declarer won the ♣K and played ♠A, spade, taking the rest when the trumps behaved. There was still a trump in dummy to ruff a diamond, and the ♥Q, on which to discard her last losing diamond, +420. 10 IMPs to Israel, 56-29.

Bd: 18	North		
Dlr: East	♠ AK876		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q64		
	♦ Q96		
	♣ 93		
	West		East
	♠ 104		♠ 532
	♥ A10872		♥ K9
	♦ K854		♦ J3
	♣ 102		♣ KQ8654
		South	
		♠ QJ9	
		♥ J53	
		♦ A1072	
		♣ AJ7	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
		Pass	1♣(1)
1♥	Db1(2)	Pass	1♠(3)
Pass	2♥	Db1	Pass
Pass	2♠	All Pass	
(1) Polish, F1; (2) At least four spades; (3) Typically a weak notrump with three spades			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		Pass	1♦
1♥	1♠(1)	2♣	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
All Pass			
(1) At least five spades			

The auction came up very well for Balicki, who was able to invite game, yet finish in just 2♠. Zmudzinski, declaring from the short side, got the lead of the ♣10 to the queen and ace, drew trumps, and led the ♥4, expecting East to have honor-doubleton. When that went according to plan he made three, +140. The double of 2♥

might have been based on queen-low, so Doron was reluctant to lead the suit.

Barel, in 3♠ from the long side, had the ♥K on lead, and so ran into a third-round ruff. He lost a club and a diamond too to go one down, -100: 6 IMPs to R/P, 35-46.

Just for the record, was that really a mandatory 1♥ overcall?

Bd: 19		North	
Dir: South		♠ J9	
Vul: E/W		♥ AK98	
		♦ Q764	
		♣ KQ4	
West		East	
♠ AK		♠ Q7652	
♥ 4		♥ J752	
♦ AJ853		♦ 2	
♣ J9862		♣ A105	
		South	
		♠ 10843	
		♥ Q1063	
		♦ K109	
		♣ 73	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
			Pass
1♦	1♥	1♠(1)	3♥(2)
All Pass			
(1) At least five spades; (2) Preemptive			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubinin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			Pass
1♦(1)	1NT	2♣(2)	Pass
2♠	All Pass		
(1) Precision, but 4+♦; (2) ♥+♠			

Against Balicki's 3♥, Israel led his singleton diamond. Doron got it right by winning the ace, cashing the ♠K to confirm that the diamond lead was from shortness (by Israel's discouraging spade card), and giving Israel a diamond ruff. Spade to the ace, diamond ruff followed, and Israel exited with a trump. The defenders got two

club tricks for two down, -100.

On the lead of the ♣K, Dubinin went two down in 2♠, trying to split the trumps and using a diamond ruff to reach East. He took no more tricks after that for two down, -200. Israel gained 7 IMPs, 63-35.

Bd: 22		North	
Dir: East		♠ K986	
Vul: E/W		♥ 85	
		♦ 10873	
		♣ KQ6	
West		East	
♠ 73		♠ J102	
♥ Q42		♥ AKJ763	
♦ KQJ5		♦ 62	
♣ 10742		♣ 85	
		South	
		♠ AQ54	
		♥ 109	
		♦ A94	
		♣ AJ93	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
		2♦(1)	Pass
2♠(2)	Pass	3♥	All Pass
(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠ or 20-22 Bal.; (2) Pass with ♠, willing to play at least 3♥ opposite ♥			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubinin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		2♦(1)	Pass
2♥(2)	Pass	Pass	Dbf
Pass	2♠	All Pass	
(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠; (2) Pass with hearts, else correct to 2♠			

Although Barel took 10 tricks in 2♠ after ♥A, diamond switch, he would have been held to three on two rounds of hearts, so stopping safely was a good result, +170.

Zmudzinski had to pass over 2♦, systemically, and he never got into the auction. 3♥ was one down, -100, and Israel gained 2 IMPs, 66-35.

Bd: 23 North
 Dir: South ♠ AQ1063
 Vul: Both ♥ J5
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ A1063

West	East
♠ K42	♠ 85
♥ 1097	♥ K8432
♦ 10	♦ A954
♣ KQJ975	♣ 82

South
 ♠ J97
 ♥ AQ6
 ♦ J87632
 ♣ 4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
3♣	Dbl	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubinin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT(1)
3♣	Dbl	All Pass	

(1) Three-card spade raise with shortness

Balicki made six when he snuck the ♦Q past Israel, and Doron was permitted to ruff the second diamond. On the trump return, declarer had time for everything; +680.

In 3♣ doubled, Dubinin took the ♦K with the ace and led a trump to the king and ace. The ♦Q was ruffed, and Dubinin cashed a high trump before passing the ♥10. He lost three spades, two trumps, and two hearts for three down, -800. 3 IMPs to Israel, 69-35.

**We hear the Aussies have
 their own Local Area Network...
 they call it "The LAN Down Under"**

Bd: 27 North
 Dir: South ♠ J
 Vul: None ♥ AKJ1064
 ♦ A9862
 ♣ 9

West	East
♠ KQ82	♠ 9654
♥ 98	♥ Q7
♦ Q5	♦ KJ103
♣ KQ842	♣ AJ7

South
 ♠ A1073
 ♥ 532
 ♦ 74
 ♣ 10653

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
1♣	4♥	All Pass	Pass

Closed Room

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

(1) 6+♣, or 5♣/4M, 11-15 HCP

It's nice to be able to bid 4♥ with a hand like North's, and also with something in the family of KQJ10-eighth and little else, and most of the time it's not so important for partner to know your hand type. But sometimes partner is involved, and it's a good idea to try to separate your hand types by doubling at your next turn with this hand type if given the opportunity. When Barel did not double 4♠, Campanile expected him to have a more traditional preempt and took the push to 5♥. As Israel Yadin did not compete with a negative double at the other table, Barel's task was somewhat more daunting than Balicki's. Both of them played carefully to take 10 tricks on a spade lead.

Balicki won the ace and led a diamond, ducking West's queen. He discarded his club loser on the spade continuation, won the diamond switch

with the ace, then ruffed a diamond and got over-ruffed. He won the trump switch with the ace, ruffed a diamond safely, ruffed himself in, drew the last trump, and claimed, +420.

Barel won the ♠A and conceded a club immediately. He ruffed the club continuation and played ♦A, diamond. West won and played another club. Barel ruffed, cashed the ace-king of trumps, and ruffed a diamond...hopefully. No, they were four-two and he had to go one down, -100. 11 IMPs to R/P, 48-70.

It was 72-48 when the last board of the session graced the tables...

Bd: 32	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 6		
Vul: E/W	♥ 1084		
	♦ K7543		
	♣ A643		
	West	East	
	♠ A743	♠ KQ10	
	♥ AQ762	♥ K3	
	♦ 8	♦ AQ9	
	♣ KQ2	♣ J10875	
	South		
	♠ J9852		
	♥ J95		
	♦ J1062		
	♣ 9		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣(1)	Pass
2♥(2)	Pass	2NT(3)	Pass
3♣(4)	Pass	3NT(5)	Pass
4♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♣	All Pass

(1) FG, nat. or bal. with support; (2) Four ♠; (3) Confirms 5+♣; (4) 4=5=1=3; (5) Tray remained in the N/E side of the screen for about a minute

Campanile led a spade against 6♣, the ten winning. Had she held the ♣A, she would have been in a position to give Barel a spade ruff, but on this lie declarer drew trumps and claimed, +1370.

On the lead of the ♦J, Israel (who really owed his partner a further move towards slam) took 12 tricks in 3NT, +690. 12 IMPs to R/P to close out the session in which they'd outscored their opponents 31-26. Halfway through the final, Israel led by 12 IMPs, 72-60.

Postscript: There had been a significant break in tempo preceding the return of the tray with East's 3NT bid on it, and West had bid again with a limited, albeit maximum, hand. Thus, the Director was summoned. He allowed the score to stand. Israel appealed, alleging that East's hesitation suggested a further move by West. The Appeals Committee made no adjustment, based in part on the fact that East's two-step approach to 3NT, when known to hold at least two stoppers in diamonds, suggested extra values in the partnership style.

Third Quarter (Boards 33-48):

Bd: 33	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 9		
Vul: None	♥ AKJ106		
	♦ QJ8		
	♣ Q642		
	West	East	
	♠ A632	♠ 754	
	♥ Q87	♥ 4	
	♦ 752	♦ A9643	
	♣ A98	♣ KJ105	
		South	
		♠ KQJ108	
		♥ 9532	
		♦ K10	
		♣ 73	
	Open Room		
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	1♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Zmudzinski	Barel	Balicki	Campanile
	1♥	Pass	3♦(1)
Pass	4♥	All Pass	
(1) Mixed raise			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Zmudzinski	Barel	Balicki	Campanile
		Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	2♦
2♥	2♠	DbI	3♦
Pass	Pass	3♥	All Pass

Both Easts led the ♠5, their systemic spot card from three small. May they and their partners live long and happy lives nonetheless. West won the ace and then...? Given that East is known to be short in hearts, West is spared the anxiety from wondering whether he also has a singleton spade. Would you have cashed the ♣A or would you have underled it? Zmudzinski did the former, Doron Yadlin the other. Both survived, the Poles despite the best effort of Barel, who followed to the ♣A with the six trying to make Balicki's lowest club look like a discouraging high one. After two club winners, East cashed the ♦A and exited safely. Gromov, who saw Israel's ♠4 and Doron's eight-nine of clubs, played East for 3=1=5=4 and picked up the trump queen for one down. Barel played trumps from the top for two down, -100. 2 IMPs to R/P, 62-72.

Had Israel not doubled 1NT, Dubinin might have bid three. The ♠J went to the ace and Doron switched to a low heart. After four heart tricks, Gromov had the rest, his bold 1NT overcall producing +380.

Against Zmudzinski's 3♥ in the Closed Room, Barel led three rounds of clubs, gained the lead with the ♦A, and played a second diamond. Zmudzinski lost to the ♠K for one down, -50. 8 IMPs to R/P, 70-72.

Bd: 34	North				
Dlr: East	♠ K52				
Vul: N/S	♥ 1097				
	♦ A7				
	♣ AK1053				
		West	East		
		♠ AQ964	♠ J8		
		♥ AJ83	♥ KQ64		
		♦ J	♦ 1064		
		♣ 982	♣ Q764		
			South		
			♠ 1073		
			♥ 52		
			♦ KQ98532		
			♣ J		
		Open Room			
		West	North	East	South
		Doron	Gromov	Israel	Dubinin
					1♣(1)
		Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
		All Pass			
		(1) Precision, F1, 16+ if balanced in this position			
		Closed Room			
		West	North	East	South
		Zmudzinsk	Barel	Balicki	Campanile
					1NT
		All Pass			

Bd: 35	North				
Dlr: South	♠ 863				
Vul: E/W	♥ K86				
	♦ Q72				
	♣ K642				
		West	East		
		♠ KQ107	♠ J942		
		♥ QJ3	♥ 7542		
		♦ AK10	♦ J943		
		♣ 985	♣ 10		
			South		
			♠ A5		
			♥ A109		
			♦ 865		
			♣ AQJ73		
		Open Room			
		West	North	East	South
		Doron	Gromov	Israel	Dubinin
					1♣(1)
		Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
		All Pass			
		(1) Precision, F1, 16+ if balanced in this position			
		Closed Room			
		West	North	East	South
		Zmudzinsk	Barel	Balicki	Campanile
					1NT
		All Pass			

Israel found the spade lead, relieving all pressure on West, and Gromov had only eight tricks, -50. Zmudzinski led the ♠K from the other side: +120. 5 IMPs to Israel, 77-70.

Bd: 36	North		
Dlr: West	♠ K753		
Vul: Both	♥ 63		
	♦ AK10		
	♣ QJ72		
West		East	
♠ J8		♠ 104	
♥ K2		♥ AQJ974	
♦ J8532		♦ 9	
♣ 9843		♣ AK105	
	South		
	♠ AQ962		
	♥ 1085		
	♦ Q764		
	♣ 6		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
Pass	1NT	2♣(1)	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
(1) Unspecified one-suiter			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	1♣	1♥	1♠(1)
Pass	2♠	Dbl	Pass
3♦	3♠	Pass	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Gromov's 1NT in this position was 12+-15. No one could be sure how the hands were fitting, but Dubin raised himself to four just in case someone could make a game. There was no losing line in 4♠ and the defense made it easy: +620. Poor East never really had a chance to show what he had, Gromov's 3♠ working well in that regard too.

We suspected Zmudzinski bid 4♥ playing Balicki for diamond length, as his double of 2♠ suggested. But maybe there was more to the auction than we knew. In any case, Barel/

Campanile were not going to reach this game, so Zmudzinski's bold 4♥ gave them a chance to double to save 6 IMPs. When they did not, Balicki was -200, and R/P gained 9 IMPs, taking the lead, 79-77.

Bd: 38	North		
Dlr: East	♠ J9		
Vul: E/W	♥ K87		
	♦ A987542		
	♣ A		
West		East	
♠ AK743		♠ Q108	
♥ 106		♥ J952	
♦ 6		♦ QJ103	
♣ Q10632		♣ J4	
	South		
	♠ 652		
	♥ AQ43		
	♦ K		
	♣ K9875		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
Pass		Pass	2♣(1)
Pass	2♦(2)	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠(2)	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
(1) 6+♣, or 5♣/4M, 11-15; (2) Inquiry			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		Pass	1♣
1♠	2♦	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

Once South opened the bidding it was tough for N/S to stay out of game. Gromov/Dubin did well, in a way, to find a game contract that offered some legitimate chances until the bad breaks revealed themselves. After three rounds of spades, Dubin ruffed in dummy, unblocked the ♦K, crossed to the ♥K, and ruffed a diamond, setting himself up to claim with three-three hearts and three-two diamonds. Alas, Doron over-ruffed and returned a club and Dubin soon ran out of gas, finishing two down, -100.

Barel was very strong for his non-forcing 3♦, but his judgment was vindicated when that proved to be all he could make, +110. 5 IMPs to Israel, back in front, 82-79.

defenders got a heart and three trumps for one down, -50. Another 5 IMPs to Israel, 87-79.

But R/P reclaimed the lead on the next deal...

Bd: 40	North		
Dlr: West	♠ KQJ4		
Vul: None	♥ 1097		
	♦ J6		
	♣ J1064		
West		East	
♠ A109632		♠ 875	
♥ 8654		♥ AQ	
♦ 10		♦ AKQ4	
♣ 92		♣ Q753	
South			
♠ ---			
♥ KJ32			
♦ 987532			
♣ AK8			
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♦(1)
2♠	All Pass		
(1) Diamonds and a major			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥(1)	Pass	2♠	All Pass
(1) Spades			

Dubinin's 2♦ convinced Gromov it was safe to lead a diamond. It wasn't. Doron threw his clubs on high diamonds as Gromov ruffed with one of his trump tricks. He exited with the ♠K, but Doron took the ace and took a losing heart finesse. Had Dubinin played a diamond, Gromov would have been able to over-ruff and play a trump, but Dubinin tried to cash a club. Doron ruffed, crossed to the ♥A, ruffed himself in and took a safe heart ruff. He could not then be prevented from leading his remaining heart towards a trump in dummy and so made three, +90.

With 2♠ played from the other side, Campanile cashed the ♣AK and switched to the ♦9. The

Bd: 41	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A53		
Vul: E/W	♥ J1095		
	♦ J7542		
	♣ Q		
West		East	
♠ 10874		♠ KQJ962	
♥ 63		♥ 872	
♦ K98		♦ 63	
♣ K1072		♣ J8	
South			
♠ ---			
♥ AKQ4			
♦ AQ10			
♣ A96543			
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
	Pass	2♦(1)	Dbl
2♥(2)	Pass	2♠	3♣
3♠	3NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠ or 20-22 bal.; (2) Pass with hearts, correct to 2♠ with spades			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	Pass	2♦(1)	Dbl
2♥(2)	Pass	2♠	3♣
3♠	3NT	All Pass	
(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠; (2) Pass with hearts, correct to 2♠ with spades			

3NT had to fail on a spade lead, but Dubinin's decision to pull to 4♥ to finish describing his hand worked beautifully, although it didn't get him to slam. He lost only to the ♦K and R/P gained 11 IMPs to reclaim the lead, 90-87.

**If you send someone styrofoam,
how do you pack it?**

Bd: 42 North
 Dir: East ♠ A108653
 Vul: Both ♥ 954
 ♦ 10
 ♣ 654

West East
 ♠ 2 ♠ KQJ7
 ♥ AKQ72 ♥ 106
 ♦ A8643 ♦ J
 ♣ 32 ♣ AQ10987

South
 ♠ 94
 ♥ J83
 ♦ KQ9752
 ♣ KJ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
		1♣	1♦
1♥	1♠	2♣	2♦
Dbl	2♠	Dbl	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		2♣(1)	2♦
Dbl	Pass	3♠	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

(1) 6+♣, or 5♣/4M, 11-15

In 5♣, Balicki took two trump finesses: -100. In 2♠ doubled, finesses would have been lovely for Gromov, but all his losers were "on top"—and there were plenty of them. He went three down, -800, and Israel gained a cool 14 IMPs to move back into the lead, 101-90.

Following the advice of Satchel Paige, Israel did not look back...

**Why does Superman stop
 bullets with his chest...
 but duck when you throw
 a revolver at him?**

Bd: 43 North
 Dir: South ♠ K9
 Vul: None ♥ J1062
 ♦ 953
 ♣ A842

West East
 ♠ AQJ4 ♠ 10763
 ♥ K ♥ A9754
 ♦ AKQJ86 ♦ 1074
 ♣ KJ ♣ 10

South
 ♠ 852
 ♥ Q83
 ♦ 2
 ♣ Q97653

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
			Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦(1)	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

(1) Waiting

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			Pass
1♣(1)	Pass	1♦(2)	Pass
2♦(3)	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♦	All Pass

(1) Polish, F1; (2) Usually 0-7

Difficult hands for E/W to bid, but we're not sure either auction was at all convincing.

Against 5♠, Gromov cashed the ♣A and switched to a diamond. When he won the ♠K, he gave Dubinin a diamond ruff: -50.

Against Balicki's 6♦, Campanile led the ♣6 to the ace. Balicki ruffed the club continuation in hand to lead a spade to the jack and king. One down, -50. No swing.

Bd: 44	North		
Dlr: West	♠ J1064		
Vul: N/S	♥ 52		
	♦ KQ106		
	♣ Q73		
West		East	
♠ K32		♠ 97	
♥ AJ1074		♥ Q983	
♦ 8		♦ A954	
♣ 9864		♣ AJ2	
	South		
	♠ AQ85		
	♥ K6		
	♦ J732		
	♣ K105		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
2♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
(1) 5+♥/4+m, weak			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣(1)	Pass
1♥(2)	Pass	2♥	All Pass
(1) Polish, F1; (2) 4+♥, 8+HCP			

4♥ was not a good contract, but it was cold, with the major-suit finesses right; +420. Zmudzinski did not take the heart finesse: +140. 7 IMPs to Israel, 108-90.

Bd: 45	North		
Dlr: North	♠ AQJ82		
Vul: Both	♥ K9		
	♦ Q5		
	♣ AJ83		
West		East	
♠ 6		♠ K97543	
♥ A102		♥ Q753	
♦ KJ10974		♦ A2	
♣ 1092		♣ Q	
	South		
	♠ 10		
	♥ J864		
	♦ 863		
	♣ K7654		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	1♣(1)	1♠	Dbl
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
2♦	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	All Pass	
(1) Precision, strong, artificial			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
2♦	3♣	All Pass	

Balicki led the singleton ♣Q against 3♣ and Barel made four, +130.

Against Gromov's 4♣, Israel led ace and a diamond, after which a third diamond promoted a certain trump trick. Gromov tried ruffing with the ♣J and the defense had a second trump winner. The ♥A was a second undertrick, -200. 8 IMPs to Israel, 116-90.

Bd: 47	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 102		
Vul: N/S	♥ AJ964		
	♦ K		
	♣ AJ864		
West		East	
♠ Q65		♠ J7	
♥ 832		♥ KQ1075	
♦ Q7542		♦ A83	
♣ 53		♣ K107	
	South		
	♠ AK9843		
	♥ ---		
	♦ J1096		
	♣ Q92		
Open and Closed Rooms			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Both Wests led the $\diamond 4$, fourth-best, against $4\spadesuit$. East took the king with the ace and returned the $\spadesuit 7$. Declarer took the ace and passed the $\diamond J$, Doron following with the seven, Zmudzinski with the deuce. On the third round of diamonds Doron (sheepishly, we'd bet) followed with the $\diamond 7$. Dubinin elected to let the ten run, but when West covered the fourth diamond, he ruffed in dummy and was over-ruffed with the jack. Israel returned the $\heartsuit K$. Dubinin ruffed, got the bad news on the $\spadesuit K$, and lost the club finesse for -100.

Campanile did better, ruffing the third diamond in dummy and cashing the $\heartsuit A$ to discard her last diamond. She ruffed a heart to hand, cashed the $\spadesuit K$, and took the losing club finesse, but had lost only one spade, one diamond, and the $\clubsuit K$, for +620. 12 IMPs to Israel.

R/P gained an overtrick IMP on the last deal of the set, but Israel had outscored R/P 56-31 over these 16 deals, and with 16 boards left to play in the 2005 NEC Cup, led mighty Russia/Poland by 37 IMPs, 128-91.

Fourth Quarter (Boards 49-64):

Russia/Poland trailed Israel by 37 IMPs after 48 boards, and they clearly would not make up the difference if they continued playing to form. But, as we've seen so often in recent years, anything can happen over 16 deals. If the first board of the final stanza was any indication, R/P's task would not be an easy one...

Bd: 49	North		
Dlr: North	\spadesuit AQ9		
Vul: None	\heartsuit AQ8753		
	\diamond QJ		
	\clubsuit Q3		
	West	East	
	\spadesuit 7543	\spadesuit K86	
	\heartsuit K4	\heartsuit J106	
	\diamond K743	\diamond A62	
	\clubsuit AJ9	\clubsuit K642	
	South		
	\spadesuit J102		
	\heartsuit 92		
	\diamond 10985		
	\clubsuit 10875		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
	$1\clubsuit(1)$	Pass	$1\diamond(2)$
Pass	$1\heartsuit(3)$	Pass	$1\spadesuit(4)$
Pass	$2\heartsuit$	All Pass	
(1) Precision: strong, artificial; (2) 0-7; (3) Artificial, F1; (4) Inquiry			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	$1\heartsuit$	Pass	Pass
Dbf	Rdbl	$2\clubsuit$	Pass
Pass	$2\heartsuit$	Dbf(1)	Pass
$3\clubsuit$	All Pass		

In $2\heartsuit$, on a trump lead, Gromov cleared that suit, Doron discarding the $\spadesuit 4$, suit preference for clubs. After a club to the ace and a spade switch, the defenders were under no pressure. One down, -50.

Barel had a bad moment when he was doubled in $2\heartsuit$, having bid a whole lot on a pile of fish guts, but was relieved to learn (from Balicki) that the double was for takeout. Against $3\clubsuit$, Campanile led her lowest trump, nine, queen, king. Declarer crossed to the $\clubsuit J$ and led a spade, Barel making the beautiful play of the queen (middle from three, in honor of his Polish opponents), Campanile dropping the jack under the king to show the ten. When Balicki played three rounds of diamonds, Campanile won and knocked out the $\clubsuit A$. Declarer could ruff dummy's losing diamond safely with his last trump, but South won the spade exit with her ten to lead a heart, and the defense had the rest for two down, -100. 4 IMPs to Israel, 132-91.



"Look Massimo, a new coffee pot."

Bd: 51 North
 Dir: South ♠ AKQ94
 Vul: E/W ♥ AK65
 ♦ 95
 ♣ A6

West ♠ 83 ♥ 1073 ♦ J1042 ♣ K872	East ♠ 1052 ♥ J982 ♦ 73 ♣ QJ103
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South
 ♠ J76
 ♥ Q4
 ♦ AKQ86
 ♣ 954

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠(1)	Pass	3♥(2)
Pass	3♠(3)	Pass	4♥(4)
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

(1) Game-forcing relay; (2) 3=2=5=3; (3) Sets ♦, RKCB; (4) 2 key cards for plus the trump queen

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski Barel</i>		<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦(1)	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	5♥	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

(1) Game-forcing inquiry

7♠ was much easier to make than to bid, but Gromov's strategy—setting diamonds as trumps and extracting the valuable key-card information—worked brilliantly. In practice, Gromov won the club lead, drew trumps, and banked on four-two or three-three diamonds, with the ♥Q as the late entry to dummy, +1510. Barel played the same way in 6♠, +1010. 11 IMPs to R/P, 102-132.

Bd: 52 North
 Dir: West ♠ 1076
 Vul: Both ♥ 1054
 ♦ KQ104
 ♣ 876

West ♠ 832 ♥ K ♦ A963 ♣ KQJ53	East ♠ AK ♥ QJ73 ♦ 8752 ♣ 1042
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South
 ♠ QJ954
 ♥ A9862
 ♦ J
 ♣ A9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
1♣	Pass	1♦	1♠
2♦	Pass	Pass	2♥
3♣	Pass	3♦	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski Barel</i>		<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
1♣(1)	Pass	1♥(2)	1♠
Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass

(1) Polish, F1; (2) 4+♥, 8+HCP

Israel Yadlin, in 3♦, ducked a trump early after a spade lead, then carefully knocked out the ♥A and started clubs before playing the ace of trumps. He could not be prevented from taking eight tricks. One down, -100.

Balicki, in 1NT on the lead of the ♠Q (deuce, seven, ace), knocked out the ♥A, won the spade continuation, cashed one high heart, and chased the ♣A for +120. R/P gained 6 IMPs, 108-132.

The next deal brought another swing for the trailing team...

Why do banks charge you a fee for insufficient funds when they know you haven't enough money to pay it?

Bd: 53 North
 Dir: North ♠ 53
 Vul: N/S ♥ KJ8632
 ♦ Q53
 ♣ Q8

West ♠ A4 ♥ 754 ♦ AJ74 ♣ AK63	East ♠ KJ92 ♥ A9 ♦ 1082 ♣ J1054
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South
 ♠ Q10876
 ♥ Q10
 ♦ K96
 ♣ 972

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	2♦(1)	Pass	2♥(2)
2NT	Pass	3♣(3)	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠; (2) Pass or correct;
 (3) Stayman

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	2♦(1)	Pass	2♥(2)
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	All Pass		

(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠; (2) Pass or correct

West had a difficult decision on the first round of bidding, made a bit easier because South's 2♥ was not natural and needn't have shown length. As it happened, hearts were a problem, but a slower one. In 3NT, Doron won the second heart and passed the ♣J. Two down, -100.

Zmudzinski passed over 2♥, hoping for a conversion to 2♠, after which he could have doubled for takeout. That didn't happen, but his hand kept improving on the bidding. Over 3♠, hearts appeared to be an issue for notrump, and he continued to investigate alternative strains for game. Whether 4♣ was forcing or merely intended as such, Balicki felt he had done enough. Even 4♣ required some good work and

a favorable lie of the cards. Zmudzinski ducked the heart lead to the queen, won the low-trump shift with the ace, crossed to the ♥A, and led the ♦2 to his seven and North's queen. He won the spade switch in hand, ruffed a heart with the ♣J, finessed the ♦J, cashed the ♣K to fell the queen, drew South's last trump with dummy's ten, and soon had the rest for +150. 6 IMPs more to R/P, whose 23-IMP mini-run had cut the deficit to just 18 IMPs, 114-132.

Israel put an end to their opponents' charge on the next deal...

Bd: 54 North
 Dir: East ♠ A3
 Vul: E/W ♥ J874
 ♦ Q95
 ♣ 9754

West ♠ 852 ♥ A52 ♦ AJ10 ♣ AJ86	East ♠ KJ ♥ Q63 ♦ 8732 ♣ KQ103
---	---

South
 ♠ Q109764
 ♥ K109
 ♦ K64
 ♣ 2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
		Pass	2♦(1)
Dbl	3♠(2)	All Pass	

(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠; (2) Pass or correct

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		Pass	2♦(1)
Pass	2♠(2)	All Pass	

(1) Weak 2♥ or weak 2♠; (2) Pass or correct

With the cards laying as they were, E/W could make 3NT by taking four clubs, three diamonds, and a trick in each major. But at both tables N/S stole the pot with their Multi 2♦ openings, Gromov's hyper-aggressive 3♠ cowing Israel Yadin in a position where it must have been very tempting for him to try 3NT. Barel made 2♠

by using his pointed-suit entries to take heart finesses, losing only one spade, one heart, two diamonds, and a club for a superb +110.

In 3♠, Gromov got a high diamond lead to the ten and queen. He cashed the ♠A before playing a heart, and that cost him a trick, as he could not repeat the heart finesse. He went two down, -100, and Israel gained 5 IMPs, 137-114.

Bd: 56	North		
Dlr: West	♠ AQ875		
Vul: None	♥ J864		
	♦ 63		
	♣ 106		
West		East	
♠ K10		♠ J	
♥ Q10		♥ AK932	
♦ KQJ94		♦ A10852	
♣ AQ75		♣ K2	
South			
♠ 96432			
♥ 75			
♦ 7			
♣ J9843			
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
1NT	Pass	2♦(1)	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
(1) Hearts			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
1♦	1♠	4NT(1)	5♠
6♣(2)	Pass	6♦	All Pass
(1) RKCB♦; (2) 2 key cards plus the ♦Q			

Balicki, who faced either 5+ diamonds, four diamonds and an unbalanced hand, or a canape into clubs, had reason to believe that slam would be a good bet facing an appropriate number of key cards. It was: +920.

The Yadlin brothers fared far worse in an uncontested auction, after a strong notrump from Doron. It needn't have worked so badly

when Israel showed a game force with at least five-four in hearts and diamonds, but Doron, with strength in the black suits, took a deep position by burying his enormous diamond support to make a regressive bid in notrump. You might argue that East should have bid again, with an extra diamond and excellent controls, knowing that he was likely to be facing a doubleton heart, but it looks far easier for West to do something positive: +490. 10 IMPs to R/P, to close to within 13 at 124-137.

But the next major swing went the other way...

Bd: 58	North		
Dlr: East	♠ K642		
Vul: Both	♥ 1073		
	♦ Q1082		
	♣ 96		
West		East	
♠ J5		♠ A10987	
♥ AQ2		♥ 864	
♦ 53		♦ A6	
♣ KQ10753		♣ AJ8	
South			
♠ Q3			
♥ KJ95			
♦ KJ974			
♣ 42			
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
		1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		1♠	Pass
2♣(1)	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♣	All Pass		
(1) Natural, strong with support, or balanced			

Doron's 2♣ response was forcing to game; Zmudzinski's was not. Whether East should rebid 3♣, 2♠ or 2NT, is a matter of both style

and system, and for the Yadlins, 2♠, to describe a balanced minimum, was the people's choice. That simplified the auction for Doron, and 3NT had nine top tricks on a diamond lead, +600.

In the Polish style, 3♣ would have shown a fourth club and a non-minimum while 2NT would have indicated stoppers in both red suits. So 2♠ was Balicki's default rebid. As 3♣ would not have been forcing, Zmudzinski had to stall with a new-suit bid, and 3♥ happened to catch Balicki with both a diamond guard and an enormous hand for clubs, in context. When he went past 3NT, Zmudzinski expected diamonds to be a problem and offered delayed spade support to suggest an alternative strain for game. Facing a limited hand with two spades, Balicki had reason to pass or convert to 5♣, but instead, he issued a grand slam try by bidding 5♦. Unfortunately for the Poles, Barel had a shrewd idea that a diamond lead would be best. When Zmudzinski took an early spade finesse, Campanile won and cashed a diamond for one down, -100. 12 IMPs to Israel, 149-124, six boards remaining.

This deal effectively ended R/P's chances...

Bd: 59		North	
Dir: South		♠ A	
Vul: None		♥ AJ85432	
		♦ 82	
		♣ 1096	
West		East	
♠ KJ1094		♠ 8753	
♥ 976		♥ K10	
♦ AK9		♦ Q763	
♣ Q7		♣ 842	
		South	
		♠ Q62	
		♥ Q	
		♦ J1054	
		♣ AKJ53	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
			1♦(1)
1♠	2♦(2)	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♥	All Pass	
(1) Precision, but 4+♦; (2) Hearts			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			1♣
1♠	2♥	3♠(1)	Pass
Pass	4♥	All Pass	
(1) Preemptive			

With the Russians stopping in 3♥ and the Israeli's in 4♥, there was sure to be a swing. A spade was led at both tables to the nine and ace, and a low heart went to East's king.

Israel Yadlin continued spades. Gromov ruffed, drew trumps, led to the ♣A, ruffed himself in with a spade, and led the ♠10 to dummy's king; +230.

The stakes were higher for Barel in 4♥. Balicki switched to the ♦3 when he won the ♥K, and West played three rounds. Barel ruffed, drew trumps, led to the ♣A, ruffed dummy's last diamond, and eventually dropped the ♣Q, believing East would not have bid 3♠ with that card in addition to the ♥K and ♦Q; +420. Israel gained 5 IMPs to increase the lead to 30 IMPs, 154-124.

Bd: 62		North	
Dir: East		♠ K5	
Vul: None		♥ KQ732	
		♦ A10	
		♣ QJ74	
West		East	
♠ 43		♠ Q1092	
♥ 10654		♥ A98	
♦ 963		♦ KQ82	
♣ AK86		♣ 53	
		South	
		♠ AJ876	
		♥ J	
		♦ J754	
		♣ 1092	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
			2♠(1)
All Pass		Pass	2♠(1)
(1) 5+♠/4+m, 6-10 HCP			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Zmudzinski	Barel	Balicki	Campanile
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
Pass	2♣	Dbf	1♠
Pass		All Pass	

The defense against Dubinin's 2♠ was interesting: ♣A, four, five, ten, diamond switch, ducked to the queen, diamond to the ace, low heart taken by the ace, ♣3 to the king, club ruff, ♦K to force dummy. Now Israel had to get another trump trick for one down, -50.

Barel, in 2♣, got a low trump lead from Balicki. Zmudzinski took the ♣K and switched to a diamond, taken by the ace. A heart went to the ace, and Balicki led a second club to the ace.



2005 NEC Cup Winners: Israel



2005 NEC Cup Runners-up: Russia/Poland

The ♦9 went to the queen, declarer discarding a heart, and West ruffed the fourth round of diamonds. Barel over-ruffed, ruffed a heart with the ♣10, came to the ♠K, drew the last trump, and claimed, +90. Well done, Mikey.

There was nothing important in the final two deals. Russia/Poland won the fourth quarter 36-30, but Israel won the match and the 2005 NEC Cup by 31 IMPs, 158-127.

Special congratulations to Israelis—Doron and Israel Yadin, Michael Barel and Migry Zur Campanile, who replaced their disappointment in the 2004 final with shining memories of their triumph in 2005. They will be a tough act to follow this year.

Penguin not included.

Humor for Women

Q: What should you do if you see your ex-husband rolling around on the ground in pain?

A: Shoot him again.

Q: How can you tell when a man is well-hung?

A: When you can just barely slip your finger in between his neck and the noose.

Q: Why do little boys whine?

A: They're practicing to be men.

Q: How many men does it take to screw in a light bulb?

A: One. He just holds it up there and waits for the world to revolve around him.

Q: What do you call a handcuffed man?

A: Trustworthy.

Q: What does it mean when a man is in your bed gasping for breath and calling your name?

A: You didn't hold the pillow down long enough.

Q: Why does it take 100,000,000 sperm to fertilize one egg?

A: Because none of them will stop and ask directions.

Q: Why do female black widow spiders kill their males after mating?

A: To stop the snoring before it starts.

Q: Why do men whistle when they're sitting on the toilet?

A: It helps them remember which end they need to wipe.

Q: How do you keep a man from reading your e-mail?

A: Rename the mail folder: "instruction manuals."



**Alan Truscott
1925-2005**

Below is the obituary that appeared in *The New York Times*, the newspaper for which Alan wrote the bridge columnist for 41 years.

Alan Truscott, Times Bridge Editor Since 1964, Dies at 80

By Michael Pollak

Alan Truscott, the contract bridge columnist of *The New York Times* for the last 41 years, whose lifelong profession grew out of the card game he learned as a British schoolboy in an air-raid shelter during the London blitz, died yesterday, September 4, 2005, at his summer home in the Adirondacks. He was 80 and he lived in the Bronx.

The cause was cancer, said his stepdaughter Katherine Hayden Thurston.

A tournament player, a teacher and an author as well as a columnist, he became *The Times*' bridge editor on January 1, 1964, succeeding Albert H. Morehead, *The Times*' only other bridge editor. Mr Morehead began the column as a weekly feature in 1935, and it became daily in 1959. By 2000, Mr Truscott estimated, his byline had appeared in this newspaper at least 12,000 times.

He traveled the world, filing articles on the progress of major tournaments. But most of his bylines were over his column, which was an artfully constructed puzzle involving a bridge deal, with the four hands shown along with the bidding and a description and analysis of the play, a form that has varied little since modern contract bridge evolved in the 1930's. Readers could cover the bidding and try to guess it; then

they could try to figure out how they would play the contract, whose solution was rarely straightforward.

While many of the deals that interested him were taken from the world's best players and involved advanced bidding technique, Mr Truscott often liked to begin with a digression that put the reader in a comfortable chair in someone's living room:

"Bridge can be played and enjoyed by the very young and the very old. An example of the latter, with some unusual features, takes place every Wednesday afternoon in Wyckoff, New Jersey. It is exclusively for retired men, a sex restriction that would be barred in tournament play, and three of the best players are nonagenarians. Partnerships are formed randomly in order of arrival. Results are distributed by e-mail an hour or two after the game.

"Joe MacDougall reports the diagramed deal in which two of the nonagenarians, Murray Socolof and Quentin Wiest, sat North and South. North was full of the optimism that afflicts many at the extreme end of the age spectrum, and raised his partner's one no-trump opening bid to game. Theoretically, this had no chance, barring a ridiculous lead of the club queen."

Mr Truscott was executive editor for all six editions of *The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge*, a thick compendium of bidding, play and defense, player biographies, tournament records, rules, bibliographies and just about everything else involving the game. Mr Truscott also wrote books classifying all of the game's simple and complex bidding systems, a task something like trying to classify all the world's street signs.

Mr Truscott also liked backgammon, puzzles and stories of little-known people with a profound impact on history. At his death, he had been working on a book about the major changes that would have resulted from minor changes in statesmen's actions. In 1986, at age 61, he ran in and finished the New York City Marathon.

Mr Truscott and Dorothy Hayden, who later became his wife, played a major role in uncovering the most famous of all bridge scandals. During a world championship match in 1965 in Buenos Aires against the British pair of Terence Reese and Boris Schapiro, the American expert B Jay Becker noticed what he thought were unusual finger movements by his opponents. He mentioned this to his playing partner, Mrs Hayden. Eventually he, Mrs Hayden and Mr Truscott, who was covering the tournament for *The Times*, determined to their satisfaction that Reese and Schapiro were using a finger code to signal the number of hearts in their hands: when they held their cards, one finger behind them meant one heart, two fingers meant two hearts, and so on. Long heart suits were supposedly indicated by spread fingers.

The British captain suspended Reese and Schapiro, who denied everything. Later investigations led to opposite decisions by the British Bridge League (acquittal) and the World Bridge Federation (guilty). The incident, which was never fully resolved, helped lead to the introduction of table screens at major tournaments, placed between partners to deter even the suspicion of illegal signaling.

Mr Truscott was born April 16, 1925, in London. He learned to play bridge in an air-raid shelter during the blitz while attending Whitgift School in Croydon. From 1944 to 1947 he was an officer in the Royal Navy. He graduated in 1951 from

Oxford, where he was chess champion for four years and where, he said, he "played chess and bridge seriously and did a little work on the side." He represented Britain three times—1951, 1958 and 1961—in the European bridge championships, winning in 1961. In 1962, his team finished third in the world championships. He moved to the United States in 1962. He married Mrs Hayden in 1972.

Mr Truscott's contributions to bridge were varied and prodigious. He served as secretary of the British Bridge League from 1957 to 1962. As a player, he represented the United States in world mixed pairs six times from 1970 to 1990, along with other national and international appearances.

He invented the Truscott Card, a device to prevent seating errors in team play. He was the author of several bidding conventions. One of his most significant areas of strategy was in the theory of restricted choice—knowing when to assume that a player had made a move because his cards had forced him to do it.

Mr Truscott wrote many books, including "The Great Bridge Scandal," about the 1965 Reese-Schapiro incident; "On Bidding," written with Phillip Alder; "Contract Bridge for Beginners and Intermediate Players"; "The Bidding Dictionary"; "Practical Bridge"; "Bridge From First Principles"; "Master Bridge by Question and Answer"; "Basic Bridge in Three Weeks"; and, with his wife, Dorothy Truscott, "Teach Yourself Basic Bidding" and "The New York Times Bridge Book: An Anecdotal History of the Development, Personalities, and Strategies of the World's Most Popular Card Game."

Besides his stepdaughter Katherine, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and his wife, Mr Truscott is survived by two sons from his first marriage, Philip, of New York, and Fraser, of London; a daughter from his first marriage, Frances Collins of London; two other stepdaughters, Margaret Cooke of Celebration, Florida, and Bobette Thorsen of Lititz, Pennsylvania.; four grandchildren; and 10 stepgrandchildren.

The following was written by Al Levy:

As District Director for District 24 (New York City

and Long Island) for the past 10 years, there was no one who passed on more ideas to me for promoting bridge than Alan. On one occasion 10 years ago, Alan suggested that I look into an international computer-bridge championship. Alan thought it would make good press as well as help advance computer-bridge software development. With Alan's inspiration I organized the event that year. This year will be the ninth annual World Computer-Bridge Championship.

It is an honor to dedicate this year's ninth annual World Computer-Bridge Championship to Alan Truscott, a remarkable man who made bridge better and more interesting for all of us.

This, from Eric Kokish:

I always found Alan tremendously entertaining, from his quick and dry sense of humor to his ability to launch into extended off-key renditions of long passages from Gilbert and Sullivan to his seemingly endless supply of trivia. But it's particularly poignant at this time to remember Alan for his gracious recommendation to Tadayoshi Nakatani to offer me the position of Daily Bulletin Editor at the first Epson Intercity Tournament in 1983. Despite repeatedly renegeing on my promise to Tadayoshi to produce much shorter Bulletins I have not yet been fired, and consider my annual trip to Japan a highlight of the year. Alan was one of the game's good guys, someone who always created positive energy for those around him and unfailingly embodied a sense of fair play.

Long Memory?

About two months ago, we received an e-mail from **Kyoko Ohno**, describing a beautiful play made by an opponent. It occurred in Round 21 of the Qualifying stage of the Seniors Bowl in Estoril. We think you'll like it...

Bd 13	North		
Dlr: North	♠ AK72		
Vul: Both	♥ AQ		
	♦ 97654		
	♣ J7		
	West	East	
	♠ Q6	♠ 1098	
	♥ 865	♥ J9732	
	♦ 102	♦ AJ3	
	♣ A109854	♣ K2	
	South		
	♠ J543		
	♥ K104		
	♦ KQ8		
	♣ Q63		
Japan vs Italy			
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Forquet</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Masucci</i>	<i>Ino</i>
	1♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

"In this tournament, it was common for 3NT to be better than four of a major when both contracts were reasonable choices. With his 4-3-3-3 shape and slow values, **Masayuki Ino** judged that an invitational 2NT was a more accurate description of his hand than 1♠. That got him to 3NT a few moments later. West, the Blue Team star, **Pietro Forquet**, led the ♣10, and when declarer called a low card from dummy, East, **Nino Masucci**, played the deuce in almost no time at all. Ino could make his contract by ducking, but that was particularly difficult to find. When he won with the ♣Q, crossed to the ♥A, and led a diamond, Masucci put up the ♦A and returned the ♣K. Forquet overtook with the ♣A to run the suit and 3NT went two down. That was very pretty defense and deserves to be recognized. There were 66 tables in play in the three major events and 3NT was declared 20 times. It was defeated only once.

At the other table in this match, North declared 4♠. The contract could have been defeated on three early rounds of clubs, promoting a trump trick, but East led a trump, so the contract was

made and Japan lost 13 IMPs.

Dear Kyoko-san,

Thank you for this wonderful deal. I can't help but wonder whether Masucci remembers the same type of play that was made by Michel Lebel of France in (I believe—EOK) the 1986 World Championships in Miami, and was (I believe) awarded the Defense of the Year prize at that time. The Lebel situation was...

	Kx	
A1098xx		Qx
	Jxx	

When declarer ducked the lead of the ♣10 in dummy, Lebel followed low. Again, declarer could have ducked, which was almost impossible to find.

The World Championships: Transnational Teams

(adapted from an article in the IBPA Bulletin, by John Carruthers)

If the Venice Cup seemed wide open, the Transnational Teams seemed even more so. With 134 teams, many of them national teams who did not make the semi-finals in the other three events, and with current and former World Champions littering the field, it would be a real dogfight.

Interesting deals abounded, and the adage, "It's a bidder's game," was never more true than on the following lesson deal from Round 4.

Bd: 16	♠ KJ98		
Dlr: West	♥ 6		
Vul: E/W	♦ 975		
	♣ AQ942		
♠ Q72		♠ A543	
♥ A4		♥ 983	
♦ 108642		♦ AQ	
♣ K85		♣ J763	
	♠ 106		
	♥ KQJ10752		
	♦ KJ3		
	♣ 10		
West	North	East	South
<i>Achterberg</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Bigat</i>	<i>Carruthers</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

were chosen by at least one competitor.

The hyper-aggressive 4♥ bid was made by those who felt that other bids merely invited the opponents into the auction too easily, and they were not willing to throw in their six-loser hand. On the actual hand, a gentle 1♥ followed by a 2♥ rebid would have secured a solid, if conservatively-achieved, plus score. On a bad day, even a contract of 2♥ would have been in jeopardy.

Count cards on opening lead generally work very well for the defenders, but declarer can take advantage of them as well. Although declarer can make 4♥ on any lead on the actual distribution, he received a lowest-from-odd ♦2 from West. When East won the ace and returned the queen, it was clear that West had led from five diamonds to the ten, since East would not have played this way from ace-queen to four.

If we project the play upon declarer's winning the diamond continuation with the king and leading a trump, either West will win the ♥A and give East a diamond ruff, or East will win the ace of trumps, cross to West's ♠A and receive a diamond ruff in return. We know this because East passed in third seat; he cannot have three aces.

South's first problem was what to do when three passes came round to him. The choices were among 1♥, 2♥, 3♥, 4♥ and Pass, all of which

Therefore, we need the club finesse to work to get rid of the ♦J before we can play trumps. We can then deal with spades accordingly, playing the other opponent for the ♠A, depending on

who shows up with the ♥A.

So the play proceeds club to the queen, ♣A pitching the ♦J, and only then a heart to the ten and ace. When West wins the ace of trumps and switches to a low spade, you can duck in dummy and claim before East has even played a card: West cannot have the ♠A (he passed in first seat, and everybody opens ace, ace, king these days) and East cannot have both the ♠A and ♠Q (that would give him at least 12 HCP and he passed in third seat).

True confession time. Bridge and golf have a lot in common, not the least of which is that they are both extremely humbling. At every tournament, something occurs to make us all realize we are not Bob Hamman after all (these days even Bob Hamman feels that way!). The next deal from Round 6 of the Transnational Teams was one such occasion for me.

Bd: 18	♠ J9432		
Dlr: East	♥ Q1062		
Vul: N/S	♦ 963		
	♣ 10		
	♠ Q75	♠ AK106	
	♥ A87543	♥ KJ	
	♦ 74	♦ J852	
	♣ J5	♣ 632	
	♠ 8		
	♥ 9		
	♦ AKQ10		
	♣ AKQ9874		

My RHO opened one diamond and I had to decide what to do. Vulnerable against not, it seems that 5♣ stands out a mile doesn't it? For fans of the Losing Trick Count, you have precisely two (count your losers in each suit by counting the missing aces, kings and queens to a maximum of three per suit).

Here's the humbling part: I thought that I'd be able to find out more about the hand if I bid a simple 2♣. Besides, with one-one in the majors, how could it go all pass? At the same time I'd also achieve a Personal Best, as it were: it would be the strongest playing hand with which I'd ever made a simple overcall.

So, I bid 2♣. It went Pass, Pass (my heartbeat

accelerated)...Pass! West led a diamond and three seconds later I had +150 and the opponents had a gift of 10 IMPs.

Ireland's Hugh McGann obviously was of the same mind as I was, but he had a slightly different problem, and outdid me entirely. Mind you, he had a slight advantage...

West	North	East	South
Jansma	Hanlon	Verhees	McGann
		1♣(1)	Pass!
2♦(2)	Pass	2♥(3)	5♣
All Pass			
(1) Three-way: minimum balanced (as here); clubs; strong (forcing one round)			
(2) Multi: either spades or hearts; weak			
(3) Pass-or-correct			

At least McGann's pass meant he'd get another chance, guaranteed, since 1♣ was forcing for one round (I'll bet he set a Personal Best as well!). Notice the respect paid by the Dutch to their vulnerable-against-not opponent who passed originally. Jansma might have chanced a double as others did in his shoes; after all, he had an ace and his partner had opened the bidding. McGann was to prove that respect was not misplaced.

Jansma led ace and another heart, and McGann ruffed, then drew a few rounds of trumps. Jansma pitched a diamond to help his partner with his discards, but this gave McGann the final clue to confirm that the distribution was as he already expected (East seemed to have a weak no trump with two hearts and three clubs, so should be 4=2=4=3).

McGann cashed two top diamonds, seeing Jansma show out, then cashed the rest of the trumps. Louk Verhees had to keep two diamonds so was forced to come down to just one spade. McGann exited with his spade at trick eleven and Verhees had to win and lead into the ♦Q10 to give the contract. Had Verhees come down to a singleton low spade, Jansma would have been able to win the spade trick with his queen, but would then have had to give dummy the last two tricks with the ♠J and the ♥Q. There was no escape after trick two.

At the other table, East again opened 1♣, but South overcalled 5♣ immediately. The diamond lead did not challenge declarer, so McGann's good play was necessary just to flatten the board.

Beginning with a very dicey proposition, Allan Graves of Canada developed a near-certainty on the following deal from Round 6.

Bd: 20 ♠ J98
 Dir: West ♥ Q106543
 Vul: Both ♦ Q106
 ♣ 5

♠ A7643	♠ K102
♥ K98	♥ AJ7
♦ J5	♦ K832
♣ K42	♣ AJ3

♠ Q5
 ♥ 2
 ♦ A974
 ♣ Q109876

West	North	East	South
<i>Graves</i>	<i>Cope</i>	<i>Baran</i>	<i>Rice</i>
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

When Tim Cope, North, led the ♣5, Graves played low from the dummy and won Rice's six with his king. Not being able to afford a safety play in trumps, Graves played off three rounds, hoping South would have to win the third to his disadvantage.

When North won the ♠J and exited with the ♥10 (a possible surrounding play), Graves tried the jack, which won. On a heart to the king, South discarded a club and Graves had a complete inferential count, with North holding only one club (else he'd have continued clubs rather than breaking hearts). He was also pretty certain of the location of the ♦A and ♦Q from North's defense.

Graves' elegant solution was to eliminate the third heart and play a diamond to the jack. He would make the contract any time South held either the diamond nine or ten along with his presumed ace (from North's failure to shift to a

diamond early), regardless of who had the queen.

When in with the ♦Q, North can either lead a diamond or a heart. If a heart, Graves would ruff and play a diamond himself, covering North's card and end-playing South. If a diamond came from North, South would find himself similarly embarrassed a trick earlier. If Graves' card-reading was right, he would only lose to a diamond holding of precisely queen-ten-nine with North.

This was a push, as at the other table, declarer in the same contract played the ♣J at trick one, then drew two rounds of trump and three rounds of hearts (with the jack, ace and king) before leading a second club toward the ace. There was no advantage to ruffing, so ace and another club end-played South.

Another humbling bridge experience occurred two rounds later, in Match 8. This time it was my partner, Joey Silver, who had the humbling experience—at least until the comparison. We were playing a strong Russian team, part of their national squad.

Bd: 19 ♠ Q43
 Dir: South ♥ QJ62
 Vul: E/W ♦ J
 ♣ AJ1054

♠ K8652	♠ AJ97
♥ K	♥ A103
♦ 75	♦ AK9843
♣ Q9873	♣ ---

♠ 10
 ♥ 98754
 ♦ Q1062
 ♣ K62

West	North	East	South
<i>Krasnosse/ski</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Zhmak</i>	<i>Carruthers</i>
Pass	1♠(!)	2♦	Pass
Pass	2♥	3♦	Dbf
Pass	3♥	Pass	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Dbf
All Pass			

'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...' After two passes, Joey traded on the favorable vulnerability to open 1♠, hoping to pick off the opponents' suit. East had a very good hand for a simple overcall, but nothing else particularly appealed so that was his choice. I made an aggressive negative double and 2♥ was the obvious response. So far so good.

Now East showed his extra strength by repeating the diamonds and, when that was passed by West, North's operation had been successful. But Joey could not bear to pass when he had a guaranteed heart fit, so came again with 3♥ (we might even make it). That slipped past East, but not West, who tried a speculative 3NT (perhaps that was intended as please compete in a minor?).

Whatever it was that West intended 3NT to be, East was charmed to pass. I doubled—after all, my partner had bid when he had no need to do so, and I had the diamonds well held. They had no suit to run to (I thought). The double ended the auction and West came to nine tricks by guessing spades(!) for +750. Joey at least made the good lead of a low club.

That may not look like a triumph for us, considering that we could have passed out 3♦ and conceded a happy -150.

However, as the contract at the other table was 6♠ making for +1430, Joey had the last laugh; we picked up 12 IMPs. A triumph after all!

Consider the following deal from Match 9 (Bd: 10; Dir: East; Vul: Both) as a single dummy problem first. You are West.

West		East	
♠ K3		♠ AJ1086	
♥ 9765		♥ KQ108	
♦ KQ76		♦ AJ9	
♣ A102		♣ K	
West	North	East	South
		1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
6NT	Dbl	All Pass	

Your partner, East, reaches 6♥ and RHO, on lead, doubles—unlikely to be Lightner unless he has forgotten the position (but since South is an expert, this is unlikely). With poor trumps and top honors in all the other suits you pull to 6NT, fearing South has doubled on multiple trump tricks.

LHO doubles and leads the ♣Q. How would you play?

Gunnar Hallberg declared 6NT doubled on a top club lead and won in dummy. Since hearts figured to be five-zero as South would not risk a double on just a four-card suit here, the ♠Q figured to be with North—particularly since he had doubled the final contract. But Hallberg paused for reflection. The double of 6♥ must have been with the awareness that the opponents might retreat to 6NT, so maybe the double of 6NT was psychic—protecting his partner's spades? Backing his judgment, Hallberg passed the ♠J, and when the suit behaved he had his twelve tricks.

This was the full deal:

♠ 975	
♥ ---	
♦ 108432	
♣ QJ543	
♠ K3	♠ AJ1086
♥ 9765	♥ KQ108
♦ KQ76	♦ AJ9
♣ A102	♣ K
♠ Q42	
♥ AJ432	
♦ 5	
♣ 9876	

Now, that is table feel at its finest!

Based on previous Transnational Teams, it should have come as no surprise that an American-Polish team won the event. Americans and/or Poles had won three of the previous four events. This time it was Peter Schneider-Grant Baze and Piotr Gawrys-Marcin Lesniewski.

John Markland "Mark" Molson (1949-2006)



JOHN MARKLAND (MARK) MOLSON of Montreal, Canada died in Miami, FL on January 19, 2006, at the age of fifty-six from complications during emergency heart surgery. He is survived by his wife Janice (nee Seamon) and cherished daughter Jennifer. The eldest son of William Markland Molson (Gail) and the late Mary Lyall Hodgson (late David Y. Hodgson), he will be deeply mourned by his brothers William (Barbara), Ian (Verena), and Christopher (Nancy), and his sisters Natalie (Gabriel Zaurrini) and Claudine (Alex Sellers), daughters of Carole Labelle Molson, as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Mark was a world class bridge player who competed internationally throughout his life. He was also an avid golfer and sports enthusiast. His family and many friends will greatly miss his playful sense of humor, his gregarious and curious nature and his warm personality. His love of people and his natural

ability as a storyteller made him an entertaining and valued friend to all who knew him. Mark will always be remembered for his unique and loveable character. Notwithstanding his residency in Florida and international travels, Mark retained his deep roots and affection for his native province of Quebec. In addition to frequent trips to Montreal, Mark returned each summer to the Lower St. Lawrence and Metis Beach where he will be fondly remembered.

The 2005 World Bridge Teams Championships

By Eric Kokish, Toronto (Estoril, Portugal: October 22-November 5)

The World Bridge Federation's annual traveling road show has taken us to some marvelous venues in the new millennium: Bermuda, Maastricht, Paris, Montreal, Monte Carlo, Istanbul. For the 2005 edition of the World Bridge Championships, the gorgeous Portuguese coastal resort town of Estoril promised to continue a very positive tradition for those fortunate enough to participate in these beautifully staged events. Whether Estoril was the best ever or merely one of the best is not important, but the warmth and hospitality of the Portuguese people, the courteous professionalism of the organization, the scenery and atmosphere, weather, accommodations, and cuisine, will all be fondly remembered by everyone in attendance. Although there was plenty of bridge to be played over the fortnight, the WBF has done its best to tailor the schedule to allow the players and officials to have enough leisure time to enjoy the wonderful places where these major tournaments are held, and there was much to see and enjoy in Estoril, away from the tables.

The three principal events (Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, Seniors Bowl) were restricted championships, each with 22 teams that

qualified for Estoril in one of eight Zonal Championships. The Transnational Open Teams, played in the second week, was open to all (including players on teams that did not survive the quarter-finals of the main events), and attracted a large field of 134 teams.

All scores would be entered directly from the tables using the new Bridgemate machines and technology that debuted successfully in Tenerife a few months earlier. This made the scores posted on the side Vugraph screens much more reliable and cohesive than in the past. BBO and Swan Games broadcast live matches over the Internet for each session, and viewers at home were treated to a plethora of rich choices in real time, or by tapping into the archived sessions on both sites.

The Bermuda Bowl

Round Robin:

The favorites were the defending champions, USA1, and Italy, the two teams that contested the 2003 final. But this year's field was very deep and, with a couple of exceptions, it would not have been surprising for any of the participating teams to qualify for the knockout

phase. The first stage, a round robin of 20-board matches, was dominated by Italy, but at one point or another, nearly every other team occupied one of the other seven positions in the top eight. Going into the last round-robin match there were still plenty of teams with a mathematical chance to reach the quarter-finals. USA1 had struggled throughout and stood only sixth, due to face an Italian team anxious to avenge a last-round thrashing in Monte Carlo that cost them the 2003 title on carry-over. Remarkably, history repeated itself in dramatic fashion, as USA1 showed great strength of character in crushing Italy 25-2 to qualify third. China, in a strong position to qualify, as in 2003, again missed out with a disappointing 0-25 blitz at the hands of a veteran Brazilian team that claimed the vital eighth spot as a result. These were the final round-robin standings:

1 Italy	368
2 USA 2	348
3 USA 1	347
4 Sweden	344
5 India	344
6 Argentina	339.5
7 Egypt	339
8 Brazil	334
<hr/>	
9 Japan	328
10 China	323
Netherlands	323
12 South Africa	317
13 Russia	314
14 Portugal	312
Australia	312
16 New Zealand	305.5
17 England	305
18 Canada	301
19 Chinese Taipei	273
20 Poland	272.5
21 Guadeloupe	225
22 Jordan	184

Quarter-finals

For the 96-board quarter-finals, Italy (Norberto Bocchi-Giorgio Duboin, Lorenzo Lauria-Alfredo Versace, Fulvio Fantoni-Claudio Nunes, npc Maria Teresa, coach Massimo Ortensi) selected India (Kiran Nadar-Buchiraja Satyanarayana, Sunit Choksi, RK Venkatraman, Subjash Gupta-

Rajeshwar Tewari), spotting the BFAME champs 2.3 IMPs. Four of the six sets were close, but Italy won both the other two by 45 IMPs, and coasted home comfortably.

Italy	53	53	31	67	35	33	272
India (2.3)	49	8	43	22	31	37	192.3

USA2 (Russ Ekeblad-Ron Rubin, Fred Gitelman-Brad Moss, Eric Greco-Geoff Hampson, npc Steve Landen, coach Sheri Winestock) chose Argentina (Pablo Lambardi-Agustin Madala, Martin Monsegur-Guillermo Mooney, Walter Fornasari-Luis Palazzo, npc Horacio Uman) and started the match 4 IMPs behind, but took the lead after the first set, and had much the better of sets 3, 4 and 5 to win an interesting match by 52 IMPs.

USA2	33	40	50	40	44	43	250
Argentina (4)	20	46	28	24	32	44	198

The defending champs, USA1 (Nick Nickell-Richard Freeman, Jeff Meckstroth-Eric Rodwell, Bob Hamman-Paul Soloway, npc Sidney Lazard, coach Eric Kokish) opted to face Brazil, a team that included five members of the squad they had beaten in the final of the 1999 Bermuda Bowl (Gabriel Chagas-Miguel Villas Boas, Marcelo and Pedro Branco, Ricardo Janz-Roberto Mello) with a 9-IMP carry-over advantage. A strong first set was nearly neutralized by the second and third, but the Americans made a strong statement in the fourth segment and built on it in the fifth to win going away by 102 IMPs.

USA1 (9)	40	24	16	55	57	42	243
Brazil	9	38	30	2	32	30	141

That left Sweden (Peter Bertheau-Fredrik Nystrom, Peter Fredin-Magnus Lindkvist, PO Sundelin-Johan Sylvan, npc Jan Kamras, coach Tobias Tornqvist) to deal with Egypt (Tarek Sadek-Walid El Ahmady, Hani Dagher-Adel El Khourdy, Mohamed Heshmat-Tarek Nadim, npc Ashraf Sadek), with a nice 16-IMP carry-over edge. Each team won three of the six segments, but the Swedes won theirs by wide margins and triumphed convincingly by 111 IMPs.

Sweden (16)	27	64	36	27	53	45	268
Egypt	30	18	54	28	6	21	157

Italy	19	33	22	43	42	32	30	47	268
USA1 (20)	24	37	24	43	17	18	29	38	250

Semi-finals:

As both American teams reached this stage, they were obliged by the conditions to face one another over 96 boards. That left Italy to face Sweden with a 3-IMP carry-over. Italy started with a big set, but lost much of its gain in the second, before showing its might in the third and fourth stanzas. When the Swedes could make no headway in the fifth set, they resigned, 74 IMPs down with 16 deals to play.

Italy (3)	43	20	56	49	34	--	205
Sweden	11	45	19	22	34	--	131

In the all-American match, USA1 carried forward 5 IMPs, and won each of the first three sets to extend its lead to 45. USA2 recouped 27 IMPs in the next two segments, however, to add some drama for the final set, which featured a lively set of boards. USA1 won that stanza by 21 and the match by 39 IMPs to set up the final that bridge aficionados everywhere were hoping to see.

The Final:

Although the teams scored plenty of IMPs and made a significant number of unforced errors, the overall quality of the bridge was very high. The Americans started with a 20-IMP carry-over, thanks to their big win in Round 21, and won in each of the first three sets by small margins to lead by 31 after the first day of play, and retained that lead at the halfway mark. But then, in Segment 5, Italy made a strong move, picking up 25 IMPs to reduce the American lead to 6. In Segment 6, Italy gained another 14 IMPs to lead by 8, before USA1 stopped the bleeding by gaining an IMP in the penultimate stanza. The final set was not dull and there were plenty of opportunities for both sides, but Italy gained 9 IMPs and shut the door behind them down the stretch, making certain there would be no repeat of their rivals' miracle finish in 2003. Italy won its first Bermuda Bowl title since 1975 with an outstanding performance and currently holds all three of the World Open Team titles—the Bermuda Bowl, the Olympiad, and the Rosenblum Cup.

The two teams in the 48-board bronze medal playoff took their mission seriously, with USA2 defeating the Netherlands, 91-76.

Italy led 228-215 early in the final segment when this distributional deal flashed up on the main VuGraph screen...

Bd: 116	North		
Dlr: West	♠ KJ87		
Vul: Both	♥ 92		
	♦ J43		
	♣ KQ87		
	West		East
	♠ Q1096532		♠ A
	♥ J10543		♥ A876
	♦ 10		♦ K5
	♣ ---		♣ A106532
		South	
		♠ 4	
		♥ KQ	
		♦ AQ98762	
		♣ J94	
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣(1)	3♦
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
(1) 2+♣, two only if 4=4=3=2			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Soloway</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Hamman</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
3♠	Pass	4♠	5♦
Pass	Pass	Dbf	All Pass

This deal highlights one of the main philosophical differences in Italian and American bridge over the years. Italians have long considered preempting with length in a side major to be losing strategy while US players have traditionally, nearly universally espoused a much looser style. Hence, Soloway's 3♠ versus Versace's pass.

It's not clear whether Soloway would have made 4♠ (it takes a diamond lead to defeat it), but that proved academic when Nunes overcalled 5♦. Against 5♦ doubled, Soloway led the ♠2 to alert his partner that a club return would be welcome, and he soon got a second-round club ruff for two down, -500 (after a heart to the ace and a third club, Nunes knew how to play the trumps when Soloway could not ruff).

Where Versace passed, he was able to bid both his suits when the auction later developed more slowly. Whether this was entirely comfortable for him with so little in high cards is not clear, but he finished in 4♥ on his nine-card fit. It's often better to play this type of hand in a seven-one fit rather than a five-four fit, and 4♥ might have been very awkward to play on a diamond lead, but Meckstroth, trying to protect his spade holding, led the ♥2. That gave declarer a vital tempo: he rose with the ♥A, discarded his diamond on the ♣A, got the ♠A out of the way, and played a second trump. Rodwell won and played a club, but Versace ruffed and led the ♠Q, and could easily bring in that suit now to take the rest of the tricks for +680. Italy gained 5 IMPs to extend its lead to 18 IMPs, which proved to be the final margin of victory.

The Venice Cup

Round Robin:

The women's event featured a number of serious contenders—notably the European and American qualifiers and China—and perhaps another half dozen teams that could expect to have a real shot at reaching the knockout stage. The form chart held, with France producing a particularly noteworthy performance, averaging more than 20 VP per match. With one match to play, it was a dogfight between Austria and Canada for the final qualifying spot. It came down to the final deal, and Canada prevailed, sneaking past Austria to finish eighth. These were the final round-robin rankings (16-board matches):

1 France	423
2 China	383.25
3 Germany	383
4 USA 2	374
5 USA 1	366
6 England	346

7 Netherlands	329.5
8 Canada	312
9 Austria	310
10 Egypt	306
11 Australia	303
12 Japan	302
13 Brazil	298
New Zealand	298
15 Sweden	293
16 Portugal	287
17 Argentina	269.5
18 Singapore	269
19 Venezuela	268
20 Pakistan	266.25
21 Morocco	250
22 India	247

Quarter-finals:

France (Benedicte Cronier-Sylvie Willard, Catherine d'Ovidio-Daniele Gaviard, Nathalie Frey-Vanessa Reess, npc Gerard Tissot) selected Canada (Francine Cimon-Linda Lee, Dianna Gordon-Beverly Kraft, Barb Clinton-Joan Eaton, npc John Gowdy) and started with a 15.5-IMP carry-over. Canada gained 8 IMPs in Segment 1, but France won the next three by a combined 150. With two sets remaining, Canada resigned.

France (15.5)	28	62	55	69	--	--	229.5
Canada	36	7	9	20	--	--	72

China (Ling Gu-Yalan Zhang, Ming Sun-Jian Wang, Ping Wang-Yiquian Liu, npc Xianjing Wang) had been dominant in the first half of the round robin, but had a much tougher run in the second half and a big win over USA1 in the final round while Germany was losing to Japan earned China the runner-up spot and the right to choose its quarter-final opponent before Germany (and USA2). China opted to face the Netherlands (Carla Arnolds-Bep Vriend, Jet Pasman-Anneke Simons, Wietske van Zwol-Femke Hoogweg, npc Ed Franken, coach Enri Leufkens) with a 16-IMP carryover. China tacked on another 18 IMPs in the first set, but dropped 5 in the second, and in Segment 3, the Netherlands outscored the PABF champs 71-20 to lead by 22 at the half. China made it closer going into the final stanza, but the Dutch won the

last set by 20 to eliminate China in impressive fashion.

China	(16)	28	23	20	40	61	27	215
Netherlands		10	28	71	33	61	47	250

Germany (Sabine Auken-Daniela von Arnim, Pony Nehmert-Barbara Hackett, Anja Alberti, Mirja Schraeverus-Meuer, npc Bernard Ludewig, coach Nikolas Bausback) chose to face England (Nicola Smith-Heather Dhondy, Michelle Brunner-Rhona Goldenfield, Sally Brocky-Kitty Teltscher, npc Alan Mould, coach Christine Duckworth), leaving the two American teams to fight it out a round earlier than either might have hoped. England started with a small carry-over of 3.7 IMPs, but Germany scored early and often, dropping only the second set in building a lead of nearly 90 IMPs through five sets. England resigned.

Germany		57	27	47	29	50	--	210
England	(3.7)	23	40	25	16	16	--	123.7

In the all-American confrontation, USA1 carried forward 9 IMPs. These teams had dominated American women's events for the past two years and knew each other well. The match was expected to be close, but USA1 (Hansa Narasimhan-Irina Levitina, Jill Levin-Sue Picus, JoAnna Stansby-Debbie Rosenberg, npc Rozanne Pollack) broke the match open in the third set and built its lead to 102 before USA2 (Renee Mancuso-Pam Wittes, Karen Allison-Peggy Sutherlin, Kathy Sulgrove-Jo Ann Sprung, npc Joan Jackson) resigned with one set to play.

USA1	(9)	33	28	64	35	68	--	237
USA2		25	39	12	23	36	--	135

Semi-finals:

Both France and USA1 had been impressive in reaching the 96-board semifinals, and no one expected a one-sided match, France starting with a 16-IMP carry-over advantage. After two inconclusive sets, France broke through in the third and fourth, gaining a total of 56 IMPs. The last two sets went in the same direction and France moved on to the final with a convincing win by 112 IMPs.

France	(16)	42	21	43	43	53	44	262
USA1		26	30	16	14	33	31	150

Germany and the Netherlands have been among the top teams in Europe for many years and enjoy an interesting rivalry. This time the Dutch started 16 IMPs ahead thanks to their carry-over, but Germany pulled ahead by 25 on the strength of a big second set. Two sets later, the Dutch had recovered to lead by 8 IMPs, but Germany won the fifth set to lead by 6. The Dutch spectators in the VuGraph theatre and watching on the Internet suffered through the sixth set as Germany recorded one big gain after another, winning comfortably by 77.

Germany		25	68	35	11	31	71	241
Netherlands	(16)	22	22	38	41	17	8	164

The Final:

France vs Germany: We can be sure that none of these players (eight of the twelve players, certainly) had forgotten the Venice Cup final in Paris in 2001, in which Germany wiped out a 47-IMP French lead in the last session to disappoint the host country at the eleventh hour.

France began the 96-board final with a 16-IMP carry-over cushion and held Germany to a single IMP in the first set to run its lead to 48. But Germany did better in the next two sets to reduce the French lead to 20 IMPs at the half. With one set remaining, Germany was only 13 IMPs behind, and France had not yet displayed its best form in this match. But, in contrast to the Paris match, this time the French team did just about everything right in the last 16 deals and won the set 49-6 to earn its first world women's title by 55 IMPs. The French had played so well throughout the event that it would have been a shame for them to lose in the final in another heartbreaker. The German team had done very well to reach the final and played very well much of the time, but France was the best women's team in Estoril.

In a close match over 48 boards, the Netherlands defeated USA1, 85-80, to earn the bronze medals.

With four deals remaining, Germany, trailing by 42 IMPs, needed divine intervention to pull out the match. Board 93, a potential slam, held

some promise for the trailing team...

Bd: 93	North
Dlr: North	♠ K
Vul: Both	♥ AJ107
	♦ QJ
	♣ AQ9865
West	East
♠ 8765	♠ QJ
♥ Q53	♥ 962
♦ K1087	♦ 96542
♣ 42	♣ K73
	South
	♠ A109432
	♥ K84
	♦ A3
	♣ J10

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Gaviard</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>d'Ovidio</i>	<i>von Arnim</i>
	1♣(1)	Pass	1♠(2)
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

(1) Strong

(2) 8+ HCP, 4+♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Nehmert</i>	<i>Willard</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦(1)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) Artificial force

6♣ by North is one of those slams you don't want to reach unless it makes. To accomplish that on a diamond lead requires a particularly unnatural line of play—♦A, ♣A, ♠K, ♥K, ♠A (diamond), heart to the jack, ♣Q (or some close variant)—and the N/S pairs undoubtedly did the right thing on this layout by staying out of 6♣. The normal line in 6♣ would be: ♦A, ♠K, ♥K, ♠A, ♣J, which East would have to duck smoothly. Declarer would surely repeat the club finesse and go down. If East takes the ♣K immediately, declarer has a trump entry to South to take the heart finesse through West.

Auken, in 5♣, got the lead of the ♦2 (count) through the ace. She won in dummy, came to the ♠K, crossed to the ♥K, discarded the ♦Q on the ♠A, and passed the ♣J, which held, and the ♣10, which didn't. D'Ovidio exited in diamonds and Gaviard got a trick with the ♥Q, +600.

Cronier, in 3NT, was in far greater danger on Nehmert's lead of the ♦4. With the ♦K wrong, the defense cleared the suit, and with the ♣K wrong, it was certainly possible for declarer to fail, particularly after two long weeks of play. But Cronier tried for an extra chance by testing spades first: ♠K, ♥K, ♠A. When the queen-jack obliged with a cameo appearance, she permitted herself a small smile, and soon claimed 10 tricks, taking no further finesses—six spades, two hearts, and one of each—+630. That was 1 IMP to France, 179-136. With this elegant effort, France effectively locked up the match. Had Cronier gone down in 3NT, the margin would have been 30 IMPs, which would have kept German hopes alive for a miracle finish.

There was a different extra chance available in 3NT, but playing for it would not have worked. Declarer's main chance is in clubs, but if that suit is five-zero or four-one with the king onside, there is a solid subsidiary chance in hearts. Say that the ♣J and ♣10 hold the first two club tricks, East showing out; Cronier, who used the ♥K to return to dummy, would still succeed if West had the ♥Q: two spade tricks, three hearts, a diamond, and three clubs. However, by playing to the ♠K early, she had to commit herself in hearts, and in the main danger scenario, where East is short in clubs, it will soon be apparent that there are more empty spaces in East's hand to accommodate the ♥Q, and declarer, needing only a third heart trick, would at that point prefer to finesse through East, but could no longer do so. The key to the hand on all other spade layouts is to retain flexibility in the heart suit.

It's also interesting to note that if East had the ♠QJx and the ♣K, it would be a fine play to drop the ♠J under the king. Even if declarer has a second spade she will never take the finesse when East follows low on the second round. She will try for her extra chance (as Cronier did) by cashing the ♠A, and the defense will get an extra trick. Had this taken place, we would expect a bouquet of yellow roses to arrive at East's door, courtesy of Frederick B Turner, who penned the

original article on “The Grosvenor Gambit” in *The Bridge World* about 50 years ago.

The Seniors Bowl

Round Robin:

Largely inspired by the efforts of Israel’s Nissan Rand, Seniors Bridge has grown dramatically in the past few years, and now each World Championship tournament has an event reserved for Seniors that embraces the same format as its parallel Open and Women’s Championships. In a few years the minimum age for competing in the Seniors events will have been increased to 60, and there it will rest, but judging from the quality of the Seniors field in Estoril, a case could be made for raising the minimum age to 65. USA sent two powerful teams chock full of players who are still serious contenders in the Trials to select the American Bermuda Bowl teams. The French, Indonesian, Japanese, Australian, Canadian, and Danish teams include players still very competitive in open events. It’s difficult to think of the fierce Garozzo, the perfectionist Forquet, and the consummate professional De Falco as the Italian over-the-hill gang. With medals and prestige on the line, it seems certain that NBOs will give increasingly serious consideration to encouraging its leading age-eligible players to compete in the selection process, and the inevitable product will be a deep field that might one day rival the strength of the Bermuda Bowl. If the original idea was to create an event for players whose skills had begun to decline or who were looking for a good game in atmosphere of limited stress, that’s not where Seniors Bridge has gone at the world level. It’s a game that has been taken over by the professionals, perhaps for the better; or perhaps not.

With one round remaining in the round robin of 16-board matches, the only qualifying spot in the quarter-finals at issue was the final one, with Poland very definitely in the driver’s seat, well ahead of dangerous Israel. Poland had much the worst of the draw, however, and fell to Indonesia 6-24. Meanwhile, Israel crushed Bangladesh 25-1 to slip past Poland at the very end. These were the final rankings in the round robin:

1 USA 1	394
2 Indonesia	378
3 Usa 2	363
4 Denmark	360
5 Portugal	355
6 France	354
7 Netherlands	352
8 Israel	336
<hr/>	
9 Poland	333
10 Australia	323
11 Italy	322
12 Japan	312.5
13 Germany	311
14 Canada	303
15 Pakistan	289
16 Sweden	286
17 Bangladesh	274
18 Egypt	264
19 Morocco	261
20 New Zealand	255
21 Brazil	226
22 Guadeloupe	217

Quarter-finals:

USA 1 (Rose Meltzer-Garey Hayden, Peter Weichsel-Alan Sontag, Lew Stansby-Roger Bates, npc Jan Martel) looked an awful lot like the team that won the Bermuda Bowl in 2001, with Chip Martel and Kyle Larsen unable to play only because they weren’t old enough. It was no surprise that they led the round robin. For their first knockout match (96 deals) they selected France (Pierre Adad-Maurice Aujaleu, Nicolas Dechelette-Guy Laserre, Francois Leenhart-Philippe Poizat, npc Yves Aubry) and carried forward 11 IMPs. That proved a sensible choice as the Americans won all but one set and coasted to an 86-IMP win.

USA1	(11)	45	46	19	46	30	20	217
France		14	48	9	31	15	14	131

Indonesia (Henky Lasut-Eddy Manoppo, Denny Sacul-Munawar Sawiruddin, Arwin Budirahardja-Yusuf Amiruddin) chose Portugal (Juliano Barbosa, Jose Antonio Debonaire, Nuno Guimaraes, Jose Manuel Lampreia, Rui Pinto, Carlos Spinola Teixeira, npc Acacio Figueredo), and started +16 with maximum carry-over. The native sons got off to a fine start by winning the

first two sets to tie the match, but Indonesia struck heavily in the third, fourth and sixth segments to win easily by 99 IMPs.

Indonesia	(16)	31	24	56	61	52	80	320
Portugal		35	36	25	34	35	36	201

USA2 (Reese Milner-Markland Molson, Zia Mahmood-John Mohan, Sam Lev-Billy Eisenberg, npc Jacek Pszczola), not a group of guys you'd expect to meet in a Seniors event, opted to face the Netherlands (Willem Boegem, Nico Doremans, Onno Jansens, Nico Klaver, Roald Ramer, Jaap Trouwborst, npc Wied Polle, coach Chris Niejmeijer), a very capable amateur team for the likes of whom I prefer to think this event was initially conceived. The Americans started with maximum carry-over of 16 IMPs, but lost their lead in the third set and never got it back. The fiercely contested match ended with David beating Goliath by 18.

USA2	(16)	24	28	26	31	49	13	187
Netherlands		21	45	53	41	27	18	205

That left Denmark (Jens Auken, Flemming Dahl, Peter Lund, Kirsten Steen Moller, Stefan Steen Moller, Georg Norris, npc Peter Westrup) to face Israel (Nissan Rand, Amos Kaminski, Yeshayahu Levit, Pinhas Romik, Adrian Schwartz, Rami Sheinman). The Danes had a surprisingly easy time of it, parlaying their 16-IMP carryover to a 112-IMP victory.

Denmark	(16)	21	37	58	52	54	65	303
Israel		17	61	12	19	47	35	191

Semi-finals:

USA1 carried forward 11 IMPs against the Netherlands, and dominated from the start, winning each of the first five sets to build a 106-IMP lead before their opponents resigned. That was a pretty tough draw for the gallant Dutchmen, who will be regulars in this event into their eighties, I'm sure.

USA1	(11)	45	48	55	38	26	--	223
Netherlands		22	22	39	33	11	--	117

Indonesia carried forward 10.5 IMPs against Denmark, which was just 2 IMPs less than their final margin of victory, the teams playing to a

virtual draw over 96 deals, although a glance at the scoreboard below will reveal that it was hardly a tight affair, the Indonesians wiping out a 38-IMP deficit with a huge fifth set.

Indonesia	(10.5)	13	21	30	7	57	30	168.5
Denmark		36	34	26	24	9	27	156

The Final:

USA versus Indonesia featured seven players who had played in the final of the Bermuda Bowl in the past 10 years, and the match proved to be an exciting one throughout, with the teams all square going into the final set, which the Americans won by 23 IMPs. Rose Meltzer becomes the only woman to win both the Bermuda Bowl and Seniors Bowl. For Indonesia, winning a medal is particularly important for its Bridge Federation to continue to enjoy government and private sector support, and its recent strategy has been to graduate its veteran experts to Senior status and focus on its youth movement to develop a new core for its open and women's teams.

USA1	(1)	10	20	57	44	29	52	213
Indonesia		26	58	20	25	32	29	190

In the playoff for the bronze medals, Denmark defeated the Netherlands over 48 boards, 104-88.

The Transnational Open Teams

Swiss Qualifying:

The 134 teams competed in a 15-round Swiss of 10-board matches to determine the eight quarter-finalists. Among the starters were an international all-star team (Zia Mahmood-Jose Damiani, Gabriel Chagas-Diego Brenner, Agustin Madala-Guido Ferraro), many of the top national teams, and a large number of first-class professional teams. It's a shame that there is not enough time on the schedule to accommodate a more desirable format for the preliminary stage and longer knockout matches, but as this event continues to grow, it is likely that it will evolve into something like the Rosenblum or the European (international) Open Teams. It is noteworthy that there was not a single appeal lodged over the course of the entire round robin.

When the music stopped, the top eight teams

were:

- 1 777 Russia (Sasha Dubinin-Andrei Gromov, Jouri Khokhlov-Maxim Khven)
- 2 Hussein (Ralph Cohen (Can)-Craig Gower (South Africa), Ahmed Hussein-Tarek Sadek (Egypt), Nissan Rand-Yeshayahu Levit (Israel))
- 3 Shugart (Rita Shugart (USA)-Andrew Robson (England), Cezary Balicki-Adam Zmudzinski (Poland))
- 4 Shato Rosenova Bulgaria (N Barantiev-V Batov, I Bonev-I Ivanov)
- 5 Schneider (Peter Schneider-Grant Baze (USA), Piotr Gawrys-Marcin Lesniewski (Poland))
- 6 Sofia Pessoa Portugal (J Castanheira, J Faria, N Paz, P Pereira, S Pessoa, S Santos)
- 7 China Open (Jianming Dai-Lixin Yang, Zhong Fu-Jack Zhao, Haojun Shi-Zejun Zhuang)
- 8 Spector USA (Warren Spector-Bart Bramley, Bjorn Fallenius-Roy Welland, Mark Feldman-Chip Martel)

Quarter-finals (32 boards):

777 defeated Sofia Pessoa, 73-47; Schneider came back to beat Hussein, 81-67; Spector shut out Shugart in the second half, 39-0 to win 66-33; China Open won both halves comfortably to upend Shato Rosenova, 77-25.

Semi-finals (32 boards):

Both matches were close, Schneider defeating 777, 59-48, while Spector bested China Open, 69-58. That set up a final between two (mostly American) professional teams.

The Final (48 boards):

Schneider got off to an excellent start, winning the first set, 38-5. The second set went in the same direction, 37-32, and although Spector came back in the final stanza, 33-18, there were no more boards to be played and Schneider prevailed 93-70.

Third place went to Russia's 777.

World Computer Bridge Championship

The first champion to be crowned in Estoril was not human. A team of four Wbridge5 robots defeated four-time reigning champion Jack 136-67 in the final of the World Computer-Bridge Championship. Wbridge5 was created in France, Jack in the Netherlands. The two programs reached the final by finishing first (Jack) and second in the six-team round-robin.

After 32 deals of the 64-board final, Jack was in the lead 45-44, but Wbridge5 was too strong in the second half, winning the third set 41-4 and the fourth 50-19 to cruise to victory.

WHY AM I GETTING MARRIED?

You have two choices in life: You can stay single and be miserable, or get married and wish you were dead.

At a cocktail party, one woman said to another, "Aren't you wearing your wedding ring on the wrong finger?" "Yes, I am. I married the wrong man."

A lady inserted an ad in the classifieds: "Husband Wanted" Next day she received a hundred letters. They all said the same thing: "You can have mine."

When a woman steals your husband, there is no better revenge than to let her keep him.

A woman is incomplete until she is married. Then she is finished.

A little boy asked his father, "Daddy, how much does it cost to get married?" His father replied, "I don't know, son, I'm still paying."

A young son asked, "Is it true, dad, that in some parts of Africa a man doesn't know his wife until he marries her?" Dad replied, "That happens in every country, son."

Then there was a woman who said, "I never knew what real happiness was until I got married, and by then, it was too late."

Marriage is the triumph of imagination over intelligence. If you want your spouse to listen and pay strict attention to every word you say—talk in your sleep.

Just think, if it wasn't for marriage, men would go through life thinking they had no faults at all.

First guy says, "My wife's an angel!" Second guy remarks, "You're lucky. Mine's still alive."

A Woman's Prayer: "Dear Lord, I pray for Wisdom, to understand a man to love and to forgive him, and for Patience, for his moods. Because, Lord, if I pray for Strength, I'll just beat him to death.

Husband and wife are waiting at the bus stop with their nine children. A blind man joins them after a few minutes. When the bus arrives, they find it overloaded and only the wife and the nine kids are able to fit onto the bus. So the husband and the blind man decide to walk. After a while, the husband

gets irritated by the ticking of the stick of the blind man as he taps it on the sidewalk, and says to him: "Why don't you put a piece of rubber at the end of your stick? That ticking sound is driving me crazy." The blind man replies, "If you would've put a rubber at the end of YOUR stick, we'd be riding the bus...so shut the hell up."

11th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Monday (Feb. 6)	18:30-20:30	Reception Players Meeting	F205-206
Tuesday (Feb. 7)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss (1)	F201/F202
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	(20 boards/match)
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Swiss (2)	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Swiss (3)	
Wednesday (Feb. 8)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss (4)	F201/F202
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Swiss (5)	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Swiss (6)	
Thursday (Feb. 9)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss (7)	F201/F202
	13:10-16:00	NEC Cup Swiss (8)	
	16:00-17:10	Lunch Break	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (1)	F206
Friday (Feb. 10)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (2)	F206
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final (1)	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)	
Saturday (Feb. 11)	10:00-17:00	Yokohama SRR & Swiss Teams (1)	F201-204
	10:00-12:20	NEC Cup Final (1) & 3 rd Playoff (1)	F206
	12:30-14:50	NEC Cup Final (2) & 3 rd Playoff (2)	
	14:50-16:00	Lunch Break	
	16:00-18:20	NEC Cup Final (3)	
	18:30-20:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
Sunday (Feb. 12)	10:00-17:00	Yokohama SRR & Swiss Teams (2)	F201-204
	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup	F201-204
	18:00-20:30	Closing Ceremony	F205-206

Swiss matches & Semi-Final segments = 20 boards; Final and 3rd place playoff segments = 16 boards