



NEC Bridge Festival

Thursday, February 9, 2006

Bulletin Number 3

Editors: Eric Kokish, Richard Colker

Israel Leads the 2006 NEC Cup

With two strong wins and a medium loss, the Israeli team (Israel Yadlin, Doron Yadlin, Michael Barel, Migry Campanile), with 123 VPs, has taken the lead in the 2006 NEC Cup. Tied for second place, only 4 IMPs back, are the WBF (French) Women (Bénédicte Cronier, Sylvie Willard, Catherine d'Ovidio, Daniele Gaviard) and YOI (Chen Dawei, Kazuo Furuta, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Yasuhiro Shimizu), both with 119 VPs. In fourth place with 115 VPs is the USA/Kasle team and in fifth place with 113 VPs are the Italians. The Paul Hackett team, who held the lead at the end of Day 1, suffered three losses to fall to a tie for ninth/tenth place. The complete rankings are shown below while individual results of the first three matches are on page 4.

NEC Cup: Standings After Day Two (Six Matches)

Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs
1	ISRAEL	123	15/17	SKOTII	96	29/31	Sweet Briar	79
2/3	WBF Women (Fr.)	119	15/17	HANA	96	29/31	BIRD	79
2/3	YOI	119	15/17	Happy Koro	96	29/31	KinKi	79
4	USA/Kasle	115	18	SLAM DUNK	95	32/33	MERRY QUEENS	76
5	Italy	113	19/20	Magnolia	92	32/33	Kimura@Yokohama	76
6	OzOne-Del'Monte	110	19/20	JAPAN YAMADA	92	34	Charade	74
7	USA/Mahaffey	109	21	SARA	89	35	XYZ	72
8	FISK	108	22	Fairy Tale	88	36	Sun Flowers	71
9/10	Paul Hackett	102	23	NAITO	87	37	CACTI (Korea)	70
9/10	South America	102	24/25	GIRASOL	86	38/39	LBH	69
11	Estrellas	101	24/25	PS-Jack	86	38/39	Japan Youth	69
12/13	USA/Mori	99	26	ESPERANZA	84	40	HYLII (Korea)	66
12/13	TAJIMA	99	27	Makko	82	41	Solaris	59
14	OzOne-Neill	97	28	MY-Bridge	80	42	Kuznun Karas	26

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

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.

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):	B�n�dicte Cronier, Sylvie Willard, Catherine d'Ovidio, Daniele Gaviard
7	Italy:	Maria Teresa Lavazza, Norberto 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):	Ilsu 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, Qian Beili, 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, Fumiko Kiriayama
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, Atsushi Kikuchi, Takehiko Tada
26	PS-Jack:	Masakatsu Sugino, Ryoji Fujiwara, Teruo Miyazaki, Akiko Miwa, Masako Otsuka, Fumiko Nanjo
27	Sweet Brier:	Toyohiko Ozawa, Terumi Kubo, Kazuko Kawashima, Kazuko Takahashi, Yumiko Oda, Yuichi Masamura
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, Atsuyo Miyake
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	Fairly Tale:	Takeshi Higashiguchi, Ryo Okuno, Kazunori Sasaki, Zhang Shudi, Masaki Yoshida, Fu Zhong
33	Sun Flowers:	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, Mariko Matsukawa, 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	Kuznun Karas:	Yoko Mitsuhashi, Sachiko Kunitomo, Michiko Furumoto, Keiko Inoue, Yuko Kimura, Hiromi Inomoto

Good luck again today, everyone!

Wednesday's Match Results

Match 4

SOUTH AMERICA (57)	3 - 17	USA/Mori (68)
ITALY (52)	21 - 9	HACKETT (23)
ISRAEL (71)	24 - 6	USA/Kasle (24)
YOI (47)	24 - 6	OzOne-Neill (6)
FRANCE (37)	17 - 13	YAMADA (25)
HANA (7)	4 - 25	FISK (66)
SLAM DUNK (18)	6 - 24	USA/Mahaffey (64)
MY-BRIDGE (22)	4 - 25	FAIRY TALE (77)
MERRY QUEENS (19)	7 - 23	TAJIMA (59)
OzOne-Del'Monte (83)	24 - 6	SARA (41)
BIRD (72)	23 - 7	GIRASOL (29)
MAKKO (49)	18 - 12	PS-JACK (36)
ESTRELLAS (49)	19 - 11	HAPPY KORO (32)
NAITO (30)	8 - 22	SKOTII (62)
KIMURA@Yokohama (45)	15 - 15	KOREA HYLII (46)
KINKI (24)	15 - 15	MAGNOLIA (26)
LBH (60)	17 - 13	SUN FLOWERS (51)
ESPERANZA (46)	23 - 7	XYZ (6)
JAPAN YOUTH (63)	13 - 17	SWEET BRIER (72)
CHARADE (66)	24 - 6	KOREA CACTI (19)
KUZUNUN KARAS (27)	8 - 22	SORALIS (60)

Match 5

ITALY (30)	7 - 23	ISRAEL (67)
YOI (70)	19 - 11	FISK (50)
USA/Mori (30)	16 - 14	HACKETT (25)
FAIRY TALE (23)	8 - 22	USA/Mahaffey (59)
SOUTH AMERICA (18)	9 - 21	FRANCE (46)
OzOne-Del'Monte (62)	14 - 16	TAJIMA (65)
USA/Kasle (67)	25 - 5	BIRD (18)
OzOne-Neill (44)	20 - 10	YAMADA (21)
MAKKO (23)	11 - 19	SKOTII (43)
SLAM DUNK (44)	13 - 17	ESTRELLAS (54)
PS-JACK (42)	9 - 21	HANA (69)
MERRY QUEENS (20)	11 - 19	HAPPY KORO (38)
SARA (46)	16 - 14	MY-BRIDGE (38)
KIMURA@Yokohama (0)	3 - 25	ESPERANZA (60)
KOREA HYLII (22)	6 - 24	GIRASOL (69)
LBH (30)	9 - 21	NAITO (57)
MAGNOLIA (68)	20 - 10	CHARADE (45)
SUN FLOWERS (51)	11 - 19	KINKI (71)
SWEET BRIER (32)	11 - 19	XYZ (51)
SOLARIS (19)	4 - 25	JAPAN YOUTH (73)
KUZUNUN KARAS (16)	5 - 25	KOREA CACTI (64)

Match 6

HACKETT (49)	9 - 21	USA/Kasle (77)
YOI (52)	20 - 10	ISRAEL (30)
USA/Mahaffey (35)	12 - 18	ITALY (50)
USA/Mori (6)	4 - 25	FRANCE (64)
FISK (48)	18 - 12	OzOne-Neill (34)
TAJIMA (47)	11 - 19	SOUTH AMERICA (64)
FAIRY TALE (36)	5 - 25	OzOne-Del'Monte (86)
YAMADA (47)	14 - 16	SKOTII (55)
ESPERANZA (24)	6 - 24	ESTRELLAS (70)
GIRASOL (28)	10 - 20	HANA (53)
HAPPY KORO (63)	22 - 8	MAKKO (29)
BIRD (32)	5 - 25	SLAM DUNK (81)
SARA (62)	19 - 11	KINKI (43)
NAITO (58)	19 - 11	MY-BRIDGE (41)
MAGNOLIA (87)	25 - 2	JAPAN YOUTH (20)
PS-JACK (46)	20 - 10	MERRY QUEENS (23)
KIMURA@Yokohama (56)	19 - 11	LBH (36)
XYZ (57)	15 - 15	SUN FLOWERS (57)
CHARADE (54)	19 - 11	KOREA HYLII (35)
SWEET BRIER (70)	25 - 2	KUZUNUN KARAS (4)
KOREA CACTI (57)	17 - 13	SOLARIS (45)

Double-Fit From Upgrades: A Point Of View

by Zar Petkov

We all know that having a fit in both of partner's suits is a good thing. But how much good exactly is it: 2, 3, 5? And 2, 3, 5 of what? And what do you do with a double fit? Let's have a look at a simple example. West is the dealer, both sides are vulnerable.

West	East
♠ KQ1074	♠ A53
♥ KQ1082	♥ A54
♦ 8	♦ 10752
♣ 74	♣ 532

First, do you open the West hand? I hope you do, since it is an opening hand by all the major evaluation criteria: it has the minimum Goren points ($10 + 2 + 1 = 13$), the minimum Bergen Points ($10 + 5 + 5 = 20$), and the minimum Zar Points ($10 + 2 + 10 + 4 = 26$). (Note that by all measures it is only a minimum opening hand, even if you upgrade a bit for the 10's, meaning that every invitational bid by partner will be turned down.)

What would you say about the East hand, though? Goren points show it to be worth a raise to the two level ($8 + 0 = 8$, with 13 needed for Game Raise), Bergen Points show it to be worth a raise to the two level ($8 + 4 + 3 = 15$, with 20 needed for Game Raise), and Zar Points similarly show it to be worth a raise to the two

level ($8 + 4 + 7 + 1 = 20$, with 26 needed for a Game Raise). Everybody says it is worth a raise to the two level, yet you can see that it's easy to take ten tricks in either major.

Again, all three methods say to raise to the two level, and that would be your gut feeling anyway with its fruitless 4-3-3-3 distribution and 8 HCP. And that's precisely why we turn to upgrade points. How much are two aces and two fits worth? (Note that because Zar Points count controls, even before any upgrades the hand evaluates at the border of three-level support.)

Zar Points have a limit of two points (the value of a side queen) for any upgrade for having values in partner's suits. You can collect these two points for having either any two cards of rank ten or higher or for having a control card (an ace or a king) in partner's suits. So here you collect two points for each of your aces, for a total of four upgrade points. The fact that you have a double fit is worth another two points (again the limit of two for any kind of upgrade) which brings the total upgrade points to six, and the value of the East hand to twenty-six after learning partner holds the majors.

The natural sequence would be $1♠ - 1NT; 2♥ - 4♠$. Visit www.ZarPoints.com for a free download of the books for more details.

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 his table has finished all the boards for that segment.

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.

Round Three: USA-Mahaffey vs Hackett

by Eric Kokish and his band of elves

Both Mahaffey (**Jim Mahaffey-Barnet Shenkin, Mark Lair-Gary Cohler, Jacek Pszczola-Michal Kwiecien**) and Hackett (**Paul Hackett-John Armstrong, Andrew "Tosh" McIntosh-Jack Mizel**) had garnered most of the available VPs in their first two matches. While both teams were looking for another big win, both would have settled for a draw if offered one.

We'll also keep an eye on some of the other matches this round, notably OzOne-Neill vs SKOTII and Israel vs Slam Dunk.

Bd: 1	North	
Dlr: North	♠ 954	
Vul: None	♥ 7643	
	♦ 10863	
	♣ A10	
	West	East
	♠ KQ103	♠ A
	♥ AKJ	♥ Q82
	♦ Q94	♦ AKJ75
	♣ Q62	♣ J873
	South	
	♠ J8762	
	♥ 1095	
	♦ 2	
	♣ K954	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Kwecien</i>
	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT(1)	Pass
6NT	All Pass		
(1) 15-17, nominally balanced			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lair</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Slam is somewhat undignified for E/W, yet 11 of 42 pairs reached 6NT or 6♦. No one made 6♦,

but four Easts brought home 6NT. The play in the Open Room will give you some idea of how that came to pass. South led the ♥9 and declarer won with dummy's ace to run diamonds, discarding two clubs from dummy. North played his diamonds up the line to suggest something good in clubs. South, reluctant to discard an early spade in case declarer started with ace-low, discarded a heart, then two clubs, and finally the ♠6. On the fifth diamond, North, to keep his spades, parted with a heart, which proved fatal to the defense. Declarer crossed to the ♥J and back to the ♠A before leading the third round of hearts to dummy. South had no choice but to blank the ♣K, and Tosh, with a shrewd idea of the position, cashed the ♠K and exited dummy with the ♣Q. North could not win because he'd have to concede *two* club tricks to declarer or lead into dummy's spades, so he followed with the ten. South won the king but had to lead a spade, and Tosh finessed the ten with the air of a man who knows he's doing the right thing: +990. If you think the defenders simply did poorly, ask yourself whether you mightn't have done the same. Had South discarded a spade early, North would surely have kept his long heart, but you can appreciate why South did not release a spade and why North felt he had to keep his "useless" small spades...can't you? At the other table, South discarded two spades defending 3NT: +490. 11 IMPs to Hackett.

Bd: 2	North	
Dlr: East	♠ AKJ	
Vul: N/S	♥ QJ853	
	♦ 75	
	♣ J43	
	West	East
	♠ Q984	♠ 652
	♥ 10	♥ 97
	♦ KQJ1083	♦ A642
	♣ K8	♣ AQ52
	South	
	♠ 1073	
	♥ AK642	
	♦ 9	
	♣ 10976	

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Kwiecien</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦	1♥	2♥*	4♥
5♦	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lair</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦	1♥	2♥*	4♥
5♦	All Pass		

4♥ did not create a force for N/S at either table, so "Pepsi's" unsolicited penalty double brought in 5 IMPs for Mahaffey for +300 vs -100, 5-11.

Bd: 3	North
Dlr: South	♠ J72
Vul: E/W	♥ J1087
	♦ 843
	♣ A52
West	East
♠ AQ108	♠ 9543
♥ AKQ6	♥ 4
♦ Q107	♦ KJ652
♣ Q3	♣ 986
	South
	♠ K6
	♥ 9532
	♦ A9
	♣ KJ1074

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Kwiecien</i>
			1♣*
Dbl	Pass	1♦	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lair</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
			1♥
Dbl	3♥	All Pass	

Armstrong's 1♥ opening is typical of the Hackett style, and here it stole the pot when 3♥ finished

everyone off. Lair cleared trumps but Armstrong picked up the ♣Q and came to seven winners for two down, -100. Not too bad if Tosh-Mizel could make a partscore, but they drove themselves to game. Three rounds of clubs left the defense in control, and when Tosh played a diamond early, Kwiecien won and returned the suit. Tosh led a trump to the ten for the contract and so ran into a diamond ruff for two down, -200. 7 IMPs to Mahaffey, ahead 12-11.

Bd: 5	North
Dlr: North	♠ K9632
Vul: N/S	♥ AQ7
	♦ AK2
	♣ A9
West	East
♠ AQJ8	♠ 1074
♥ KJ64	♥ 1032
♦ 10	♦ J63
♣ Q873	♣ KJ65
	South
	♠ 5
	♥ 985
	♦ Q98754
	♣ 1042

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Kwiecien</i>
	1♠	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Lair</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
	2NT	Pass	3♣*
Pass	3♠(1)	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
(1) Five spades			

On a deal on which three N/S pairs reached 6♦ (okay, it wasn't a great contract and went down), the aggressive Poles were the only pair in their line to stop in 1♠. "Pepsi" did make it for +80. Hackett, in the much more popular 3NT, got a threatening club lead, won the first trick, and ran diamonds, West discarding a couple of clubs along with two low hearts and the ♠J. Declarer played for the ♠A onside, but the heart finesse would have worked too; +600. Hackett gained 11 IMPs and led 22-13.

Bd: 7 North
 Dir: South ♠ AKJ95
 Vul: Both ♥ AJ7
 ♦ 9
 ♣ AQ85

West	East
♠ 1074	♠ 862
♥ Q9843	♥ K106
♦ AQ2	♦ J1086
♣ 102	♣ K76

South
 ♠ Q3
 ♥ 52
 ♦ K7543
 ♣ J943

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Kwiecien</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lair</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	All Pass	

This time it was Hackett-Armstrong who took the low road, stopping safely at 2♣ on a deal on which only three of 42 N/S pairs stayed out of game. 2♣ made five for +150. Pepsi, in 4♠, one of the popular game contracts on this deal, ran into strong defense from McIntosh. He led the ♦J, which held, and switched to a trump. Pepsi won in dummy to play a club to the queen. Tosh ducked. Now Pepsi drew trumps and played ace and another club. Tosh won and got out with a diamond, and declarer had to lose two hearts for one down. Had Pepsi used the ♠Q entry to ruff a diamond before drawing trumps to play clubs from hand, Tosh would have had to take the king at the right time to deprive declarer of a second club entry to dummy, else declarer could ruff out the ♦A and return to a late club to cash diamonds. 4♠ was made about half the time it was bid; three N/S pairs reached 6♣ and failed;

5♣ made twice and went down three times.

The South hand is not easy to bid over North's jump-shift rebid of 3♣. 4♣ is too slammish, but failing to raise clubs (by stalling with 3♠), might bury the club fit. What should North bid over 3♠? 4♥, while showing the general shape, seems pointless in terms of reaching 4♥ as South would usually introduce hearts with five over 3♣, and with a flexible hand, North might try 3NT to leave all strains open. South should not pass 3NT and the partnership would reach 5♣ or 4♠ after South continues with 4♣ over 3NT. In Israel vs Slam Dunk, Keisuke Akama did bid 3NT over 3♠, but Kenji Miyakuni passed and soon went five down on a heart lead to the ten and a switch to the ♦J by Israel Yadlin. That 500 meshed well with the +620 returned by Michael Barel-Migry Campanile, and Israel gained 15 IMPs en route to a 23-7 VP win.



Migry Campanile and friend

Bd: 13 North
 Dir: North ♠ 1075
 Vul: Both ♥ 7
 ♦ A1064
 ♣ AK762

West	East
♠ QJ984	♠ 632
♥ K94	♥ AQJ832
♦ K2	♦ 98
♣ 1043	♣ 98

South
 ♠ AK
 ♥ 1065
 ♦ QJ753
 ♣ QJ5

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Mizel	Pszczola	McIntosh	Kwiecien
	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♦
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Lair	Hackett	Cohler	Armstrong
	1♦	1♥	2♥*
Dbl	Pass*	Pass	3♥
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Three pairs bid 6♦ and made it when trumps behaved; a handful defended heart contracts for plus scores ranging from 200 to 500. Three N/S pairs, one of them Pepsi-Kwiecien, stopped in unsatisfying partscores in clubs or diamonds, but most were +620 in 5♦. While it's not so wonderful to open 1♦ or 1♣ with the North hand, in terms of planning a rebid over 1♥, it's always dangerous to pass ace-king-ace with some shape, and here Pepsi payed an unusually harsh price for his conservative initial action. 10 IMPs to Hackett, 40-13.



Jacek "Pepsi" Pszczola



Michal Kwiecien

Bd: 14	North
Dlr: East	♠ AJ3
Vul: None	♥ 87
	♦ QJ106542
	♣ 7
West	East
♠ Q864	♠ K10752
♥ AK3	♥ J9
♦ 9	♦ AK3
♣ AQ952	♣ KJ6
South	
♠ 9	
♥ Q106542	
♦ 87	
♣ 10843	

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Mizel	Pszczola	McIntosh	Kwiecien
		1♠	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3NT*	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Lair	Hackett	Cohler	Armstrong
		1NT	Pass
2♣	2♦	2♠	Pass
3♥*	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Cohler, who knew Hackett held long diamonds, won the diamond lead (Armstrong led the eight), crossed to the ♥A, and led a trump through North, playing him for the relatively short ace. He had to lose two trump tricks for one down, the same fate suffered by most of his counterparts across the field. Only three declarers made 6♠ and Tosh was one of them: with N/S silent throughout, Kwiecien found the lead of the ♦7, playing fourth-best leads but low from two, middle from most three-card holdings. Had Tosh played two more rounds of diamonds, he almost certainly would have gone down for the same reasons as Cohler, but he decided to play on trumps instead, and made the normal play of low to the queen, catering to AJ93 in North. North took the queen with the ace and exited with a trump, which was sufficiently interesting to Tosh to convince him to finesse the ten. Backing his judgment of the "table" situation earned him 14 IMPs, 54-13.



Andrew "Tosh" McIntosh



Jack Mizel

Bd: 15
 Dir: South
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 432
 ♥ K108
 ♦ 8542
 ♣ K95

West
 ♠ AQJ
 ♥ AJ5
 ♦ A
 ♣ QJ7642

East
 ♠ 9875
 ♥ 43
 ♦ Q63
 ♣ A1083

South
 ♠ K106
 ♥ Q9762
 ♦ KJ1097
 ♣ ---

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Kwiecien</i>
			2♥(1)
Dbf	3♥	Pass	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	All Pass

(1) 5+♥, 5+ other, not strong

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lair</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
			1♥
Dbf	2♥	Dbf	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	All Pass		

With both black-suit kings right, 12 tricks were available in clubs. Cohler, whose responsive double was mildly unusual, knew that Lair's 4♣ was forcing, but thought he had enough going for him non-vulnerable to take his chances. Backing his judgment cost him a game swing when Mizel bid strongly at the other table and coasted into 5♣. Hackett gained 7 IMPs and led 61-13. This deal inspired a heated debate at dinner, with both editors (remarkably) suggesting that it would not be sacrilege to overcall 1♥ with 2♣. The rest of the gathered throng insisted that double was the only feasible choice. Dinner was consumed nonetheless.

Sunday School teacher: "Now, Johnny, tell me, do you say prayers before eating?" "No sir, we don't have to! My mom's a good cook!"

Bd: 19
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ ---
 ♥ AK1063
 ♦ 754
 ♣ KJ1097

West
 ♠ AQ863
 ♥ Q2
 ♦ K6
 ♣ AQ82

East
 ♠ K1072
 ♥ J987
 ♦ 9832
 ♣ 3

South
 ♠ J954
 ♥ 54
 ♦ AQJ10
 ♣ 654

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Kwiecien</i>
1♠	2♠*	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lair</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Cohler</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>
1♠	2♠*	3♠	Pass
4♠	Dbf	All Pass	

Unless there's something we don't know about his system, Hackett's double of 4♠ was wildly aggressive (my conservative sidekick tells me I should select a different adjective). Against 4♠ doubled, he led the ♥K and switched to the ♦5. South won and returned his remaining heart to the queen and ace, and Hackett reverted to diamonds. Lair played ♣A, club ruff, and the ♠7, intending to run it, but Armstrong, accustomed to defending closed doubled contracts as the least of evils, found the excellent play of the ♠9. Lair won the queen, returned to the ♠K, and led the ♥J, Armstrong discarding a club before declarer did. Lair could not shut out the ♠J and so went -200. Had he ruffed a second club before leading the ♥J, South would have had to ruff to defeat the contract, else declarer could discard the ♣Q, and catch South in a trump coup. At the other table, Mizel was permitted to win the ♥Q at trick two, and would have succeeded had he done anything but what he did, which was to play a high trump from hand. He continued with ♣A, club ruff, diamond, but Kwiecien went in

with the ace to make the essential switch to a low trump, and there was no way home from there: -10. Hackett gained 3 IMPs, and went on to win the match 65-13, 25-5 in VP.

only three deals (2, 2, and 3 IMPs). Tosh and Mizel had two huge boards and held their own on the others against the reigning World Open Pairs champs.



Paul "Papa" Hackett



John Armstrong



Gary Cohler



Mark Lair

Both Hackett pairs played extremely well, with Hackett-Armstrong losing IMPs to the datums on

The OzOne Project: It's in the Air

[In case you were wondering about the names of the two Australian teams at this year's NEC Bridge Festival, here is a summary of what the OzOne web site (www.oz-one.com.au) says about it.]

OzOne is an initiative designed to lift Australia to become a contender at the highest level of the game. It has been made possible thanks to a generous anonymous donation that is expected to be in the order of one million dollars per year.

Australia has never been a major force in bridge. It has never reached the finals of an important international event and it hasn't won a Far East Championship since 1970. Yet Australia does have a large and prosperous bridge community with many talented players, so you might wonder why it hasn't done better. The problem is that the best players are usually spread over several teams and the pairs that do get together are rarely well prepared for the level of competition they encounter overseas.

Nine pairs have been selected for the OzOne squad: Bob Richman-Zoli Nagy, Phil Gue-Khokan Bagchi, Ron Klinger-Bruce Neill, Nigel Rosendorff-Avi Kanetkar, Adam and Nabil Edgton, Ishmael Del'Monte-Robert Fruewirth, Sartaj Hans-Tony Nunn, Kieran Dyke-David

Wiltshire, Hugh Grosvenor-Paul Marston.

The players span all ages. There are seasoned campaigners of middle age, a new crop of experts in their 20s and 30s, and remarkably, even a pair that is 13 and 14.

The coach is Eric Kokish of Canada, who is widely regarded as the best in the world, and the coordinator is Margaret Bourke of Canberra. She is one of Australia's all-time most successful women bridge players. The pairs will train from one to two days a week and they will form teams to play in major events both in Australia and overseas.

The project was launched at the beginning of February with a four-day Kokish training camp in Canberra.

There are two OzOne teams playing in the NEC: OnOne-Neill and OzOne-Del'Monte. This is the first time that OzOne has been represented outside of Australia.

Two Grand for Starters

by Ron Klinger

Australian bridge players are not known for their shyness in the bidding. Here are two grand slams bid recently by members of the OnOne teams.

On this first one North was the dealer, with neither side vulnerable.

♠ AKJ5	♠ 3
♥ KQJ84	♥ A97
♦ 108	♦ A3
♣ 97	♣ AKQ8643

<i>Wiltshire</i>	<i>Dyke</i>
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---	2♣
2NT(1)	3♣
3♠	4♥
4NT	5♦(1)
5NT	6♣(2)
7♥	Pass

(1) 0 or 3 key cards
(2) ♣K, intending to bid 7♥ next

The result was an easy +1510.

<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
------------------	------------------

---	1♣
1♥	2♦
2♠(1)	4♣(2)
4♠(3)	6♣

Pass
(1) 4th-suit forcing
(2) Sets clubs
(3) Cuebid

Del'Monte thought Fruewirth was not worth 4♣: he needed the ♣AKQJxxx for the bid, and he should have bid 4NT over 4♠. The result was a disappointing +940.

On our second hand West was the dealer, E/W were vulnerable.

♠ KQ1084	♠ A
♥ ---	♥ AKQ108
♦ J109	♦ AKQ72
♣ AJ762	♣ Q10

<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Hans</i>
-------------	-------------

1♠	2♥
2♠	3♦
3NT	5NT(1)
6♦	Pass

(1) Pick a slam

The result was +1390.

The auction took a bit longer at the other table...

<i>Neill</i>	<i>Klinger</i>
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1♥(1)	1♠(2)
1NT(3)	2♣(2)
2♣(4)	2♥(2)
2NT(5)	3C(2)
3♠(6)	4♠(7)
4NT(8)	5♥(9)
5♠(10)	5NT(11)
6♠(12)	7♦

(1) Spades
(2) Relay
(3) 10-13
(4) Clubs
(5) 5-5 or 6-5
(6) Specifically, 5=0=3=5
(7) Sets diamonds as trumps
(8) 1 key card
(9) Club ask (East could have bid 7♦ over 4NT but kept bidding for practice)
(10) No ♣K or ♣Q
(11) Spade ask
(12) ♠K and ♠Q

...but the result was a more satisfying +2140.

Round Four: USA-Mori vs South America

by Eric Kokish

The day's first VuGraph match featured the teams lying fifth and sixth in the field, one VP apart. USA Mori (**Larry Mori-Ven Koneru, Paul and Linda Lewis**) faced South America (**Pablo Lambardi-Alejandro Bianchedi, Frankie Frontaura-Diego Brenner**). The South American team includes the veteran Japan hand Lambardi and frequent Argentine international teammate Bianchedi. The latter has been a consistent contender for South American championships for many years although he looks like he's under thirty. Brenner, who has partnered most of the leading Brazilian players in the past few years, has moved to Spain, but will continue to represent Brazil when time permits him to play in the trials. Frontaura spends much of his time in Cuba these days, and has been instrumental in creating the formal Cuban Bridge Federation. He has the distinction of competing in a major tournament with great success in partnership with Fidel Castro's sister, whose influence in advancing the cause of organized bridge in Cuba has been very important. The American team is made up of four fun people who nevertheless happen to be very good bridge players.

Bd: 1 North
 Dir: North ♠ 2
 Vul: None ♥ KQJ10542
 ♦ 10962
 ♣ 7

West	East
♠ KQ1076	♠ J9853
♥ 963	♥ 7
♦ A	♦ Q85
♣ A964	♣ KJ52

South
 ♠ A4
 ♥ A8
 ♦ KJ743
 ♣ Q1083

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
	4♥	Pass	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
	3♥	Pass	4♥
4♠	All Pass		

4♥ feels cleaner than 3♥ to me, but that didn't convince Bianchedi to go on to 5♥ either. The West players, both gentlemen, were pleased to thank their partners for a spectacular dummy (we can imagine Paul having his share of anxious moments after South's penalty double). Although 5♥ can be defeated at double dummy with a diamond lead and low club switch to get a diamond ruff, each of the 11 declarers in heart contracts took at least 11 tricks, and it proved very expensive to sell out too cheaply to E/W's spades. Both Norths led their singleton club, but nothing mattered as declarer would safety-play clubs on his own. Mori gained 5 IMPs for +590 vs -420. Only one N/S pair went minus in hearts, and that involved something unusual...

West	North	East	South
<i>Mizel</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>McIntosh</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
	4♥	Pass	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	5♠	6♥
Dbl	All Pass		

Guido Ferraro judged very well to compete over 4♠ (4NT suggested length in the minors, to involve North in a later decision if it came to that), but over 5♠ he elected to go on to six himself, willing to insure against a huge adverse swing. And although he would have beaten 5♠ and saw Madala go one down in 6♥ doubled, his instincts were spot on. At the other table, Bocch-Duboin were +590 in 4♠, so Italy gained 10 IMPs. That's a bravo for Guido, say I.



Frankie Frontaura



Diego Brenner

three hearts and the $\diamond A$ for +400.

Frankie won the diamond lead in dummy to lead a club, taking Mori's smooth queen with the ace to play two rounds of spades, ducking North's jack. Accepting the diamond force, declarer could simply have continued clubs with complete safety, but he had a blind spot and played a third spade. Koneru drew trumps and cashed two diamonds (Mori had discarded two diamonds) for two down, -100. 11 IMPs to Mori, 16-0.

Bd: 2 North
 Dlr: East \spadesuit J2
 Vul: N/S \heartsuit 9863
 \diamond Q9863
 \clubsuit Q4

West \spadesuit K9 \heartsuit AQ5 \diamond A75 \clubsuit K8732	East \spadesuit Q8653 \heartsuit K742 \diamond J \clubsuit AJ10
---	--

South
 \spadesuit A1074
 \heartsuit J10
 \diamond K1042
 \clubsuit 965

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
		1 \spadesuit	Pass
2 \clubsuit (FG)	Pass	2 \heartsuit	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
		1 \spadesuit	Pass
2 \clubsuit	Pass	2 \spadesuit	Pass
2NT(FG)	Pass	3 \heartsuit	Pass
3 \spadesuit	Pass	4 \spadesuit	All Pass

I'm not sure why Linda didn't bid 3 \clubsuit over 2NT despite her thin opening bid, or why Frontaura rebid 2 \spadesuit and not 2 \heartsuit or 3NT over 3 \spadesuit , but Paul's 3NT needed less to succeed than Frankie's 4 \spadesuit .

Paul took the first diamond to lead a club to the ten, and soon coasted home with five clubs,

Bd: 4 North
 Dlr: West \spadesuit AJ832
 Vul: Both \heartsuit 102
 \diamond 8
 \clubsuit 108632

West \spadesuit KQ654 \heartsuit AKQJ93 \diamond --- \clubsuit KJ	East \spadesuit --- \heartsuit 76 \diamond QJ107543 \clubsuit A754
--	---

South
 \spadesuit 1097
 \heartsuit 854
 \diamond AK962
 \clubsuit Q9

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
2 \clubsuit	Pass	2 \heartsuit (1)	Pass
3 \heartsuit	Pass	4 \diamond	Pass
4 \heartsuit	Pass	6 \heartsuit	All Pass

(1) 2 controls

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
1 \heartsuit	Pass	1 \spadesuit (1)	Pass
2 \spadesuit	Pass	2NT	Pass
4 \heartsuit	All Pass		

(1) ART, F1, not 5 \spadesuit

In 6 \heartsuit , Paul ruffed away South's $\diamond A$ at trick one, ruffed a spade, came to the $\clubsuit K$, ruffed another spade, and played $\clubsuit A$, club, South discarding. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps, and played the $\spadesuit K$, needing spades to be four-four, which they weren't. One down, -100.

After the same start in 4♥, Brenner passed the ♦J, discarding a spade. Mori ruffed and exited with his remaining trump, so Brenner made only four, +620. 12 IMPs to South America, 12-16.

Bd: 5 North
 Dlr: North ♠ A10954
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q52
 ♦ 92
 ♣ A63

West ♠ Q7 ♥ A1084 ♦ AKJ8 ♣ J104	East ♠ K62 ♥ J963 ♦ Q764 ♣ Q5
--	--

South
 ♠ J83
 ♥ K7
 ♦ 1053
 ♣ K9872

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦	1♠	Dbl	2♥(1)
4♥	All Pass		

(1) Constructive spade raise (or perhaps a misprint in the records)

1NT made two, +120. 4♥, a decided overbid, made three, -50. Mori gained 5 IMPs, 21-12.



Pablo Lambardi



Alejandro Bianchedi

Bd: 6 North
 Dlr: East ♠ J72
 Vul: E/W ♥ 10964
 ♦ 1096
 ♣ J75

West ♠ Q86 ♥ KQ ♦ 73 ♣ KQ10942	East ♠ A103 ♥ J532 ♦ KJ2 ♣ 863
---	---

South
 ♠ K954
 ♥ A87
 ♦ AQ854
 ♣ A

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
		Pass	1♦
2♣	Pass	3♣	Dbl
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
		Pass	1♦

All Pass

It takes a spade lead to defeat East in 3NT, but that was never really in the picture at either table. 2♣ is not a glorious vulnerable overcall with the West hand, but it's more or less necessary. In any case, bidding 2♣ got N/S to 3♦, -100, while passing got N/S to 1♦, +70. Mori gained another 5 IMPs to lead 26-12.

Bd: 7 North
 Dlr: South ♠ Q94
 Vul: Both ♥ A4
 ♦ K1043
 ♣ J972

West ♠ KJ653 ♥ 102 ♦ Q65 ♣ K53	East ♠ 10872 ♥ J83 ♦ AJ82 ♣ A8
---	---

South
 ♠ A
 ♥ KQ9765
 ♦ 97
 ♣ Q1064

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
			1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
			1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

As 2♥ covers a fair amount of ground, it's always a close decision for responder when judging whether to try for game. The vulnerability is often the determining factor, but Lambardi took the conservative course where Mori went the other way. This time the low road was the road to ride as 2♥ is the maximum for N/S on a diamond lead—two diamonds, two clubs and a ruff. Both Wests led a spade, however, so Bianchedi made three while Koneru, in four, went one down. South America gained 6 IMPs, 18-26.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Dbl	Pass	2♥	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

Paul's conservative but very reasonable pass led to his side defending 1♠ (as at only six other tables) with a play for 4♥ E/W. While no one bid 4♥, a dozen E/W pairs played a partscore in that strain. Meanwhile, 1♠ should have been beaten, but wasn't. Paul found the safe lead of the ♠Q, ducked by declarer, who took the second spade to play a third. Linda switched to the ♣9, ducked to the ten, and Paul continued with the ♣K. Declarer won and exited with a club to West's king. What now? Paul had seen Linda follow three-nine in trumps and three-five to the later rounds of clubs. Both these plays pointed to Linda holding the ♦A rather than the ♥A. Paul switched to a diamond and declarer made an overtrick, discarding a heart on the long club in dummy; +110. Koneru went three down, -150, in 3♠, so South America gained 6 IMPs, 24-27.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ 74
 ♥ J10
 ♦ QJ1064
 ♣ 8764

West	East
♠ QJ	♠ K93
♥ K862	♥ A9743
♦ K875	♦ 93
♣ KQ10	♣ 953

South
 ♠ A108652
 ♥ Q5
 ♦ A2
 ♣ AJ2

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠
All Pass			

Bd: 11
 Dir: South
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ 5
 ♥ A86432
 ♦ K1074
 ♣ 105

West	East
♠ ---	♠ AQJ987642
♥ KJ75	♥ Q9
♦ Q653	♦ ---
♣ AJ862	♣ K7

South
 ♠ K103
 ♥ 10
 ♦ AJ982
 ♣ Q943

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♥	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♦	5♠	Dbl
All Pass			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
			Pass
1♣	1♥	1♠	1NT
Pass	2♥	4♠	All Pass

At both tables, South led his singleton heart, got a heart ruff, and scored the ♠K. That was -100 for Linda and +420 for Frontaura, so Bianchedi's light opening bid showed a huge plus. South America gained 11 IMPs and took the lead, 35-34.

Bd: 12	North	
Dlr: West	♠ A103	
Vul: N/S	♥ AKQ6	
	♦ K7	
	♣ J1083	
	West	East
	♠ Q965	♠ KJ87
	♥ 874	♥ J52
	♦ 83	♦ J10654
	♣ Q642	♣ 7
	South	
	♠ 42	
	♥ 1093	
	♦ AQ92	
	♣ AK95	

This is not the worst 6♣ ever attempted, and four pairs tried it. Two of them made it. In our featured match, Lambardi-Bianchedi played in 3NT, Mori-Koneru in 4♥, which gained them an IMP, tying the match at 35.

Bd: 15	North	
Dlr: South	♠ 7	
Vul: N/S	♥ K974	
	♦ J6	
	♣ AKJ1042	
	West	East
	♠ Q63	♠ AK952
	♥ AJ2	♥ Q106
	♦ AK1072	♦ 543
	♣ Q8	♣ 76
	South	
	♠ J1084	
	♥ 853	
	♦ Q98	
	♣ 953	

Open Room:			
West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
			Pass
1NT	3♣	Dbl*	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

4♠ was the popular contract on Board 15, declared about as often by West as by East. The defense started with two rounds of clubs, and it was up to North to find a safe switch. Lambardi, looking at the West hand, saw Bianchedi lead the three and follow upwards, which suggested that he could not provide any help in hearts. Lambardi elected to play a third round of clubs, and Linda discarded a diamond, taking the ruff in dummy. She continued with three high spades, discarding...a diamond on the third. Now she needed the heart finesse and so went one down, -50. Had she discarded a heart from dummy, she could have ruffed out diamonds and conceded Bianchi his trump winner, but dummy would have had two diamond winners and the ♥A left in the end.

Brenner declared from the West side, and Mori cashed the ♣AK, Koneru following nine-three, again denying interest in hearts. Unfortunately for his side, Mori interpreted South's club cards as "interest in diamonds" rather than "greater interest in diamonds than hearts" and switched to the ♦J. Now Brenner brought in the whole diamond suit with a finesse of the ten for +420, and South America reclaimed the lead with a 10-IMP pickup, 45-36. 4♠ was made 12 times, always with West declaring.

Are you getting the impression that those spot cards are much more relevant in 2006 than they were 25 years ago?

Bd: 16	North
Dlr: West	♠ Q8753
Vul: E/W	♥ 64
	♦ J52
	♣ J73
West	East
♠ J9	♠ K64
♥ AQ8732	♥ ---
♦ 94	♦ Q108763
♣ A82	♣ 10954
	South
	♠ A102
	♥ KJ1095
	♦ AK
	♣ KQ6

Paul opened 2♥ with the West cards, Brenner 1♥. At both tables, that was passed around to South. Both Bianchedi and Koneru elected to pass. Lambardi led a highly effective club, Mori an unfortunate low spade. There was more to it than that, but the bottom line was that Paul was -400 in 2♥, Brenner -100 in 1♥, and South America gained 7 IMPs, 52-36.

Bd: 17	North		
Dlr: North	♠ Q32		
Vul: None	♥ AQ752		
	♦ QJ2		
	♣ 104		
West	East		
♠ KJ10986	♠ 74		
♥ KJ	♥ 984		
♦ K6	♦ 10873		
♣ K52	♣ AJ98		
	South		
	♠ A5		
	♥ 1063		
	♦ A954		
	♣ Q763		
Open Room:			
West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
1♠	Pass	Pass	1♦
2♠	2♥	Pass	Pass
	3♦	3♠	All Pass

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♠	All Pass		

3♠ went one down while 1♠ made two, so South America gained another 5 IMPs to extend its lead to 21 IMPs, 57-36. Bianchedi's light 1♦ in third seat paid off because he didn't have to play the 3♦ contract perpetrated by Lambardi. It's often that way. Had Koneru reopened 1♠ with 1NT or a takeout double, he too might have defended 3♠.



Ven Koneru



Larry Mori

Bd: 19	North		
Dlr: South	♠ AJ96		
Vul: E/W	♥ J		
	♦ KJ853		
	♣ J98		
West	East		
♠ K	♠ Q532		
♥ 1097653	♥ AK82		
♦ Q109	♦ 6		
♣ 1074	♣ K532		
	South		
	♠ 10874		
	♥ Q4		
	♦ A742		
	♣ AQ6		
Open Room:			
West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbf	1♣
2♥	2♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	4♠	All Pass	3♠

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Dbl	2♠
3♥	4♠	All Pass	

Against Lambardi's 4♠, Linda led the ♥AK. Declarer ruffed, led the ♣9 to the queen, and a spade to the king and ace. He proceeded to misguess diamonds and so lost four tricks: the ♥A, the ♠Q, a diamond ruff, and the ♦Q, -50.

Against Mori, Frontaura cashed the ♥A, but then switched to his singleton diamond, sparing declarer that guess. Well, sort of. Mori actually won with the ♦A to start spades, and continued trumps when the king came up. Although East ducked the second trump, then cleared them, Mori took the club finesse and then the diamond finesse to land his contract with an overtrick. 4♠ went down only 10 times and made more than twice as often. Mori gained 11 IMPs and closed to within 9 IMPs of South America, 48-57.

Bd: 20	North		
Dlr: West	♠ KJ108		
Vul: Both	♥ 3		
	♦ 10863		
	♣ 10643		
	West	East	
	♠ 93	♠ A54	
	♥ 8765	♥ AKQJ10	
	♦ AKJ2	♦ Q7	
	♣ A98	♣ KJ2	
	South		
	♠ Q762		
	♥ 942		
	♦ 954		
	♣ Q75		

Open Room:			
West	North	East	South
<i>P Lewis</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>L Lewis</i>	<i>Bianchedi</i>
1♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠(1)	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♠(2)	Dbl	Rdbl(3)	Pass
4NT(4)	Pass	5♣(5)	Pass
5♠(6)	Pass	6♦(7)	Pass
7♥	All Pass		

(1) Inquiry; (2) RKCB for hearts; (3) 0 or 3
 (4) Heart queen?; (5) Yes, plus the ♣K
 (6) We'll try to find out; (7) Ditto

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Brenner</i>	<i>Mori</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♦	Pass	7♥	All Pass

The grand slam was attempted 14 times, with every other E/W pair (save one that reached 4♥—not five, mind you) playing 6♥. Eight of the declarers eventually lost to the ♣Q, but six declarers made their grand slam. One of those was Linda Lewis. Here's what happened at her table: South led the ♠6 to the eight and ace. She played three rounds of spades, Lambardi discarding the ♠K10, and then cashed the diamonds, discarding spades (Bianchedi parting with a spade). When she played a fourth trump from dummy, Lambardi discarded a club, but so did Bianchedi, who was known to have a safe spade discard. That caught Linda's attention: Bianchedi had to be trying to create the impression that he could afford a club discard, and would not be so inclined to do that without the ♣Q. Backing her judgment, Linda led the ♣J and passed it for +2210. Wow! Had Bianchedi covered, an impossible play, Linda was not going to play him for an original holding of Q105, and so would have finessed against North's ten for the same result.



Linda Lewis



Paul Lewis

At the other table, Koneru led a trump and Frontaura played four rounds, Mori discarding two clubs and a spade. Later, declarer played him for five clubs and so took the straight club finesse to go one down -100. Linda's spectacular effort brought in 20 IMPs and gave Mori a 68-57 win, 17-13 in VP.

In the match between FISK and Hana, won convincingly by the four-nations dudes, Subhash Gupta made 7♥ in curious fashion on a trump lead, playing four rounds immediately: North parted with *three* spades, which left South with the sole burden of guarding that suit, and along the way South had no choice but to discard a club. In the endgame, Subhash had a count and

knew South had only three clubs to his partner's four, but when it came down to trick 12, Gupta led a club to his king to drop the queen. Apart from his usual impeccable table feel, Subhash reasoned that North would have sooner discarded a club from four to the queen than from four to the ten.

Round Five: Italy vs Israel

by Rich Colker

Israel (**Doron-Israel Yadlin, Michael Barel-Migry Campanile**) entered their fifth-round match in first place with 113 VPs, 14 VPs ahead of second-place YOI. Their opponent, Italy (**Maria Teresa Lavazza, Massimo Ortensi, Norberto Bocchi-Giorgio Duboin, Guido Ferraro-Agustin Madala**), was tied for fourth/fifth place with 95 VPs, 18 VPs back. A big win for Italy would go a long way to help insure its bid to qualify, while dealing a serious blow to a team which figured to be one of the chief contenders for the championship. A win for Israel, on the other hand, could do wonders for their morale and confidence, given the obvious quality of their opposition.

conservative. Migry ruffed the opening spade lead, crossed to the ♥A, passed the ♣10, ruffed a second spade, cashed the ♣A and ♥KQ and claimed 10 tricks when trumps split three-three; +170.

In the other room Israel's 1♣ opening gave N/S room to compete, and when both Ferraro and Madala showed extras with their second-round actions, they had no trouble reaching the good 3NT game. Israel started with the ♠A to get a look at dummy (and Doron's attitude toward the suit), then switched to the ♥5. Madala rode this around to his hand and worked out to win the trick with the ace (so as not to block the suit), and when the ♣10 was covered with the queen he simply drove out the ♣9 and claimed nine tricks when Israel cashed his remaining spades; +600. 10 IMPs to Italy, 10-0. It paid fir N/S to think positively this time

Bd: 1	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 62		
Vul: None	♥ A54		
	♦ 10984		
	♣ AQ92		
	West	East	
	♠ A103	♠ QJ54	
	♥ J9	♥ Q8762	
	♦ J752	♦ A	
	♣ J853	♣ K74	
	South		
	♠ K987		
	♥ K103		
	♦ KQ63		
	♣ 106		

Both E/W pairs started out aggressively, playing partscores with a minority of the high cards. The Yadlins tried 2♣; Bocchi-Duboin opted for 1NT. Both contracts failed by two tricks. No swing.

On Board 2 (next column) Barel's decision to pass Campanile's vulnerable 2♥ overcall (hearts and a minor) of Bocchi's 12-14 notrump seems just a bit

Bd: 2	North		
Dlr: East	♠ J10852		
Vul: N/S	♥ A10		
	♦ AQ1097		
	♣ 10		
	West	East	
	♠ 97643	♠ AKQ	
	♥ 864	♥ J95	
	♦ KJ3	♦ 862	
	♣ 72	♣ Q954	
	South		
	♠ ---		
	♥ KQ732		
	♦ 54		
	♣ AKJ863		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
		1♣	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		1NT	2♥*
All Pass			

Israel struck back immediately with a double-digit gain of their own...

Bd: 3	North
Dlr: South	♠ 987
Vul: E/W	♥ 9
	♦ K652
	♣ AQ1095
West	East
♠ K	♠ AQ1043
♥ 64	♥ AK832
♦ AQJ1073	♦ 4
♣ KJ32	♣ 64
	South
	♠ J652
	♥ QJ1075
	♦ 98
	♣ 87

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
			Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Dbl	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥	Dbl
3NT	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
			Pass
1♦	2♣	2♠	All Pass

In the Closed Room Bocchi clearly intended 2♠ as forcing but Duboin took a different view of the bid and passed. Bocchi won the ♥Q lead in hand and took the diamond finesse, hoping to shake some losers. Barel won the ♦K and played a spade to dummy's king. Bocchi threw a heart on the ♦A, then came off dummy with a second heart. Barel ruffed, cashed the ♣A, and played a diamond for Campanile to ruff. Bocchi emerged with seven tricks (four trumps, two hearts and a diamond) for one down, -100.

In the Open Room E/W had a free run in the auction when Madala chose not to overcall 2♣. N/S were each able to try to help out the defense (and perhaps declarer) by doubling their suits, but the merit of Ferraro's double of the final contract escapes me, as does Madala's choice of the ♠9 lead—not that a heart would have fared any better. Perhaps he felt Ferraro's double of 3NT suggested a positional spade holding. Doron won the spade lead in hand, cashed dummy's ♥AK, getting the news in that suit, then the ♠AQ, and a diamond to the queen and king. Madala was now forced to put declarer back in his hand to cash his diamond winners, and Doron emerged with five diamonds to go with his five major-suit tricks for +950; 14 IMPs to Israel, leading 14-10.

Bd: 4	North
Dlr: West	♠ AQJ954
Vul: Both	♥ 1094
	♦ AQ3
	♣ Q
West	East
♠ 6	♠ K872
♥ AJ87	♥ K5
♦ K652	♦ 108
♣ A642	♣ J10975
	South
	♠ 103
	♥ Q632
	♦ J974
	♣ K83

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
1♦	1♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Rdbl	2♣	Pass
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
1♣*	1♠	1NT	Pass
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	3♣	All Pass

Israel's decision to pass 2♠ in the Open Room seems rather conservative—N/S could be cold for 2♠ while E/W are on for 10 or more tricks in clubs. (Indeed, North needs only to guess the diamond position—unlikely though that be—for this to happen.) The Yadrins' defense was right on. On the ♣J lead Doron rose with the ace and shifted to a spade to Israel's king. Israel played the ♥K and a heart to Doron's jack, then pitched a diamond on the ♥A. When Doron led a fourth heart Madala ruffed high as Israel pitched his last diamond. A spade to the ten allowed Madala to get rid of one of his diamond losers on the ♣K, but when he came off dummy with a diamond to the queen Israel could ruff for one down, -100.

The auction in the Closed Room seems about right to me. Duboin doing well to protect to get his side to the more normal 3♣ contract. Duboin didn't break a sweat and took ten tricks via the heart finesse; +130. 1 IMP to Italy, 11-14.

Bd: 5	North		
Dlr: North	♠ Q		
Vul: N/S	♥ AK84		
	♦ AK853		
	♣ 765		
	West	East	
	♠ AKJ542	♠ 93	
	♥ Q53	♥ J7	
	♦ ---	♦ QJ762	
	♣ A983	♣ KQJ2	
	South		
	♠ 10876		
	♥ 10962		
	♦ 1094		
	♣ 104		
	Open Room		
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
	1♦	Pass	Pass
Dbl	1♥	Pass	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	2♥
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥
1♠	3♥	Pass	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

In the Open Room Doron had to pull somewhat more than his fair share of the load with the West cards, but when the smoke cleared the Brothers Grimm had reached that fairytale land known as game. With only two hearts and a spade to lose Doron quickly scored up 10 tricks for +420.

Meanwhile, at the other table, the combination of Campanile's aggressive 1♥ response and Barel's 3♥ bid seem to have talked E/W out of the good 4♠ game. Even if Bocchi could not double 3♥ for systemic reasons (it could be used to show a good spade raise or perhaps as a variation of Snapdragon: clubs with spade tolerance), it was uncharacteristically conservative for him to pass Duboin's 3♠ bid. The same 10 tricks were taken as at the other table but this time for only +170. 6 IMPs to Israel, leading 20-11.

Bd: 9	North		
Dlr: North	♠ Q32		
Vul: E/W	♥ AK642		
	♦ A73		
	♣ 93		
	West	East	
	♠ K5	♠ A96	
	♥ 109	♥ QJ873	
	♦ 9642	♦ Q1085	
	♣ AJ1074	♣ Q	
	South		
	♠ J10874		
	♥ 5		
	♦ KJ		
	♣ K8652		
	Open Room		
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
	Closed Room		
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

The Israeli lead was down to 6 at 20-14 when Board 9 was placed on the tables. Campanile, exercising appropriate restraint, rebid 2♠ and took the obligatory 8 tricks for +110. Ferraro, at the other table, bid game with Campanile's hand when Madala chose to raise to 2♠ rather than rebid 1NT and was duly punished when he took only 9 tricks; -50. 4 IMPs to Israel, up 24-14.

Bd: 13	North	
Dlr: North	♠ 1032	
Vul: Both	♥ 987	
	♦ 652	
	♣ KJ63	
	West	East
	♠ KQ7654	♠ AJ8
	♥ 6543	♥ AQ
	♦ 84	♦ AJ3
	♣ Q	♣ A10982
	South	
	♠ 9	
	♥ KJ102	
	♦ KQ1097	
	♣ 754	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
	Pass	2♦(1)	Pass
2♥(2)	Pass	2NT(3)	Pass
4♥(4)	Pass	4♠	Pass

(1) Multi; (2) P/C; (3) 20-22 bal.; (4) Transfer

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
	Pass	2NT(1)	Pass
3♣(2)	Pass	3♥(3)	Pass
4♣(4)	Dbl	Rdbl(5)	Pass
4♥(6)	Pass	4NT(7)	Pass
5♣(8)	Pass	5♦(9)	Pass
5NT(10)	Pass	6♣(11)	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

(1) 20-22 bal.; (2) Relay; (3) No M
 (4) 4♥, 5+♠, good hand; (5) ♣A; (6) Not signoff
 (7) RKCB; (8) 1 key card; (9) Q trumps?
 (10) ♠Q, no K; (11) General try for 7

Israel was leading 29-14 when Board 13 came up.

6♠ is not the worst slam we've ever been in but today it was good enough. Barel must have talked himself into a club lead with his double of 4♣ (despite Campanile's failure to double 6♣) when a red-suit lead would have scuttled the slam. Duboin rode the club around to his queen, lost the heart finesse, won the trump return, crossed to the ♥A and cashed the ♣A to pitch his losing diamond, played ♦A, ruff a diamond, drew trumps, and claimed; +1430. At the other table Israel made only 10 tricks in 4♠, +620, so Italy picked up 13 IMPs to cut Israel's led to 2 IMPs at 27-29.

Bd: 14	North	
Dlr: East	♠ ---	
Vul: None	♥ KQ82	
	♦ Q62	
	♣ AQJ643	
	West	East
	♠ KQJ843	♠ 1076
	♥ 3	♥ 10654
	♦ KJ73	♦ A98
	♣ 82	♣ 1095
	South	
	♠ A952	
	♥ AJ97	
	♦ 1054	
	♣ K7	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
		Pass	1♦
1♠	Dbl*	Pass	2♥
2♠	3♠	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
		Pass	1♦
1♠	2♣	Pass	2♥
2♠	4♠	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♠	Pass	5NT
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

In the Closed Room Campanile/Barel bid briskly to 6♥ despite being off two cashing diamond tricks. "It's cold. I bid diamonds," Migry later explained. Duboin led the ♠Q and Campanile ruffed in

dummy and claimed 12 tricks (6 clubs, 4 hearts, 1 spade and 1 spade ruff); +980. In the Open Room Madala-Ferraro came to rest sensibly in 4♥, made 12 tricks, +480, and lost 11 IMPs. Israel led 40-27.

Bd: 17	North		
Dlr: North	♠ AJ3		
Vul: None	♥ KQ		
	♦ J108		
	♣ AJ1075		
	West	East	
	♠ K	♠ 1098642	
	♥ AJ1086	♥ 93	
	♦ 52	♦ A4	
	♣ K9632	♣ Q84	
	South		
	♠ Q75		
	♥ 7542		
	♦ KQ9763		
	♣ ---		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
Pass	1NT	2♣(1)	2♦
Dbl	3♦	Pass	3♥
All Pass	Pass	Pass	3♠
(1) Unspecified one-suiter			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♣(1)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
(1) Puppet Stayman			

Ferraro's 2♦ over Israel's conventional 2♣ was nonforcing, and after that N/S were scrambling to find the right strain at the right level. In the end, Madala felt he had nowhere to go and passed 3♠ without much conviction. Before Doron made the opening lead, the youthful Agustin turned to Israel and asked him whether his long suit was clubs. "No, sorry, spades," replied our man East. Doron led the ♠K and the defense dropped a trick along the way to let Ferraro out for two down, -100.

Campanile elected to drive to game but decided not to mention her best feature, instead focusing on the majors. That turned out fine when Bocchi could not logically find the killing heart lead. He started with the ♠10, low king, ace. With no further problems, Barel chalked up an easy +430 and Israel gained 11 IMPs to lead 52-27.

There was one big swing to come, and it proved to be dessert (not desert) for Israel...

Bd: 20	North		
Dlr: West	♠ QJ92		
Vul: Both	♥ QJ96		
	♦ K9843		
	♣ ---		
	West	East	
	♠ K84	♠ 107653	
	♥ 10875	♥ K42	
	♦ 10	♦ A6	
	♣ A10964	♣ Q83	
	South		
	♠ A		
	♥ A3		
	♦ QJ752		
	♣ KJ752		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Doron</i>	<i>Madala</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Ferraro</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Campanile</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Against Madala's ugly 3NT, Israel led the ♠7 to dummy's ace. Declarer knocked out the ♦A, and Israel shifted accurately to the ♣Q, king, ace. A low club went to the eight and jack, and Madala came to hand to pass the ♠Q, discarding a club from dummy. Doron won and cashed three club tricks for two down, -200.

In her rather more dignified 5♦, Campanile took the spade lead with her ace and cross-ruffed for a while, bringing down the ♣Q and ♠K. Then she changed tack by drawing trumps, and soon had 11 tricks without the heart finesse for +600 and 13 IMPs. Israel had made a strong statement by defeating Italy convincingly, 67-30, 23-7 in Victory Points, and remained solidly in first place. It had become apparent that anyone hoping to win the 2006 NEC title would have to work hard to wrest it from the defending champs.

Meet the OzOne-Del'Monte Team



Ishmael Del'Monte, 34, was born in Auckland, New Zealand. His father was a New Zealand Grand Master and one of the true characters of his era. Ishmael ("Ish"), who learned the game in New Zealand, enjoyed considerable early success playing for his native land. These days

Ish runs his new bridge club (Kings and Queens) and is a bridge professional and sports gambler in Australia, his adopted country, where he lives (in Sydney) with his wife, Kim, and two children, Julia, 5, and Ben, 3. Away from the bridge table, Ish is a keen fan of both Cricket and Rugby; he also plays squash and poker.

Ish's most notable bridge partnership was with Lionel Wright before Lionel relocated to the UK. Together, they won the New Zealand Open Teams twice in the early 1990s. When Ish was just 22, they finished 29th in the finals of the 1994 World Open Pairs. In 1997, they were invited to the Cavendish, where they finished a creditable 12th in the Pairs.

Ish's other serious partnership was with Ashley Bach, with whom he played as a Junior. They earned Silver medals at the 1995 World Junior Teams, losing to a very strong Great Britain team in the final. Ish represented New Zealand at two World Junior Teams Championships (1993 and 1995) and then played for Australia in his last year of eligibility (1997).

Perhaps Ish's greatest bridge success to date was his second-place finish in the World Junior Teams Championship in 1995 in Bali. He's won numerous titles in both his native New Zealand and in Australia, represented Australia in World competition, and currently plays on the Rita Shugart team (USA) where he partners Norwegian expert, Boye Brogeland.

Robert Fruewirth, 38, lives outside of Melbourne, Australia, with his wife Monique and three children, Xavier, 8, Nicholas, 6, and Adam, 5. He is currently employed as a full-time accountant,



but intends to move to consulting/contracting work to afford him more flexibility for his bridge pursuits.

Robert spends as much time as possible with his family, but also enjoys squash and reading.

Robert has won a number of Australian titles, and has been successful playing with Ishmael Del'Monte. He has also represented Australia in World competition.



Tony Nunn, 27, is a bridge professional. He represented Australia at the Far East Championships in 2002 and at the World Championships in 2004 and 2005, where he partnered Sartaj Hans.

Tony was the star junior player in Australia for a number of years, but surprisingly qualified for the Open Team several times while failing in the youth competition. (His last youth success was in 1997.)



Sartaj Hans, 31, used to work as an analyst in the IT world but has recently taken a break to devote himself to being a bridge professional. He represented Australia at the Far East Championships in 2003 and at the World Championships in 2004/2005.

Sartaj picked up bridge 10 years ago as an excuse to skip exams while at University. Today he looks forward to bridge as a way of life.

[Below and on subsequent pages are several reports culled from Ron Klinger's Sydney Morning Herald bridge columns featuring hands played by the OzOne players.]

Fruewirth finds the lead

by Ron Klinger (Sydney Morning Herald 12/24/05)

Try this problem.

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

What would you lead as North from: ♠Q104
♥AQ1082 ♦106 ♣762?

When your side has bid a suit it is normal to lead that suit against 3NT. Still, if the bidding indicates that declarer is well prepared for that lead, you might choose something else. On this deal from the final of the 2005 Australian Spring National Open Teams the defender had to find the killing opening lead to defeat 3NT.

[See top of next column]

Opening Lead: ♥8

Despite Bob Richman showing a stopper in hearts, Khokan Bagchi opened with a heart and the defense took the first five tricks. With 6♦ a good slam, and laydown as the cards lie, this was not a great result for E/W.

Dir: West
Vul: E/W

North
♠ Q104
♥ AQ1082
♦ 106
♣ 762

West	East
♠ 95	♠ AK72
♥ J653	♥ 9
♦ Q732	♦ AKJ54
♣ AKJ	♣ Q84

South
♠ J863
♥ K74
♦ 98
♣ 10953

West	North	East	South
<i>Richman</i>	<i>Bagchi</i>	<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Gue</i>
Pass	2♥	Dbl	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

At the other table 3NT was also reached by West after the auction at the start of this article. Even though declarer had bid hearts Rob Fruewirth started with a low heart and thus tied the board. Perhaps he reasoned that a passed hand jump to 2NT would be well-heeled in the unbid suit and neither of dummy's suits looked an attractive lead.

Del'Monte Finds the Lead

by Ron Klinger (Sydney Morning Herald 12/16/05)

Try this problem.

West	North	East	South
		1♥	2♠(1)
4♥	4♠	All Pass	
(1) Weak			

What would you lead as West from: ♠108
♥K10874 ♦Q1098 ♣Q8?

With one round to go in the Australian Spring

National Open Teams qualifying, Maryo Derofe, Ishmael Del'Monte, Robert Fruewirth, Zoli Nagy, and Bob Richman were lying second, 5 VPs ahead of third place. They managed to hang on to second place by just 1 VP after losing their last match 14-16.

On two deals from the last match Del'Monte had to find the winning defense. Had he failed on either his team would have missed the final. On the first, cover the East and South cards, study

the auction below and consider your defence against 4♥. You lead the ♠A, two, eight, five. What do you play at trick 2?

Dir: North		North (<i>Kieran Dyke</i>)	
Vul: None		♠ J932	
		♥ QJ8	
		♦ QJ87	
		♣ 32	
West (<i>Ishmale Del'Monte</i>)		East (<i>Robert Fruewirth</i>)	
♠ AK10764		♠ Q8	
♥ 93		♥ 1042	
♦ 42		♦ AK95	
♣ 984		♣ Q1065	
South (<i>Paul Lavings</i>)			
♠ 5			
♥ AK765			
♦ 1063			
♣ AKJ7			
West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♥
2♠(1)	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	2NT(2)	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) Weak			
(2) Scramble			

Opening Lead: ♠A

Dyke's sequence (2NT, then support hearts) showed a hand better than a 3♥ reply to the double and that persuaded Lavings to push to 4♥. Against many defenders he might have made the contract. Suppose West switches to a trump at trick 2. Dummy wins and South takes the club finesse, followed by ♣A, club ruff and another trump. A similar line works if West plays a 'safe' low spade at trick 2.

Del'Monte judged that South's takeout double strongly favoured South to be the one with the singleton spade. In addition, South's choice of 3♣ meant that would not be a fruitful area for the defense. He therefore chose the slim but best

chance for the defense and switched to the ♦4 and received the diamond ruff for one down and +50. That matched the -50 at the other table, but had 4♥ made, the loss would have been 10 Imps and 2 VPs worse.

Dir: East		North (<i>Dyke</i>)	
Vul: Both		♠ AK7	
		♥ Q	
		♦ AKJ4	
		♣ K10975	
West (<i>Del'Monte</i>)		East (<i>Fruewirth</i>)	
♠ 108		♠ 2	
♥ K10874		♥ AJ9653	
♦ Q1098		♦ 652	
♣ Q8		♣ AJ3	
South (<i>Lavings</i>)			
♠ QJ96543			
♥ 2			
♦ 73			
♣ 642			
West	North	East	South
		1♥	2♠(1)
4♥	4♠	All Pass	
(1) Weak			

Answer to problem:

On most leads declarer will have seven spade tricks, two diamonds and can create a trick in clubs via the normal play, low to the ten or nine after drawing trumps. Del'Monte led the ♥K! This enabled him to hold the lead and decide on the next move after seeing dummy. With no more tricks in hearts and dummy's powerful diamonds, Del'Monte shifted to the ♣Q. Again he received his ruff on the third round for one down. That was +100, a 3-Imp loss against the -200 at the other table, but had 4♠ made the loss would have been 13 Imps, again 2 VPs worse.

"The game we play is a game and nothing more. It's a wonderful game. It's a game I love. I think the game needs to be played in that spirit." (Jack Nicklaus on golf, but it translates well to bridge)

Hans Some Is As Hans Some Does

by Ron Klinger (Sydney Morning Herald 12/9/05)

The youngest pair, by a long way, on the current Australian Open Team is Sartaj Hans-Tony Nunn. Their bidding style is aggressive, a good thing. Perhaps we old fogeys could learn a thing or two from them. Witness this deal from Round 1 of the 2005 Bermuda Bowl.

Dir: North	North (<i>Hans</i>)		
Vul: None	♠ 654		
	♥ 9		
	♦ A82		
	♣ A109732		
West		East	
♠ AJ		♠ K1082	
♥ J1052		♥ A8763	
♦ KJ10954		♦ 63	
♣ J		♣ 85	
	South (<i>Nunn</i>)		
	♠ Q973		
	♥ KQ4		
	♦ Q7		
	♣ KQ64		
West	North	East	South
	3♣(!)	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Opening Lead: ♦J

South won trick 1 with the ♦Q. A top heart gave declarer nine tricks for +400. At the other table:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♣
2♦(1)	2NT	3♦	Dbl
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
(1) Weak			

Opening Lead: ♦6

Here the contract was two down, as the ♦Q was of no use. It is true that 3NT can be defeated, but in the real world 3NT by South is almost certain to succeed.

North was too hasty with that 2NT bid and 3♣

was quite enough. If South want to explore 3NT he can bid 3♦ to ask for a stopper. Playing stopper asks, North can then bid 3♥ to say, 'I have diamonds stopped. Do you have hearts covered?' This allows South to bid 3NT and right-side the contract.

Main Bermuda Bowl results: 3 in 3NT (one failing), 8 in club part-scores, 6 in 4H (five failing), 3 in 3D, 2 in 5C (failing).

Main Venice Cup results: 3 in 3NT (one failing), 4 in 4H (all failing), 5 in 3C, 4 in 5C (all failing), 2 in 3H, 2 in 3D.

Main Seniors Bowl results: 3 in 3NT, 12 in club part-scores (2 failing), 3 in spade part-scores by West.

In the Seniors Bowl, Australia vs USA1:

West	North	East	South
<i>Bates</i>	<i>Neill</i>	<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Klinger</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♦	2♠(1)	Pass	3♣
All Pass			
(1) 7-9 points, 6 clubs, no major, short hearts			

Opening Lead: ♣J

Nine tricks were routine for +110. There was more excitement at the other table.

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Haughie</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
	Pass	2♣(1)	Pass
2♥	3♣	Pass	Pass
3♥	Pass	Pass	3NT(!)
Dbl(!)	4♣	All Pass	
(1) Weak, both majors			

Opening Lead: ♦6

Declarer won the lead with the ♦A, drew trumps and led the ♥9. Haughie grabbed the ♥A and two spades and a diamond later, the defense had four tricks.

Nice work by Nagy, doubling them in the virtually cold 3NT and having them run to 4♣, which is then beaten by one trick, for +50 and 4 Imps to Australia.

It is important to be fit to play a good game of bridge, but players still park as close to the venue as possible.

Nunn Too Good

by Ron Klinger (Sydney Morning Herald 11/18/05)

On this deal from the Bermuda Bowl (Round 2, Board 18) Tony Nunn found the killing lead against 3NT.

Dir: South	North		
Vul: E/W	♠ 986		
	♥ KJ6		
	♦ AKQ5		
	♣ QJ9		
West (<i>Tony Nunn</i>)	East (<i>Sartaj Hans</i>)		
♠ KJ10532	♠ 4		
♥ Q3	♥ 108742		
♦ J2	♦ 976		
♣ 642	♣ AK105		
	South		
	♠ AQ7		
	♥ A95		
	♦ 10843		
	♣ 873		
West	North	East	South
			Pass
2♠	Dbl	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

3NT was reached 20 times, ten times by North and ten times by South. Where South declared, three Wests led a spade, giving declarer his ninth trick. Three Wests led a heart and each South failed. However, after a heart lead the contract can be made, especially if West has opened a weak 2♠ or a Multi 2♦. Declarer can cash the ♠A, the hearts and the diamonds and endplay East with a club to the queen. East figures to have the ♣AK once West turns up with the ♥Q and ♦J, and the presumed ♠K and ♠J. As long as West has not opened with a five-card spade suit, East will be endplayed.

Answer to yesterday's problem:

Four Wests, including Tony Nunn, led a club. 'I was not brave enough to lead the ♥Q,' said Nunn. Just as well, since only a club lead by West defeats 3NT for sure. East captures dummy's honor and shifts to the ♠4. Now there is no way for declarer to succeed.

Nunn also found the winning lead on this deal from the Round 7 match against Brazil, but this time the bidding made it much easier.

Dir: East	North (<i>Paul Marston</i>)
Vul: N/S	♠ KJ4
	♥ 732
	♦ 976
	♣ A876
West	East
♠ 853	♠ A97
♥ A8	♥ QJ654
♦ J8542	♦ 10
♣ Q92	♣ J1054
	South (<i>Matthew Thomson</i>)
	♠ Q1062
	♥ K109
	♦ AKQ3
	♣ K3

With E/W silent, Thomson was in 3NT after North had shown a balanced hand of 5-9 points with four clubs and South had shown only a strong, balanced hand. West led the ♠8 to East's ace. On the ♥5 switch Thomson put in the ♥10 and now nine tricks were certain for +600. At the other table.

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>		<i>Hans</i>	
		2♥	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The five-card weak-two opener is a powerful weapon if the opening is based on a respectable suit. Nunn led the ♥A and continued with the ♥8. This produced an easy one down for +100 and

12 Imps to Australia, who won the match 17-13. Note that if East's suit had been any weaker the opening lead would not have been such a success.

Del'Monte Follows the Versace Fashion

by Ron Klinger (Sydney Morning Herald 1/4/06)

When Italy won the 2000 World Open Teams Olympiad, Alfredo Versace found a great bid on this deal from the final.

Ishmael Del'Monte produced a Versace-type bid on this deal from the final of the 2005 Australian Spring National Open Teams.

Dlr: North	North		
Vul: None	♠ Q65		
	♥ KQJ954		
	♦ J9		
	♣ KQ		
West		East	
♠ K87432		♠ J9	
♥ ---		♥ A6	
♦ A4		♦ KQ873	
♣ 107643		♣ A852	
	South		
	♠ A10		
	♥ 108732		
	♦ 10652		
	♣ J9		
West	North	East	South
	1♥	Pass	4♥
4♠(!)	All Pass		

Bd: 11	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 1098		
Vul: None	♥ K854		
	♦ A94		
	♣ J102		
West		East	
♠ AQ7532		♠ KJ4	
♥ ---		♥ 7632	
♦ J8752		♦ Q106	
♣ AQ		♣ 864	
	South		
	♠ 6		
	♥ AQJ109		
	♦ K3		
	♣ K9753		
West	North	East	South
<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Thomson</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>	<i>Marston</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♣(1)	Pass(?)	4♥
4♠(!)	Pass	Pass	Db1
All Pass			
(1) Heart raise, 8-10 points			

The lack of spade length argues against a takeout double by East and the diamonds lack the quality needed for a two-level overcall. The rationale for Versace's very courageous 4♠ was: (a) The void in the enemy suit (usually a good sign for competing), and (b) the good shape (6-5 pattern) with moderate strength. As South's was a weak action and West was also weak, it was very likely that East would have some useful values. Indeed they were sufficient to allow 4♠ to make, thanks to the ♠A onside and the two-two split in clubs.

Opening Lead: ♥5

It does not seem outrageous for East to show support with 2♣. That does not promise any wealth these days. Notice the similarities between Del'Monte's cards and Versace's: freakish 6-5 pattern and void in the enemy suit.

At the other table East overcalled 2♦, but the bidding ended with 3♠ by West. In the Women's final, both Wests did bid 4♠, but that was aided by East's 2♦ overcall.

Declarer ruffed the heart lead, drew two rounds of trumps and played a diamond to the ten and king. South returned the ♣3 and Del'Monte rose with the ♣A, drew the last trump and played

another diamond for ten tricks, +590.

West	North	East	South
<i>Bagchi</i>	<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Gue</i>	<i>Richman</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
1♠	3♥	3♠	4♥
4♠	All Pass		

Declarer ruffed and drew trumps. He then set about the diamonds for ten tricks and +420. Given the shapely nature of the South hand, would a sacrifice in 5♥ be far-fetched? It might well escape undoubled and is not such a bad contract single dummy. Give East the ♣Q and 5♥ might make.

Opening Lead: ♥4

Meet USA-Mahaffey

Jim Mahaffey, of Orlando, Florida, is a successful businessman who specializes in building and managing large apartment developments. He has won many North American and Regional events; his last North American win was the Grand National Teams in New York in 2004. He has an ebullient personality and appreciates fine dining and excellent wines. He is accompanied by his wife Terry.



Mark Lair, from Texas, is a professional bridge player and fourth on the all time USA Master Point list. Originally from Canyon, Texas, Mark is a country boy. He has been married for 35 years to his wife Sally. He has won seven major North American team titles and

twelve other North American events. He represented USA in the Bermuda Bowl in Beijing in 1995.



Gary Cohler, from Florida, a professional bridge player. He has won three North American championships and has seven second-place finishes. He represented the USA in the 1996 Olympiad in Rhodes, Greece. Gary likes big cigars. A recent golf

enthusiast, he likes heads-up matches when he is allowed as many strokes as possible.

Barnet Shenkin, from Glasgow, Scotland, played Internationally for both Scotland and Great Britain many times between 1970 and 1994. He has won seven Camroses for Scotland and many Scottish and British national championships. A winner of two Sunday Times Invitational Pairs, he moved to the USA in 1998 where wrote "Playing with the Bridge Legends" about his experiences. He has won three North American championships. He is a member of the Florida Bridge Golfers tour and is accompanied by his wife Maggie.



Jacek Pszczola and Michael Kweicen are from Poland. They have represented Poland in both the Olympiad and Bermuda Bowl. Winners of the Olympiad Pairs in 1998 in Lille, France, they also won the prestigious Cavendish Pairs in Las Vegas.

Pszczola is playing much of his bridge in USA these days and is in the process of moving there full time. He has been nicknamed "Pepsi" though he has not received their sponsorship as yet.



Meet Team Israel: The 2005 NEC Cup Defenders

The land by the rivers of Babylon was in turmoil: the fearless Yadlin brothers, the so-called "Children of Paradise," were again sailing their boat on the river, looking for their lost teammate Migry, the mythical "Red Girl in the Ring." She had been taken hostage by Daddy Cool and Ma Baker, after winning last year's NEC and taking off with "Cool," the conciliatory penguin. It was only through the prompt intervention of her young trusty liege Michael "Rasputin" Barel that she was saved before being immolated to the dark gods of Kalimba de Luna.



Israel and Doron Yadlin

Israel and Doron Yadlin

Hailing from glamorous Petah Tikva and strenuously claiming to be still in their very late forties, the Yadlin brothers come with an impressive pedigree having won the European Open Teams two years ago. They have been playing together for sixteen years and have been the mainstays of many an Israeli Open team. Doron is still fighting his dangerous addiction to noodles and hopes he will overcome it soon, while Israel has been reviewing his notes from the course entitled "The demands of Japanese cuisine: How to recognize plastic replica dishes in Japanese restaurants 101," from last year.



Michael Barel

Michael Barel

Blessed with a natural gift for always knowing

the correct bid and play but cursed by Baba Yaga with not being able to use his talent till the hand is over, Michael is now two years into the "Migryzoic era" and still loves arguing over her mistakes, like the first time they played together. The legendary argument over the signal with the $\diamond 6$ in the 2004 NEC Cup final is still awaiting its hearing in the Israeli Supreme Court. In the meantime, Michael is busy honing his debating skills ready for the yearly systemic discussions with the Koke of all Kokes.



Migry Zur-Campanile

Migry Zur-Campanile

Finally we come to the incomparable queen of meatballs, as she was crowned at a gastronomic pageant in Verona a year ago last September, shortly after the Generali Masters, the one and only red-head of the bridge world, Migry Zur Campanile. Her overwhelming beauty, razor-sharp wit and Einstein-like intelligence have dazzled many a player at the bridge table and outside (Gosh, what drivel do I have to write to earn my measly salary?—Pietro Campanile). She has confounded pundits for the last two decades by proving that you can win two World Championships simply by counting to 13 and following suit. Will she be able to re-repeat her amazing feat here? We cross our fingers and wait...

[The following is a synthesis of two articles, one written by Ian Crorie for The Scotsman, the other from The Times Online.]

Albert Benjamin (April 1, 1909-January 17, 2006)

The past month has seen Scottish bridge lose two of its best-known players: David Frew and Ken Baxter. Now Albert Benjamin has died at the age of 96. As a teacher, writer and player, Albert had spread the bridge gospel in Scotland since the early days of contract bridge, and no one else did it so well.

Players in Great Britain traditionally played Acol (strong-ish) two-bids, the rest of the world weak twos. It was Benjamin who had the brilliant idea of combining the two some decades ago. His “Benjaminized Acol,” or simply “Benji” (and the arguably more popular “Reverse Benji”), was soon adopted throughout Britain at the club level and remains one of the most popular bidding systems to this day, although many modern players who use it have no idea who “Benji” was.

The “Lion of the North” (as a collection of Albert’s bridge columns was titled) was born in Glasgow in 1909, and, though no fool, he loved to jest. He was one of the great raconteurs and jokers in the game of bridge, and could speak for hours, regaling entranced audiences with such stories as the time he fell asleep at the bridge table. It was perhaps surprising that he should doze off when he did, for it was the 1964 England-Scotland match, and Scotland—whose team had never won—was level with just a few deals remaining.

A poke in the ribs by the scorer woke him up with a start, whereupon his reflex reaction was to say “no bid.” The problem was that it was not his turn to speak (and furthermore he had a good hand). The bad news was that, with a penalty resulting from his infraction, a poor result ensued. The good news was that his Scottish teammates scored 2,200 points in 3♦ redoubled, a huge score, on the same deal in the other room. This ensured a big swing to Scotland and, ultimately, the match.

Though Benjamin lived in Glasgow all his life, his mother was born in Siberia and his father in Sweden. His education was of a scientific bent.

His mother had, as he put it, the “my son, the doctor” syndrome, and he was somewhat pushed into studying medicine at Glasgow University. It was there that he discovered bridge, which effectively put paid to any medical career. He was soon immersed in the game, both through playing and journalism, and he wrote a daily bridge column from 1937 to 1976.

Just before World War Two, Benjamin married Judy, with whom he enjoyed much success at the bridge table, until her death in 1986. During the war Albert was drafted into the ambulance service; the pay was just £3 per week. And so, with a wife and mortgage to support, he became a professional poker player. He paid another ambulance man to take over his night shift and made a small fortune, with 47 winning months out of 48. Yet he regarded poker as the most boring and soul-destroying of card games.

After the war Benjamin resumed bridge playing and writing, and also opened “Benjamin’s” (actually the Ken Muir Bridge Club) on the outskirts of Glasgow. It was there that he inspired the young prodigies Michael Rosenberg and Barnet Shenkin, both now professional players living in the US. Benjamin loved to play with young players and bring them on, and he was always a true gentleman at the bridge table.

Dir: West	North	
Vul: None	♠ K952	
	♥ A63	
	♦ Q64	
	♣ Q54	
West		East
♠ QJ108		♠ ---
♥ QJ10		♥ 98542
♦ J83		♦ 10752
♣ J102		♣ 9863
	South	
	♠ A7643	
	♥ K7	
	♦ AK9	
	♣ AK7	

This hand is from a Scottish Cup semi-final in the early 1960s when Albert's team came up against one including his wife, Judy.

At one table she and Harry Barnett bid to 6♣. When Judy won the opening lead and made the normal play of a top spade, the four-zero split meant the contract was one down.

When the board was replayed, Albert and Louis

Mitchell reached 6♠ but West doubled the final contract. Warned of the bad trump break, Albert played for the only distribution that would allow him to succeed: he won the opening heart lead, played off all his outside winners and ruffed a heart in hand. Down to four trumps in each hand he led one, and when West put in the ten he ducked. West's "sure" second trump trick had disappeared and the slam was made.

John Collings (1933-2005)

by Chris Dixon



I first got to know John Collings in the late 1960s when I got a job at The Bridge Academy, a bridge school in North London owned by John Collings and Jack Nunes. Working there with John, I soon became captivated by the charm and charisma of this larger than life character whose natural flair and talent for bridge was matched only by his

vivacity and open-handed generosity.

He had already made a considerable name for himself in the international bridge world. He represented England first in the 1950s playing with Ronnie Crown but in 1964 he formed a partnership with Jonathan Cansino that was so successful that many felt that the future of the British game was assured with these two magnificently talented players. John, playing with Jack Nunes, won both the pairs and the teams in the prestigious Juan Les Pins international tournament in the South of France. A month later, playing with Jonathan, he was the runaway winner of the BBL trials for the European Championships in Ostend of that year. With four matches to go, the British team was in the lead but eventually fell back into fourth place. It was during these championships that one of John's most famous hands occurred.

This was the deal:

[See top of next column]

Cansino's jump to 7♠ was an attempt to prevent the vulnerable N/S from discovering whether they could make 7NT (in those days, the penalties for non-vulnerable undertricks was not as severe as today).

Dir: North	♠ AK93		
Vul: Both	♥ KQ102		
	♦ AK872		
	♣ ---		
♠ 106		♠ Q52	
♥ 97		♥ 83	
♦ 6		♦ Q10943	
♣ AKQ86542		♣ 1073	
	♠ J874		
	♥ AJ654		
	♦ J5		
	♣ J9		

West	North	East	South
<i>Collings</i>		<i>Cansino</i>	
	2♣	Pass	2♥
4♠	5NT	7♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

John said to me later, "All the bridge press reported how, after a crazy psychic bid, I ended up in 7♠ doubled going ten down. What no one reported was that anyone else in the bridge world would have gone eleven down!"

But, as was reported in the *Bridge Magazine* by Ewart Kempson, many a player would have carelessly or in the depths of misery played low from dummy when North switched to a cunning

♠9 at trick four, but John was never in the depths of misery when there were cards in his hand. Prophetic remarks which remained true from that day until the last major international in which John took part, which was just 6 months earlier in the World Olympiad, in Istanbul when I had the honor and pleasure of again being his NPC.

In 1965 John and Jonathan were also runaway winners of the Life Masters pairs (The Waddington Cup), and also won the Gold Cup. He won Crockford's cup in 1964 and 1966, which was also the year of his famous victory in the Spring Foursomes, overturning a 48-IMP deficit in the last eight boards of the final. But within a few years tragedy was to strike both these talented youngsters. Jonathan suffered a brain tumor and John had two heart attacks. John was prescribed medication for his heart condition, which had an unfortunate side effect on his eyes—a problem which remained with him for the rest of his life.

John returned to international success, playing in the European Championships with Paul Hackett in 1981. Then, he played an innovative system called "The Walpurgis Club" which included some strong-pass sequences in first or second position. This system had many triumphs and led to a silver medal for Great Britain, and fifth place in the Bermuda Bowl in New York in the same year.

He was married in the 1960s to Pamela, but after his first divorce married Noura from Lebanon. For much of this time, John lived in his parents' house in South London.

John formed close friendships with many of the top Swiss players such as Tony Trad and Jean Besse (he won the Sunday Times with Besse in 1969), and lived for many years in Switzerland during which time he was relatively unknown in Britain.

After his return in the 1990s, now again divorced, he resumed his playing career in England, forming a partnership with a promising English junior, Martin Jones. This led to a consistently high performance in national events (winning the Gold Cup in 1997 and 1999) and in British and English trials. He played in the European Championships in Malta in 1999 where the team narrowly missed qualification for the Bermuda Bowl. In the English trials 2 years later, John bowed out at the final stage, although in a leading position, to travel to Indonesia to marry and return with his new wife, Lusy.

As recently as 2004, John was still at the forefront of English bridge, representing England in the Seniors series in the European Championships in Sweden and the World Bridge Olympiad in Istanbul. I was honored to be John's NPC in Istanbul and also 5 years earlier in Malta. I was able to witness first hand how this great old man of bridge, although suffering from ill health, displayed some of the old magic which had made him one of the most successful, talented and highly respected and loved players in history.

He is survived by his lovely and devoted wife, Lusy who, together with all of the bridge world, will miss him sorely.

Images of Our Game



"Nice duck!"



"I'll Huff, 'cause I'm Puff."



"Don't take that pic..."

11th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
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	
Friday (Feb. 10)	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (1)	F206
	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)	
Saturday (Feb. 11)	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)	
	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)	
Sunday (Feb. 12)	18:30-20:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams	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

