



NEC Bridge Festival

Friday, February 9, 2007
Bulletin Number 3

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

JAPAN D-MaTK Leads 2007 NEC Cup

With two matches left to play, three healthy Day-Two wins left JAPAN D-MaTK (Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura) the leaders of the 2007 NEC Cup with 123 VP. Two blitzes and a loss were enough to move POLAND/RUSSIA (Adam Zmudzinski, Cezary Balicki, Andrei Gromov, Alexander Dubinin) from sixth to second place with 115 VPs. And three wins also sufficed to lift OzOne-Bridge (Bob Richman, Zoli Nagy, Michael Prescott, Paul Marston) from seventh to third place with 114 VPs. CHINA SMEG and CHINA-Beijing, yesterday's leaders, have 113 VPs and 112 VPs, respectively, to round out the top five. Going into today's final two matches six more teams have scores ranging from 109 to 105, queued up right behind the leaders, so there's no rest for the weary as all eight qualifying spots are still up for grabs. The complete Day-One rankings are shown below; individual results of the second three matches may be found on pages 4-5.

NEC Cup: Standings After Day Two (Six Matches)

Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs
1	JAPAN D-MaTK	123	17	VEGA*	95	33/34	JAPAN 2x4	82
2	POLAND/RUSSIA	115	18	THE LATIN	94	33/34	JAPAN Kitty's	82
3	OzOne	114	19	IRELAND	93	35/36	JAPAN Friends	79
4	CHINA SMEG	113	20/21	JAPAN Symmetry	91	35/36	JAPAN NAITO	79
5	CHINA Beijing	112	20/21	INDIA-Tolani Shipping	91	37	JAPAN MARUYAMA	77
6	JAPAN SKOTII	109	22	JAPAN WOMBAT+	90	38	JAPAN PS-Jack	76
7	POLAND	108	23	JAPAN makko	89	39	JAPAN ESPERANZA	73
8	JAPAN Shy Ant	107	24	JAPAN LAS FLORES	88	40/41	JAPAN Rhein	69
9/10	ENGLAND+ (Hackett)	106	25	JAPAN KOJIMA	87	40/41	JAPAN SunFlowers	69
9/10	ISRAEL	106	26/27	JAPAN CHARADE	86	42	JAPAN BIRD	66
11	NETHERLANDS	105	26/27	JAPAN MINK	86	43/44	JAPAN Honey Hunt	65
12/13	HELMAN Bridge Mag	99	28/29	JAPAN Kimura@Yoko	85	43/44	JAPAN KinKi	65
12/13	JAPAN YAMADA	99	28/29	JAPAN GIRASOL	85	45	JAPAN progress	62
14	JAPAN momocchi	98	30	KOREA CACTI	84	46	JAPAN MY-Bridge	56
15	JAPAN HANA	97	31/32	JAPAN Youth	83	47	JAPAN Kuzunun Karas48	
16	ENGLAND	96	31/32	JAPAN TAJIMA	83			



"We can bearly bear the suspense."

Today's 1st VuGraph match features the teams tied for 10th/11th: ENGLAND (Hackett) vs ISRAEL

NEC Cup 2007: 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	<p>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.</p> <p>In the Knockout Phase, the team with the higher position from the Swiss will be assumed to have a ½-IMP carryover.</p>
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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Smoking	No player may leave the Annex Hall during play without permission due to security concerns arising from the Bridge Base Online broadcast.

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 12th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/game/nec/necfest.html>

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

Team Rosters: 12th NEC Cup

#	Name	Members
1	Israel: Migry Zur-Campanile,	Michael Barel, Amir Levin, Yaniv Zack
2	Poland: Rafal Jagniewski,	Michal Kwiecien, Krzysztof Buras, Grzegorz Narkiewicz, Radoslaw Kielbasinski (npc)
3	Helman (The Bridge Magazine):	Mark Horton, Valio Kovachev, Vladislav Isporski, Victor Aronov, Leonard Helman (PC), Kay Enfield (coach)
4	Hackett:	Paul Hackett, Geir Helgemo, Justin Hackett, Jason Hackett, John Armstrong
5	INDIA-TOLANI SHIPPING:	Ramawatar Agrawal, Archelius Sequeira, Alexander F. Lewis, Anal Shah
6	The Latin:	Frankie Frontaura, Carlos Pellegrini, Diego Brenner, Pablo Ravenna
7	China SMEG:	Fu Zhong, Jack Zhao, Wang Xia Jing, Sun Shao Lin, Yang Li Xin, Dai Jian Ming
8	England:	John Holland, William Hirst, John Hassett, Michelle Brunner
9	The Netherlands:	Huub Bertens, Ton Bakkeren, Leon Jacobs, Maarten Schollaardt
10	Ireland:	Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann, Nick FitzGibbon, Adam Mesbur, Tommy Garvey, John Carroll
11	Poland/Russia:	Adam Zmudzinski, Cezary Balicki, Andrei Gromov, Alexander Dubinin
12	China-Beijing:	Wang Kui, Cheng Zhe, Shi Zhengjun, Ju Chuancheng, Shi Jianxin, Fan Xinyan
13	CACTI (KOREA):	Ilsu Chung, Jungyoon Park, Kyunghae Sung, Neongwook Seo
14	VEGA*:	Valerie Gardiner, Wayne Burrows, Peter Gill, Brian Callaghan, Michael Ware
15	OzOne-Bridge:	Bob Richman, Zoli Nagy, Michael Prescott, Paul Marston
16	D-MaTK:	Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura
17	YAMADA:	Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Katsumi Takahashi, Kazuhiko Yamada, Takahiko Hirata, Eiji Otaka
18	TAJIMA:	Tadashi Teramoto, Mitsue Tajima, Kyoko Shimamura, Shunsuke Morimura
19	HANA:	Takeshi Hanayama, Sei Nagasaka, Makoto Hirata, Nobuyuki Hayashi, Takashi Maeda
20	Shy Ant:	Yasuhiro Shimizu, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Ryoga Tanaka, Tomoyuki Harada
21	Kittys:	Makiko Sato, Hiroko Sekiyama, Kyoko Toyofuku, Yoko Nenohi, Kumiko Matsuo, Toshiko Kaho
22	ESPERANZA:	Haruko Koshi, Mieko Nakanishi, Michiko Iwahashi, Misuzu Ichihashi, Hideyuki Sango, Nobuko Matsubara
23	momocchi:	Yasushi Kobayashi, Seiya Shimizu, Hiroshi Kaku, Masaaki Takayama, Masaru Yoshida, Makoto Kono
24	NAITO:	Sakiko Naito, Ayako Amano, Kenji Miyakuni, Keisuke Akama, Hiroaki Miura
25	GIRASOL:	Sachiko Yamamura, Taeko Kawamura, Kimi Makita, Keiko Matsuzaki
26	Kimura@Yokohama:	Osami Kimura, Hiroko Kobayashi, Chizuko Tsukamoto, Akio Yamasuge, Mamiko Odaira, Yumiko Kichise
27	Rhein:	Michiko Ono, Toyoko Saito, Fumiko Kimura, Minako Takahashi, Junko Tsubaki, Mariko Matsukawa
28	Symmetry:	Michiko Oono, Junko Arai, Haruyo Iiyama, Yayoi Sakamoto
29	PS-Jack:	Akiko Miwa, Masakatsu Sugino, Teruo Miyazaki, Ryoji Fujiwara, Akiko Kawabata, Harumi Shibano
30	MINK:	Yasuyo Iida, Midori Sakamoto, Natsuko Nishida, Atsuko Katsumata, Kimiko Kamakari, Misae Kato
31	BIRD:	Yasuyoshi Toriumi, Yasuko Kosaka, Emiko Tamura, Hiroko Yanagisawa, Hideko Hasegawa, Kayoko Kubota
32	SKOTII:	Tsuneo Sakurai, Atsushi Kikuchi, Kikuo Ito, Takehiko Tada
33	SunFlowers:	Takao Nakatani, Sachio Ueda, Betty Tajiri, Etsuko Hasegawa, Taeko Kuratani, Reiko Fukuda
34	LAS FLORES:	Teruko Nishimura, Michiko Shida, Kotomi Asakoshi, Junko Nishimura
35	makko:	Atsuyo Miyake, Makiko Hayashi, Yukiko Umezu, Etsuko Naito, Ayako Matsubara, Natsuko Sugimoto
36	KOJIMA:	Kazuhisa Kojima, Kei Nemoto, Toru Nishiwaki, Hitoshi Hojo, Kazuo Saeki, Yumiko Oda
37	2x4:	Miyako Miyazaki, Kazuko Okamoto, Kiyoko Fushida, Hideko Shindo, Fumiko Kubo, Machiko Sekiya
38	progress:	Shoko Somemiya, Setsuko Neya, Tomoko Sakai, Yumiko Ishibashi, Akiko Miyata, Yoko Shimominami
39	Honey Hunt:	Chieko Ichikawa, Junko Den, Kuniko Saito, Atsuko Kurita, Yoshiko Murata
40	MARUYAMA:	Yoko Maruyama, Miho Sekizawa, Kyoko Sengoku, Masako Sakurai, Megumi Takasaki, Megumi Takasaka
41	Japan Youth:	Yuichi Ikemoto, Shugo Tanaka, Motoaki Shiga, Hiroki Yokoi
42	Friends:	Yoko Saito, Masaharu Takatori, Tsukasa Ito, Etsuko Matsuki, Kikyo Yamamura, Toshiko Nishi
43	CHARADE:	Shunichi Haga, Misako Fukazawa, Sumiko Sugino, Kazuo Takano
44	WOMBAT+:	Ryo Matsubara, Michio Goto, Mark LaForge, Hideto Yamaguchi, Midori Ito, Mutsue Kokubo
45	Kinki:	Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka, Sonoko Namba, Chizuko Sugiura, Noriko Takami
46	MY-Bridge:	Noriko Yoshizawa, Masafumi Yoshizawa, Kuniko Miyauchi, Yoshitaka Agata, Takashi Sumita, Yoko Fukuyama
47	Kuzuuum Karas:	Yoko Mitsunashi, Sachiko Kunitomo, Michiko Furumoto, Emiko Noda, Kuniko Kito, Yoko Yagasaki

PCs with Internet access (but no printing capability) are available in the Secretariat (E206) for player use.

Wednesday's Match Results

Match 4

YAMADA (27)	11 - 19	POLAND/RUSSIA (46)
CHINA Beijing (4)	1 - 25	D-MaTK (78)
ENGLAND (45)	14 - 16	THE LATIN (52)
OzOne-Bridge (45)	16 - 14	CHINA SMEG (42)
ISRAEL (47)	21 - 9	ENGLAND+ (Hackett) (19)
Shy Ant (13)	13 - 17	HELMAN (Bridge Magazine) (24)
HANA (60)	22 - 8	KOJIMA (24)
IRELAND (29)	9 - 21	POLAND (57)
momocchi (45)	17 - 13	Symmetry (33)
The NETHERLANDS (74)	25 - 2	makko (8)
TAJIMA (81)	25 - 1	2x4 (3)
NAITO (44)	18 - 12	JAPAN Youth (30)
INDIA-Tolani Shipping (24)	14 - 16	WOMBAT+ (27)
Kitty's (14)	3 - 25	SKOTII (79)
KOREA CACTI (42)	14 - 16	BIRD (49)
VEGA* (72)	24 - 6	KinKi (29)
SunFlowers (72)	21 - 9	Honey Hunt (43)
Friends (24)	10 - 20	MARUYAMA (47)
LAS FLORES (72)	20 - 10	CHARADE (49)
MINK (33)	17 - 13	Kimura@Yokohama (24)
GIRASOL (40)	18 - 12	PS-Jack (27)
ESPERANZA (38)	16 - 14	progress (34)
Rhein (74)	23 -	My-Bridge and Kazunun Karas (33)
MY-Bridge (25)	8 -	Rhein and Kazunun Karas (57)
Kuzunun Karas (47)	13 -	Rhein and My-Bridge (56)

Match 5

OzOne-Bridge (37)	15 - 15	HANA (35)
THE LATIN (11)	9 - 21	ISRAEL (38)
ENGLAND (27)	8 - 22	CHINA Beijing (60)
D-MaTK (26)	10 - 20	POLAND/RUSSIA (52)
YAMADA (45)	17 - 13	NETHERLANDS (36)
CHINA SMEG (61)	20 - 10	TAJIMA (38)
POLAND (37)	16 - 14	HELMAN (Bridge Magazine) (34)
Shy Ant (41)	14 - 16	ENGLAND+ (Hackett) (44)
SKOTII (33)	20 - 10	momocchi (10)
VEGA* (57)	18 - 12	NAITO (42)
Symmetry (33)	13 - 17	IRELAND (43)
KOJIMA (56)	24 - 6	SunFlowers (28)
INDIA-Tolani Shipping (45)	20 - 10	MARUYAMA (22)
WOMBAT+ (2)	9 - 21	LAS FLORES (52)
BIRD (12)	6 - 24	JAPAN Youth (54)
KOREA CACTI (30)	11 - 19	MINK (49)
GIRASOL (41)	22 - 8	Rhein (6)
Kimura@Yokohama (41)	14 - 16	Friends (48)
Honey Hunt (7)	5 - 25	makko (59)
CHARADE (41)	16 - 14	2x4 (35)
KinKi (43)	16 - 14	progress (35)
PS-Jack (54)	21 - 9	Kuzunun Karas (26)
ESPERANZA (26)	11 -	Kitty's and MY-Bridge (46)
Kitty's (77)	25 -	ESPERANZA and MY-Bridge (16)
MY-Bridge (31)	7 -	ESPERANZA and Kitty's (72)

Match 6

CHINA SMEG (53)	21 - 9	YAMADA (24)
POLAND/RUSSIA (31)	16 - 14	CHINA Beijing (25)
D-MaTK (67)	23 - 7	ISRAEL (29)
OzOne-Bridge (87)	24 - 6	THE LATIN (45)
HANA (22)	8 - 22	POLAND (54)
ENGLAND (28)	10 - 20	NETHERLANDS (51)
SKOTII (65)	25 - 4	KOJIMA (11)
HELMAN (Bridge Magazine) (51)	16 - 14	VEGA* (45)
Shy Ant (67)	25 - 3	TAJIMA (7)
ENGLAND+ (Hackett) (78)	25 - 4	JAPAN Youth (19)
INDIA-Tolani Shipping (38)	14 - 16	IRELAND (42)
LAS FLORES (30)	12 - 18	Symmetry (46)
momocchi (64)	24 - 6	NAITO (19)
makko (35)	17 - 13	GIRASOL (26)
MINK (35)	16 - 14	Kitty's (29)
MARUYAMA (28)	11 - 19	KOREA CACTI (48)
WOMBAT+ (68)	25 - 5	SunFlowers (15)
PS-Jack (32)	13 - 17	Friends (44)
CHARADE (60)	25 - 5	BIRD (8)
KinKi (12)	5 - 25	Kimura@Yokohama (65)
2x4 (58)	23 - 7	Kuzunun Karas (18)
progress (39)	13 - 17	MY-Bridge (50)
Rhein (26)	12 -	ESPERANZA and Honey Hut (41)
ESPERANZA (42)	19 -	Rhein and Honey Hut (22)
Honey Hunt (25)	14 -	Rhein and ESPERANZA (30)

Making an Impression

by Barry Rigal

On this deal from the second qualifying session of the Nail Life Master Open Pairs, two of the top qualifiers met, and the encounter left Sue Picus highly impressed with the defense found by Norway's Martin Andresen. Picus was playing with Alex Ornstein, Andresen with Tor Helness.

Dir: East	♠ K93	
Vul: E/W	♥ J	
	♦ J10	
	♣ AKQJ932	
♠ Q854		♠ 76
♥ AKQ65		♥ 109832
♦ K9		♦ 7542
♣ 54		♣ 76
	♠ AJ102	
	♥ 74	
	♦ AQ863	
	♣ 108	

West	North	East	South
Andresen	Ornstein	Helness	Picus
		Pass	Pass
1♥	3♥(1)	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

(1) Asking for a heart stopper.

Picus sent for the higher-scoring game and found herself in a delicate spot. Andresen led a top heart and could have assured the defeat of the contract by continuing with another high heart.

Instead, he shifted to a club, which looked to Picus like a singleton. Perhaps it is best to win in the South hand and run the ♠J, but if East wins and gives partner a club ruff, another heart dooms the contract.

So Picus ruffed a heart to dummy and played the ♠9, letting it ride. Had Andresen taken this and played another heart, Picus would have won in dummy, crossed to the ♦A and drawn trumps. Even on a club return, declarer can win and give up a diamond and still have the rest. But Andresen ducked the ♠9! Declarer was now dead, twist and turn as she might.



“Back off, punk; you can't handle the truth.”

Bridge Defense - What's Going On (3)?

by Mike Lawrence

East deals, N/S vulnerable.

West	North	East	South
4♦	Dbl	Pass	Pass
Pass	6♠	5♦	5♠
		All Pass	

NORTH
♠ AQ107
♥ AQ54
♦ 8
♣ AKJ9

EAST
♠ 4
♥ 9873
♦ A3
♣ Q76542

After a hectic auction, West leads the ♦4 against their 6♠ contract. You win the ace and declarer drops the ten. What do you do now? Are you sure or are you guessing?

The correct play is clear. It is not a guess.

West is ruffing clubs and you should know it. How do you know? You know because of partner's lead. West opened the bidding with 4♦. Whatever else West has, he has a fistful of diamonds. What, therefore, is the ♦4?

Is it fourth best? Can't be. If it were fourth best, the rule of eleven tells you there would be seven diamonds higher than the four in the other three hands. You are looking at the ace and dummy has the eight. That means declarer has five diamonds higher than the four.

Nonsense.

The ♦4 is a suit-preference signal. You come to this conclusion because it can't be accounted for any other way. All reasonable interpretations are impossible. By default, the only thing left is suit preference.

You might for a moment think you have a club trick coming anyway if partner is really void, but there is a chance, even a likelihood, that South will be able to get rid of that club loser on dummy's hearts.

Return a club and spare partner from further anguish.

♠ AQ107
♥ AQ54
♦ 8
♣ AKJ9

♠ 85
♥ 1062
♦ KQJ97654
♣ —

♠ 4
♥ 9873
♦ A3
♣ Q76542

♠ KJ9632
♥ KJ
♦ 102
♣ 1083

Give West credit for a good lead. If West had led a reflex ♦K, East might or might not do the right thing, but he would have had to think twice about it. East would have to overtake the king, and then talk himself into leading a club. West's thoughtful lead did two things. It forced East to take the ace and it woke East up to the fact that something was going on. If West was afraid that leading the four might give declarer a free trick (if East had no ace OR ten) West could lead the ♦J. It should wake East up, but it might not. The four is a loud card and should succeed.

For more of Michael Lawrence on bridge, visit his web site at: www.michaelslawrence.com

Register for Weekend Events

To be guaranteed an entry in either of the scheduled events this coming weekend, you must register in advance in the Secretariat (Room E206). Registration deadlines are:

Yokohama Swiss Teams (2-day teams on 10th and 11th) deadline: 7:00 pm Friday, 9 February.

The Asuka Cup (2-session Open Pairs on 12th): Deadline: 7:00 pm Sunday, 11 February.

Round Four: Russia/Poland vs Yamada

by Barry Rigal

After a quiet first deal on which both N/S pairs avoided trouble, deal two provided the E/W pairs with a declarer play problem.

Bd: 2 North
 Dir: East ♠ 9
 Vul: N/S ♥ A10952
 ♦ 102
 ♣ AQ972

West
 ♠ A2
 ♥ KQ764
 ♦ KQ43
 ♣ K5

East
 ♠ KQJ1076
 ♥ ---
 ♦ 965
 ♣ J643

South
 ♠ 8543
 ♥ J83
 ♦ AJ87
 ♣ 108

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
		2♦ (1)	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♥ (2)	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

(1) Multi; (2) Spades, good suit

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Otake</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
		2♠	Pass
2NT	Dbf	4♠	All Pass

Dubin-Gromov had the tools to make West the declarer, and now on the lead of the ♦10 to the ace and a club shift the only issue was what line of play declarer would select for his 10 tricks. In the other room the weak two made East the declarer, but at least he had the clue that North was short in spades. On the lead of the ♣10 I would have expected declarer's first thought to be that this was from shortage. Balicki won the first club and shifted to a trump, and now declarer won in dummy and played the ♥K, ruffing out the ♥A. So far so good; but declarer expected the ♦A to be wrong, so he decided to play to ruff a club in dummy and then to pitch a diamond on the good heart. So he played a second club himself, which was sensible had North started life with, e.g., a 1-5-4-3 shape (by no means impossible). Balicki took his ♣A and returned the suit and Zmudzinski scored a trump trick, since dummy's ♠A had already gone on the first round of trumps.

In our second featured match, China SMEG vs

OzOne-Bridge, both tables played 4♠. Where Yang Li Xin was declarer the defenders led ♣10 to the ♣Q for a club continuation—no good. Richman-Nagy's transfer system got Nagy as West to be declarer on the ♦10 lead to the ♦A. No swing.

The datum of +370 for E/W suggests it was the Closed Room result that was exceptional.

After Yamada got on the board with an undertrick imp, a difference of style scored a pick-up for the Europeans.

Bd: 5 North
 Dir: North ♠ QJ98
 Vul: N/S ♥ ---
 ♦ J1053
 ♣ AJ853

West
 ♠ AK752
 ♥ J43
 ♦ 874
 ♣ 76

East
 ♠ 10
 ♥ KQ98752
 ♦ Q6
 ♣ K94

South
 ♠ 643
 ♥ A106
 ♦ AK92
 ♣ Q102

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Otake</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥	Dbf.	4♥	Dbf
All Pass			

Yamada's silence in the balancing seat is surprising, whereas Balicki had a far easier time once the real heart fit came to light at his table. Takahashi, who bounced to 4♥, was a trifle unlucky to find Zmudzinski with such an easy diamond lead (of course on a passive lead declarer can arrange 10 tricks) and his partner with such an inappropriate hand.

There are those (include me in) who would respond 1♠ with a hand like this precisely because we want partner not to sacrifice prematurely and to be aware that we have spade values if he faces a valuation decision; we pay off when our third trump

occasionally gets lost in the shuffle. But non-vulnerable it may be a small price to pay.

The transfer-systems in play made OzOne-Bridge declarer in both rooms; 5♣ down 200 was balanced out by 3♥ making +170 in the other room.

Sekiyama-Matsuo, Furuta-Dawei and Horton-Aronov all recorded +530s when their opponents doubled 2♥ for takeout, and 3♥ for penalty. Michael Ware actually made 4♥ from the East seat after a top diamond lead; he must have spectacular powers of persuasion.

Bd: 7	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 10		
Vul: Both	♥ AQ105		
	♦ AQ76		
	♣ Q954		
	West		East
	♠ Q763		♠ AJ842
	♥ 4		♥ J986
	♦ KJ42		♦ 985
	♣ AK76		♣ J
	South		
	♠ K95		
	♥ K732		
	♦ 103		
	♣ 10832		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
1♦	1♥	1♠	2♥
4♠	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Otaka</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
1♦	1♥	1♠	3♥
3♠	4♥	4♠	Dbl
All Pass			

B and Z (as they often called for reasons of tree-saving) take few prisoners in the auction or play. On this hand Zmudzinski's efforts are certainly worth considering. The 3♥ bid would occur to many but most would be able to resist temptation. Balicki's 4♥ is also well up in the 'sporting calls of our time' competition. And Zmudzinski's double of 4♠ did not exactly come with the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. This may sound a little carping, since it served to generate a swing of 7imps. At the other table Dubin's exaggerated jump to 4♠ at least avoided any chance that he would be doubled there.

Zmudzinski led the ♥K and shifted to diamonds on seeing a discouraging/suit-preference ♥10 at trick one. Takahashi was down 500 before he started, and he would have been depressed to discover that 3♥ was the limit for N/S. Poland led 23-2.

Hanlon-McGann were the only other pair who managed to double their opponents in 4♠ for 500.

The next board kept up the general level of excitement:

Bd: 8	North		
Dlr: West	♠ Q1083		
Vul: None	♥ J104		
	♦ ---		
	♣ AJ9632		
	West		East
	♠ K765		♠ A9
	♥ K875		♥ AQ632
	♦ AQ1063		♦ KJ94
	♣ ---		♣ 104
	South		
	♠ J42		
	♥ 9		
	♦ 8752		
	♣ KQ875		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
1♦	2♣	Dbl.	4♣
Dbl	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♦	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Otaka</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♠(KCB)	Pass
5♦(1)	Pass	6♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl.	All Pass	
(1) 2 KCs, no ♥Q			

Balicki's silence over 1♦ is one of the more surprising expert actions I've seen this event. One can understand why he did not preempt, but bidding 2♣ does not seem such an extreme action to take. As it was, he must have thought Christmas had come early when he got to double 6♥ for the diamond lead—this after a Key Card auction in which West had implicitly denied a void...Ah well, better luck next time. We'll never know if Balicki would have underled his ♣A to try for two down on the suit-preference lead of ♦2. In the other room the 2♣ overcall left E/W with just too little space to reach the Grand Slam. Making 6♦ was not such a terrible result but it gave Yamada their first real pick-up of the set.

To compare and contrast, Dai-Yang (remember only the good Dai Yang) bid 1♦-(2♣)-2♥-(5♣); 5♥-5♠-6♣-6♦; 7♥-(x). Prescott led a diamond and defeated the slam, and no doubt the Chinese were less than delighted to discover that Nagy-Richman had missed the slam altogether.

As an amusing sideline, Migry Zur-Campanile has learned to trust her opponents. When Geir Helgemo reached 6♥ on an unopposed sequence and Michael Barel doubled, Helgemo retreated to 6NT. Everybody passed and Migry led a top club. Helgemo put his hand back in the slot saying "six?" Migry duly wrote down -990 on her card...when her partner asked her why she did not double she had a good reason.

Of course this board generated mayhem all round the room. Plus scores for N/S varied from 1400 (the Irish ran from 7♥x to 7NT and this time there was no hiding place) to E/W results of 1620 from 6♥xx by Kenji Miyakuni-Hioroaki Mikura and +1440 in 7♦ (well bid!) by Hiroshi Kaku-Masaaki Takayama. Only two Norths forgot to double 7♥ and allowed it to make. Nobody played in a partscore but Sango-Matsubara were apparently allowed out for -100 in 6♣x.

Refreshed from their first real gain, the Japanese revved up their engines, and went out to catch the Poles speeding...

Bd: 10
Dir: East
Vul: Both

North
♠ KJ1093
♥ 8532
♦ 1074
♣ J

West	East
♠ 62	♠ AQ54
♥ AJ94	♥ 7
♦ J9	♦ AQ62
♣ K9862	♣ A754

South
♠ 87
♥ KQ106
♦ K853
♣ Q103

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
		1♣(STR)	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦(R)	Pass
2♠(♥)	Pass	2NT(R)	Pass
3♣(1)	Pass	3NT	All pass
(1) 2-4-2-5			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Otake</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♥	1♠	Pass	1NT
Dbl.	2♠	Dbl.	All Pass

I've used some unflattering adjectives about the bids taken by B/Z in this set, even if in my heart of hearts I admire the thinking behind them, but would not duplicate those actions. Having said that, bidding 1♠ as an unpassed hand here, vulnerable, and NOT overcalling on Board 8 looks entirely inconsistent to me. Zmudzinski has a fine turn of phrase, and a particularly convincing frown; and as the play progressed towards the inevitable -800, he looked less and less happy. While Balicki could argue that a spade lead was necessary to beat 3NT, his opponents would take the 5 imps from the action and move on, as unconvinced as Adam appeared to be. 28-12 for the visitors.

Nagy-Richman bid their way to 6♣—in the vernacular, an Austrian (as opposed to Australian) slam. This is characterized by an extreme shortage of high cards, a good fit, and not two top losers but so much work to do that a wise declarer would throw the hand in for down one. Richman as East won the top heart lead, took a diamond finesse, won the diamond return, and cashed the top clubs after which he had no way out for less than down two. If it would make the Australians feel any better I can report that 13 E/W pairs did play the hand in partscores—generally at the one-level. At least they can feel like they outbid all of them.

Bd: 12
Dir: West
Vul: N/S

North
♠ A52
♥ Q654
♦ K987
♣ 104

West	East
♠ J984	♠ KQ
♥ AK7	♥ 1032
♦ A4	♦ J106
♣ QJ92	♣ A8753

South
♠ 10763
♥ J98
♦ Q532
♣ K6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
1NT	Pass	2♠(1)	Pass
3♣(2)	Pass	3NT	All Pass
(1) Range inquiry;	(2) Maximum		

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Otaka	Balicki	Takahashi	Zmudzinski
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Both tables reached 3NT on uninformative auctions. Yamada led a diamond and declarer took the first trick and cleared the clubs. The defense cleared diamonds and declarer ran his clubs and set up spades for his nine tricks.

In the Closed Room Balicki led a fourth-highest ♠4. Declarer put up the ten and won Zmudzinski's jack to take the club finesse. Zmudzinski won as Balicki dropped the ♣10—Reverse Smith asking for a switch—and shifted to diamonds, then ducked the second diamond to see Otaka's ♦A fall on empty air. Nicely done; but of course declarer had opened the door to N/S by playing clubs before spades. Here it would seem that you want to keep South off lead for just this reason, and the losing club finesse will surely give South the chance to shift. But if the cards lie as they do, no shift can hurt you when North takes the ♠A.

Both tables in OzOne-Bridge-China SMEG won the heart lead in 3NT and played spades. Nicely done. A grand total of four declarers went down in 3NT on the heart lead and diamond shift. Jacobs-Schollaardt, Cheng-Nishimura and Kimura-Tsubaki were the successful defenders.

After a 12-15 notrump had led Dubinin to attempt an ambitious vulnerable game (albeit one just about worth attempting at imps) for 6 imps to Yamada, the Europeans earned back those points with the sort of small board that to me exemplifies their street-fighting approach.

Bd: 14	North
Dlr: East	♠ AKQJ2
Vul: None	♥ A65
	♦ K943
	♣ 3
West	East
♠ 10976	♠ 3
♥ Q8	♥ K10743
♦ J7	♦ Q1052
♣ QJ1064	♣ AK7
South	
♠ 854	
♥ J92	
♦ A86	
♣ 9852	

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Dubinin	Yamada	Gromov	Ohno
Pass	1♠	1♥	Pass
2♣	2♦	3♣	All Pass

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Otaka	Balicki	Takahashi	Zmudzinski
1NT	Dbl.	2♦	Pass
2♥	2♠	All Pass	

Balicki got to show a good hand and the Japanese discovered they did not appear to have a fit. Whether or not Takahashi could have doubled 2♠ to get back into the auction, he did not, and 2♠ wrapped up eight tricks. In the other room Dubinin passed 1♥ with his limited values, then could introduce clubs to get to buy the hand in 3♣. Whether or not Yamada could have shown his hand type by doubling 3♣, he did not do so. Against 3♣ Yamada led a top spade and shifted to a trump. Dubinin won in dummy and led a diamond to the 8, J and K. Back came a low diamond and Dubinin ducked in dummy, forcing the ♦A, and now on a heart shift declarer had nine tricks. Even if the defenders had managed to set the game a trick this would still have been a small pick-up for the visitors. The score was 40-18 for the Europeans.

The limited opening bid style let Dai-Yang stop in 1♥. They, too, managed to get to 3♣ but Prescott bid on to 3♠, down 50, while 2♠ in the other room fetched 140. Only four E/W pairs successfully stole the hand in a club partscore though some other pairs did push their opponents too high.

Bd: 15	North
Dlr: South	♠ Q1084
Vul: N/S	♥ 7
	♦ KQ63
	♣ A864
West	East
♠ AKJ	♠ 652
♥ A105	♥ KQJ9642
♦ J85	♦ ---
♣ K1052	♣ QJ3
South	
♠ 973	
♥ 83	
♦ A109742	
♣ 97	

Reaching a slam on the E/W cards after a strong notrump from West looks nearly impossible. Neither table managed to get to the optimum spot in our featured match, though Dubinin-Gromov

could start with a strong club. But for SMEG Dai-Yang bid 1♣-1♥; 2♥-4♦; 4♠-5♦; 6♥, for an 11-imp gain when at the other table Richman did not manage to get to show his void as opposed to a singleton in his strong club auction.

The datum score of +600 suggests a quarter of the field bid slam; no one played either a partscore or a Grand Slam. Well bid, I suppose.

Bd: 17
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ AQJ72
 ♥ J4
 ♦ Q9
 ♣ J1074

West
 ♠ K863
 ♥ Q63
 ♦ AK2
 ♣ Q52

East
 ♠ 94
 ♥ AK105
 ♦ 10653
 ♣ 863

South
 ♠ 105
 ♥ 9872
 ♦ J874
 ♣ AK9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♦	1♠	Dbl	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Otaka</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

The Europeans bought the hand in both rooms, again. 2♠ on a heart lead has play; declarer needs to take some spade finesses and arrange a trump coup; not easy to do if the defense does not cooperate. In fact, on two rounds of hearts and a club shift declarer drew two rounds of trumps and finessed in clubs. Otaka cashed his minor-suit winners and exited with a club, leaving declarer with too many trumps in hand for the coup.

1NT on a heart lead was a stimulating affair. Declarer cashed four hearts (North pitching spades while Dubinin threw a diamond), then ducked a spade. Back came a club to the king followed by a diamond switch. Declarer won, exited with a low spade, and North had to set up a club or a spade winner for West. Just 1 imp to the visitors.

Bd: 18
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ Q
 ♥ Q842
 ♦ 94
 ♣ KJ8542

West
 ♠ A1063
 ♥ AJ
 ♦ AKQ72
 ♣ A6

East
 ♠ K9754
 ♥ K975
 ♦ 1065
 ♣ 9

South
 ♠ J82
 ♥ 1063
 ♦ J83
 ♣ Q1073

Both rooms played in a small slam here. The fact that Otaka-Takahashi elected to play in 6NT rather than 6♠ after a serious bidding accident turned out not to cause them undue heartburn when the defenders failed to lead clubs. Declarer then guessed spades anyway.

While reaching the small slam was the norm rather than the exception here, one must offer some sympathy to Geir Helgemo who played 7♠ as East. We all know about Restricted Choice, but how does it apply when EW reach a slam after using Key Card but not asking for the trump queen, and South, Migry-Zur Campanile, leads a spade? You play low from dummy forcing the queen—not a true restricted choice card since North would play the queen whenever he had it. On that basis, one has to ask if South would be more or less likely to lead a trump from jack-third or a small doubleton. I think the former; with two small spades the chance of cobbling partner's doubleton queen is higher than the alternative. Helgemo disagreed and who am I to argue—but it was a 25-imp swing away.

Again, rather as you might expect, the scores were all over the place. Helgemo was the only declarer to go minus, but only Pellegrini-Frontaura attempted the grand slam successfully, making 13 tricks from the East seat. Rather more than half the field at least got to slam.

As if to go against the whole tenor of the match, the home team promptly outbid the visitors in both rooms on each of the final two deals.



“You dropped a trick there.”

Bd: 19 North
 Dir: South ♠ 10762
 Vul: E/W ♥ A984
 ♦ 1065
 ♣ J9

West
 ♠ Q93
 ♥ J
 ♦ Q84
 ♣ Q86543

East
 ♠ KJ
 ♥ KQ107632
 ♦ K93
 ♣ 7

South
 ♠ A854
 ♥ 5
 ♦ AJ72
 ♣ AK102

Bd: 20 North
 Dir: West ♠ A752
 Vul: Both ♥ 73
 ♦ AK65432
 ♣ ---

West
 ♠ K94
 ♥ AJ
 ♦ J87
 ♣ 108764

East
 ♠ QJ8
 ♥ K1094
 ♦ Q109
 ♣ AQJ

South
 ♠ 1063
 ♥ Q8652
 ♦ ---
 ♣ K9532

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT(15-17)
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Otaka</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	Pass	2♥	All Pass

Spade fit, what spade fit? You can just about understand why Ohno bypassed his spades (I hate it but I can understand it). But Gromov's failure to bid hearts directly or on the second round looks very strange. In the other room I'd have expected Zmudzinski to double 2♥ every day of the week. Too dangerous is no excuse as Bobby Wolff says.

Neither contract yielded many challenges to the declarers. Declarers in notrump won the club lead in dummy, ducked a spade, and now there were no entries to the heart suit. In fact, when Ohno arranged the endplay to collect +180 he had negotiated an 8-imp pick-up for his side, since 2♥ produced +140 in the other room. It was 46-27 now.

Quite a few pairs did find their spade fit, and regretted it. 4♠ was attempted several times; only Tamura-Kosaka and Takano-Haga were lucky enough to find defenders who would not attack diamonds in time.

**Winners tell funny stories;
 loser holler "Deal!"**

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbl.	1♥
1NT	2♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Otaka</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbl.	1♥
2♣	2♠	All Pass	

On the final deal the Japanese outbid their counterparts again, and the Russians had to work hard to flatten the board. While 2♠ had play on the lead of the ♣A Balicki took only seven tricks. 2♦ looks easy; not so said Alexei Gromov. He led the ♠Q, and when declarer carelessly ducked he shifted to a heart and the defenders cashed two hearts and played a third, Dubinin ruffing in with the ♦J to leave declarer helpless. No swing, and a 41-29 win for the visitors.

In sharp contrast to the above, Yang for SMEG doubled a 1♠ opening that showed diamonds, and voluntarily competed to 2NT over Marston's 2♠ effort. Dai raised to game, a painless -400 since Marston had arranged to be on lead now. Not to be outdone, in the other room Richman overcalled 1♦ with 1NT and Nagy bounced to 3NT. Wang now saved in 4♦, doubled but down only 500. At the death OzOne-Bridge had gained 14 imps to beat China SMEG 45-41.

Marston-Prescott's +400 did not quite take the brass ring for the N/S pairs; Saito-Ichikawa came to +670 in 2♥x. Meanwhile their teammates Murata-Kurita collected +600 in 3NT from the East seat. That combination of results ought to be worth more than 15 imps, don't you think?

Round Five: OzOne-Bridge vs JAPAN HANA

by Rich Colker

With OzOne-Bridge and JAPAN HANA sitting 7th (with 75 VPs) and 8th (with 74 VPs), respectively, after four matches, Match Five figured to be crucial to determining which of these teams would qualify for the KO stage of the 2007 NEC Cup. Both Aussie pairs play Moscito: 1♣ strong-ish (15+); 1♦/♥/♠ transfers openings (♠=♦); 1NT=11-14; 2♣ Precision-type; 2♦/♥/♠ openings weak; 2NT for the minors. Their 3rd/4th-seat openings are slightly more traditional: 1♣=17+; 1♦/♥/♠ natural (4+); 1NT (13)14-16 (3rd only).

True to expectations, the match began with a swing and featured swings on 16 of the 20 deals.

Bd: 1 North
 Dir: North ♠ 105
 Vul: None ♥ 976
 ♦ AKQ86
 ♣ 965

West
 ♠ J9
 ♥ AJ52
 ♦ J954
 ♣ Q104

East
 ♠ KQ8732
 ♥ Q43
 ♦ ---
 ♣ KJ82

South
 ♠ A64
 ♥ K108
 ♦ 10732
 ♣ A73

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
	2♦	2♠	4♦
Dbl	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠	All Pass

The auction in the Closed Room was the equivalent of the standard auction 1♠-1NT; 2♠, and Bob Richman emerged with ten tricks on the ♦3 opening lead; +170 for N/S. The real action took place in the Open Room. Paul Marston won the ♠Q lead with dummy's ace and played a trump to his queen, getting the bad news when Takashi Maeda pitched a spade. A heart to the eight lost to the jack and when Makato Hirata played the ♠J Maeda let it hold by playing low, suggesting a club switch. The ♣4 went to the 6, 8 and A and when Marston played a diamond Hirata went in with the nine to force an honor from declarer. A heart to the

ten brought the ace and after two more rounds of clubs East put the lead back in dummy with the ♥Q. Declarer claimed his eight tricks for -300; 4 imps to HANA.

Bd: 2 North
 Dir: East ♠ Q72
 Vul: N/S ♥ AQJ
 ♦ AQ9
 ♣ K1042

West
 ♠ A4
 ♥ K53
 ♦ KJ642
 ♣ 865

East
 ♠ KJ86
 ♥ 1097
 ♦ 753
 ♣ A93

South
 ♠ 10953
 ♥ 8642
 ♦ 108
 ♣ QJ7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦	1NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦	Dbl	1♠	Pass
2♦	All Pass		

Maeda's ♦7 lead against 1NT in the Open Room made Marston's life easier: 10, J, Q. Marston led a club to the queen, a heart to the queen, a club to the jack, a heart to the jack, and exited with the ♣K to Maeda's ace. A spade to the ace and a spade back allowed Maeda to cash a third spade on which Hirata pitched his ♥K. It looks easy for Maeda now to work out to exit with the ♥10, forcing Marston to lose a diamond at the end. But instead he played the ♦5 and Marston claimed for +150.

In the Closed Room Sei Nagasaka led the ♠2 against 2♦ and Zoli Nagy put in dummy's jack, 3, 4. Better technique might have been to win the ♠A to leave the finesse open for later. Declarer next led a diamond to the ten, jack and queen and Haganaka for some reason played ♥A, ♥Q. Nagy won the king and unblocked the ♠A, before exiting with a low diamond to the nine. Nagasaka cashed the ♦A, ♥J, then exited with a club, but Nagy had seven tricks in for down only one; -50. That was 3 imps back to the Aussies, HANA ahead 4-3.

Bd: 3 North
 Dlr: South ♠ K865
 Vul: E/W ♥ AQ64
 ♦ J4
 ♣ J72

West
 ♠ A107
 ♥ K953
 ♦ A865
 ♣ A5

East
 ♠ Q93
 ♥ 10872
 ♦ Q72
 ♣ 843

South
 ♠ J42
 ♥ J
 ♦ K1093
 ♣ KQ1096

Bd: 4 North
 Dlr: West ♠ QJ5
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ64
 ♦ Q
 ♣ A9864

West
 ♠ 8763
 ♥ 32
 ♦ 752
 ♣ K1073

East
 ♠ AK9
 ♥ AJ97
 ♦ 9843
 ♣ Q2

South
 ♠ 1042
 ♥ 1085
 ♦ AKJ106
 ♣ J5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
			Pass

1NT All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
			Pass
1♣	Pass	1♦	2♣
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

Nagy led ace and a club against 3♣. Hanayama won to play the ♥J: K, A, 7. A low diamond went to the ten and ace and Nagy continued hearts, declarer winning the queen to pitch a spade. The ♦J was covered by the queen and king and Hanayama led a spade up. When Nagy went up with the ace (which he needed for his 1♣ opening) Hanayama claimed the rest for +130.

In the other room Marston led the normal spade against 1NT: 5, 9, J, A, and Hirata exited with a low heart which ran to Prescott's jack. Prescott tried the ♣9, which held, followed by a second club to declarer's ace. Hirata led a spade toward dummy, rising with the queen when Marston ducked, then a heart to the nine and queen (Prescott signaling with the ♦10), and Marston promptly exited with the ♦J: Q, K, A. When Hirata next exited with a low heart the defense was able to take the rest of the tricks for down three. Plus 300 was a 5-imp pick-up and the Aussie's took the lead at 8-4.

The datum was N/S +190. 1NT usually went down three, though a fair number of pairs rescued their opponents.

No defense is too simple to screw up.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
Pass	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

We'd say that Richman's strange-looking 1♥ overcall in the Closed Room on the ♥AJ97 (no red cards in your bid box, Bob?) looks like a man looking for an excuse to bid—we'd say that, except we know Bob needs no excuse. The defense got off to their best start against 1NT when Richman led ace, king and another spade. But when he ducked the ♥Q at trick three (it doesn't matter) Nagasaka quickly cashed out for +120.

In the other room Marston-Prescott unluckily got a bit too high (2♦—not natural—showed 9-11 with three hearts) when Marston rebid 3♣ to show a maximum non-1♣ opener with four hearts and five clubs and Prescott passed. The defense began with the ♠AK (Hirata following with the 8-3), after which Maeda shifted to...a low heart!? Marston won dummy's eight, cashed the third spade, and overtook his ♦Q to run the suit. He managed to pitch two of his hearts before Hirata ruffed the fourth diamond with the ♣7. He overruffed with the ♣8 and collect two more tricks in the ending to finish one down; -100. 6 imps to HANA, back in the lead 10-8.

After food and sex, a bridge player's greatest need is to tell his partner how he should have bid/played a hand.

Bd: 5
 Dir: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 103
 ♥ KJ84
 ♦ KJ54
 ♣ Q107

West
 ♠ K7
 ♥ 32
 ♦ A86
 ♣ KJ8532

East
 ♠ AQ9864
 ♥ Q65
 ♦ 109
 ♣ A9

South
 ♠ J52
 ♥ A1097
 ♦ Q732
 ♣ 64

Both tables played in 4♠, Nagy-Richman from the West side after a transfer 1♥ opening and Hirata-Maeda from the East seat. Nagasaka's ♣7 lead allowed Nagy to take all the tricks while Prescott's ♦3 took out a crucial dummy entry and held Maeda to ten tricks—which might have been nine (see below). That was 3 imps to the Aussies, back on top 11-10.

In Beijing-England, the Chinese, who were leading 8-1 after some desultory initial interchanges, landed a sizeable body-blow here. Ju, as East, played 4♠ on a club lead and declarer drew trumps and ruffed out the clubs. On repeated diamond leads John Hassett had the choice of ruffing a heart in dummy and trying to avoid a trump promotion, or taking the club finesse. Both lines fail as the cards lie, and that was 11 imps to Beijing.

At double-dummy 4♠ cannot be made after the diamond lead. So the datum score of E/W +240 is in line with expectations; but appearances are misleading. Half the field did not bid the game, and of those whom we know to have received a diamond lead, four out of 10 pairs actually made the game.

Bd: 6
 Dir: East
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ AJ
 ♥ J6
 ♦ AK10
 ♣ KJ8732

West
 ♠ Q43
 ♥ 8742
 ♦ 852
 ♣ A94

East
 ♠ 962
 ♥ 103
 ♦ J9643
 ♣ 1065

South
 ♠ K10875
 ♥ AKQ95
 ♦ Q7
 ♣ Q

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♣	Pass	4NT
Pass	6♥	Pass	5♥
		All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
Pass		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Prescott-Marston's auction in the Closed Room may be the longest of the tournament so far—at least that we've seen here in the press room. Marston's 1♦ was an artificial game force after Prescott's strong (15+) 1♣. 2NT showed South's major two-suiter, at least five-five. After a shortage-ask Prescott showed short clubs, four controls, and then the honor location. Maeda led a low diamond against 6♥. Marston won, drew trumps, gave up the ♣A and claimed twelve tricks for +980.

At the other table Hanayama appears to us to owe Nagasaka at least one slam-suggestive move over 3♠ (after all, he would have made precisely the same bids without both the ♥K and ♣Q). 3NT wrapped up twelve tricks for +490; 10 imps to the Aussies, increasing their lead to 21-10. Would 4NT over 3♠ be Key Card or quantitative?

For Beijing, Wang-Cheng had a strong club auction after which North was never going to stop out of slam. Holland-Brunner bid 1♠-2♣; 2♥-3♦; 3♥-3NT; Pass. At her last turn we would have thought 4NT would have been absolutely perfect on the South cards, but there again our days of playing Acol are fortunately far behind us. China now led 30-1.

Only one third of the field bid slam here but at least all but one pair played notrump; the unlucky pair played 6♠ on a club lead. Now the percentage play in the spade suit (low to the jack picks up Qx or Qxx onside) works, but it was not found.

The possibilities grow more numerous every morning—then fewer again each evening.

Bd: 7
 Dir: South
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ AJ3
 ♥ Q643
 ♦ K74
 ♣ KQ8

West
 ♠ 75
 ♥ K102
 ♦ Q853
 ♣ A754

East
 ♠ K104
 ♥ AJ9
 ♦ A9
 ♣ J10932

South
 ♠ Q9862
 ♥ 875
 ♦ J1062
 ♣ 6

declarer ruffing in dummy as he pitched his low spade. Another heart drew the remaining trumps and Richman now cashed the ♦A. Somehow and declarer managed to then take the last three tricks for (only) one down, -100. 5 imps to the Aussies, ahead 26-10.

Bd: 8
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ J1053
 ♥ Q7
 ♦ J7643
 ♣ 96

West
 ♠ Q6
 ♥ J104
 ♦ KQ109
 ♣ Q753

East
 ♠ A92
 ♥ A8532
 ♦ 5
 ♣ 10842

South
 ♠ K874
 ♥ K96
 ♦ A82
 ♣ AKJ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hirata	Marston	Maeda	Prescott
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nagy	Nagasaka	Richman	Hanayama
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	All Pass	

In the Open Room Prescott transferred to spades and let Marston play it there. Maeda led the ♣10 (Russinow) to the ace and Hirata woodenly returned a club, allowing Marston to shed two of dummy's hearts. Hirata won Marston's heart exit with the ten and returned a heart, ruffed in dummy. Marston passed the ♦J to Maeda's ace and Maeda returned the ♦9 to the ten, queen, and king. A heart ruff was followed by a spade to the jack and king, and now Maeda capped this mesmerizing defense by playing a club, allowing Marston to pitch a diamond from dummy as he ruffed low in hand, setting the stage to take the last three tricks on a crossruff with the ♠10 in front of the queen-nine. But Marston cashed the ♠A, and now he had to lose the last trick to West's ♦8; +110.

In the Closed Room Hanayama used Stayman instead of transferring and decided to play in the four-three heart fit; well, that is he had Nagasaka play it. ("Thanks, partner.") Nagy won the ♣J lead with the ace and switched accurately to a low trump. Richman won with the nine and switched back to clubs, Nagayama pitching a diamond from dummy as he won the king. A low heart went to the jack and Richman exited with another club on which dummy's other small diamond was pitched. Nagasaka next led the ♠J from hand and Richman hopped up with the king to play yet another club,

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hirata	Marston	Maeda	Prescott
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nagy	Nagasaka	Richman	Hanayama
Pass	Pass	1♥	DbI
2♣	Pass	2♥	DbI
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
3♥	All Pass		

The Aussies picked up a double partscore swing here when both pairs bought and made contracts. In the Open Room 1♣ was 17+ and 1♥ showed something approaching a semi-positive (not that this looks like a semi-positive to me) with any of several hand types. 1NT was 17+ balanced and ended the auction. Hirata got off to his side's best lead, the ♥J: Q, K, A. Maeda returned the ♥3 (original 4th best) and when Prescott played the king Hirata followed low, blocking the suit. Prescott next advanced the ♠K, ducked all around, and continued with a low spade to Hirata's queen. Hirata cashed the ♥10 (dummy pitching a diamond) and switched to a low club to Prescott's jack. A low spade now drove out Maeda's ace and he cashed his two good hearts, but Prescott has the last four tricks for +90. Nicely done!

In the Closed Room Richman's third-seat 1♥ was natural and 2♣ looks to be either diamond values (perhaps planning to support hearts later) or a

good three-card heart raise. In either case Richman rebid his hearts (1♥ could be four). When Hanayama doubled again to show extras and Nagasaka competed to 2♠, Nagy took the opportunity to make explicit his heart support. Hanayama got off to the unfortunate lead of the ♥6, Nagasaka ducking dummy's jack. Richman next led the ♥4 to the queen and ace and the ♦5 went to dummy's king, Hanayama ducking. Hanayama then found himself on lead with the ♥K in a position where nothing he could do was to his side's advantage. He tried the ♠7 but Richman went up with dummy's queen, came to hand with the ♠A, and led a club toward dummy's queen. Hanayama rose with the king and played a low spade to Nagasaka's jack, but the defense had no effective reply. Declarer could ruff any return, knock out the other high club, and still had a trump to regain the lead and cash his two club tricks. Plus 140 was worth 6 imps, increasing the Aussies' lead to 32-10.

In Beijing-England, Hassett passed the East cards initially but backed in with an overcall in hearts, actually making it easier for his opponents to play 2♠, the limit of the hand. Ju opened 2♥ in the other room—hearts and a minor. Brunner overcalled 2NT and played there, down three on normal play in the heart suit (♥J covered all around and a heart back, finessed). It was 36-1 now to Beijing.

HANA cut well into the deficit on Board 10.

Bd: 10	North		
Dir: East	♠ AQJ1054		
Vul: Both	♥ 2		
	♦ A42		
	♣ Q64		
	West	East	
	♠ K9876	♠ 2	
	♥ AJ	♥ 10985	
	♦ KQ105	♦ 98763	
	♣ KJ	♣ 973	
	South		
	♠ 3		
	♥ KQ7643		
	♦ J		
	♣ A10852		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
		Pass	1♦
1NT	Dbl	Rdbl	3♣
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
		Pass	1♥
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♣
Dbl	3NT	Pass	Pass
Dbl	4♣	All Pass	

Prescott's 1♦ in the Open Room showed 4+ hearts and Marston doubled for penalty. Maeda redoubled for rescue and Prescott decided not to wait for his opponents to find their fit (if indeed they had one) and jumped to 3♣ to show his extra distribution. Marston thought his spades were good enough to be trumps despite his partner's likely lack of support, but the adverse five-one split posed serious problems for the spade game. Maeda led the ♦9 against 4♥ and Marston won the ace to track a heart. Hirata won dummy's king with the ace and returned the ♠6 to Marston's queen. When Maeda pitched a diamond on the ♠A Marston paused to consider his next move. A club to the ace allowed him to pitch one diamond on the ♥Q and a third heart allowed him to score one of his low trumps as Hirata pitched the ♣K. Hirata next ruffed the ♣Q and cashed a high diamond, but he could collect only one additional trump trick to beat 4♠ two tricks; -200 for N/S.

After a natural auction in the Closed Room, Nagy (doubtless regretting his double of 3NT) led the ♦K against 4♣. Hanayama won the ♦A and played a heart toward his hand, ducking completely to Nagy's jack. He ruffed the diamond return, ruffed a heart, ruffed a diamond, and played a deceptive ♥Q. When Nagy discarded Hanayama pitched a spade and continued with the ♥K, which also held the trick. Now he played a low spade to the ten, cashed the ♠A, and wound up with 11 tricks; +150. That was 8 imps to HANA, trailing now by 32-18.

Hassett-Hirst beat the Beijing 3NT by two tricks; not a bad position? Well, in the other room Brunner opened 1♥ and balanced with 2♣ when 1♠ came back to her. Shi tried 2♦, Holland doubled, and that was -380. We have to admit we might have bid the N/S cards the same way here. Beijing led 44-1 at the half.

Incidentally, on this deal scores ranged from N/S +1400 defending 3♠x (we think they heard that double in Tokyo, even with bid-boxes) to 800 the other way from 4♠x. There were two +670s from 3♦x, and three 380s.

Bd: 11 North
 Dir: South ♠ J109765
 Vul: None ♥ K74
 ♦ 83
 ♣ AJ

West
 ♠ A84
 ♥ Q53
 ♦ KQ54
 ♣ 1094

East
 ♠ 32
 ♥ AJ1082
 ♦ A6
 ♣ K752

South
 ♠ KQ
 ♥ 96
 ♦ J10972
 ♣ Q863

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
1♦	2♠	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
Pass	2♠	All Pass	Pass

Looking at all four hands 4♥ does not seem an unreasonable contract, but as so often can happen it did not play out that way. In the Open Room Prescott started the ♠K against 4♥, won by dummy's ace, and Maeda proceeded to play three rounds of diamonds hoping to discard his losing spade before the mice got at it. When Marston ruffed the third round Maeda pitched his spade loser anyway rather than overruff, ruffed the spade return, cashed the ♥A, and led the ♥10 to the 9, Q and K. He ruffed the spade return, gave up a club to Marston's jack, and it seems as though at this point declarer has all but one of the remaining tricks. But the play record says he only took two of the last four tricks (it doesn't say how) and went down two; -100 for E/W. Of course it is not too difficult to see that if declarer does not try to pitch his spade loser on the diamonds (they can be used for a club loser later) and simply takes the trump finesse and draws trumps, he will come to ten tricks in the form of five hearts, one spade, one club and three diamonds. C'est la vie.

In the Closed Room Nagasaka-Hanayama bought the contract for the bargain-basement price of 2♠. Richman led a low club, which did nothing to further his side's chance for a three-digit plus score. Nagasaka won with the jack, then played a spade to the queen, Nagy ducking, and a heart to the king and ace. Richman returned a second

trump to deny declarer a heart ruff. Nagy won and shifted to ♥Q and a third heart. In with the ♥10 Richman continued hearts so Nagasaka eventually had to lose two diamonds to finish one down; -50. That was 4 more imps to the Aussies, leading by 36-18. How often do you see the Australians so 'out-bid' and gaining imps? Maybe they should try it again at least one more time this tournament.

Only seven pairs found their way home in 4♥ on the ♠K lead. They say anyone can take a finesse. Apparently not.

Both tables in England-Beijing went down in 4♥ on a top spade lead, after following essentially the same line as Maeda. The match score was still 44-1, but the next four deals saw England score 15 unanswered imps, primarily from a deal where having overcalled in spades Cheng found himself on lead against 3NT (1♦-(1♠)-Dbf-1NT; 2NT-3NT) holding ♠K10954 and ♣AQ1087. He naturally led a low club—and that was the ninth trick.

With the score standing at 36-22 the Aussies found themselves in double-digit trouble on the following deal.

Bd: 16 North
 Dir: West ♠ AQ1084
 Vul: E/W ♥ AJ75
 ♦ ---
 ♣ K763

West
 ♠ K975
 ♥ Q9
 ♦ 93
 ♣ AQ1042

East
 ♠ 632
 ♥ K1084
 ♦ A105
 ♣ J98

South
 ♠ J
 ♥ 632
 ♦ KQJ87642
 ♣ 5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Maeda</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
1♣	1♠	Dbf	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♦
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Nagasaka</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Hanayama</i>
1♥	Pass	2♠	3♦
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	Dbf	All Pass

In the Closed Room Nagy opened a Moscito 1♥ (4+ spades) and Richman jumped to 2♠ (6-8 HCP,

three-card support). Hanayama contented himself with a modest 3♦ and Nagasaka, who had so far been silent with the best hand at the table, came out of his shell with a vengeance—3NT! Hanayama decided to retreat to 4♦ before the doubling started (why can't partners ever take a joke?) but Nagasaka was not to be denied and raised the ante to 5♦. Richman, who must have thought Thanksgiving had come early this year (it had, but what he didn't realize was that he was the turkey), doubled to end the auction. All would have been well for the defenders on a heart lead, but Nagy led the ♦3 to the ten and queen (dummy pitching a club). Hanayama played a club as Nagy won the ace and shifted to the ♥9. Hanayama rose with the ace, pitched a heart on the ♣K, ruffed a club to hand, and tabled the ♠J. With the ♠K in the slot declarer could discard his other heart loser on a spade, return to hand with a ruff, and pull the remaining trumps to take 11 tricks; +550.

In the other room Marston-Prescott bought the hand for 3♦, which is cold on any defense. Hirata led the ♥Q, ducked all around, the ♥9 to the ace, and Prescott now found the avoidance play of the ♣K to Hirata's ace. He ruffed the club return, finessed the ♠Q, pitched his last heart on the ♠A, and ruffed a club back to hand. But when he led the ♦J to the ace Maeda led a heart to obtain a trump promotion and hold Prescott to nine tricks; +110 for N/S. That was 10 imps to HANA, closing to within 4 at 36-32.

Brunner reached 5♦x here on what appears to have been a bidding misunderstanding. The defense led the ♣A, the unbid suit, and the heart shift came too late. Brunner pitched one heart loser on the clubs, ruffed a club back to hand to take the spade finesse, and had 11 tricks when trumps broke. That made the match score 45-26 since in the other room they played 3♦.

Diamond contracts were reached at just about every table; while 3♦ went down on a heart lead more than once, 5♦ made as often as it was defeated. Pride of place on defense goes to the only pair to double AND lead the ♥Q, Well done Hiroaki Miura-Kenji Miyakuni.

The English had the opportunity to level the match when Hirst had to lead against 6♠ from a 2-4-5-2 hand with ♥K and ♦QJ after his partner had overcalled a strong club with 1♥, and had not doubled a heart cue-bid on his left. Not surprisingly Hirst led a heart anyway; this was the full story. 12 tricks were made at 44 tables out of 47, so one can hardly criticize Hirst too much.

Bd: 17
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ A9864
 ♥ A75
 ♦ 54
 ♣ AK9

West
 ♠ 103
 ♥ K864
 ♦ QJ632
 ♣ 102

East
 ♠ 5
 ♥ QJ1032
 ♦ K98
 ♣ Q874

South
 ♠ KQJ72
 ♥ 9
 ♦ A107
 ♣ J653

After the heart lead declarer could build a club discard for North's diamond loser. That was a 22-imp turnover; Beijing picked up a little more on the last three deals to win 60-27, 22-8 in VPs. Over the final four deals HANA outscored the Aussies 3-1, making the final score OzOne-Bridge 37, HANA 35; 15-15 in VPs. It may not have been great bridge, but it sure was high-tech entertainment.

Images of Our Game



"Oh, THAT 1400!"



"And then he told me I was the one who miscounted trumps!"



"This time you hum and I'll sing."

Round Six: YAMADA vs CHINA SMEG

by Barry Rigal

This match was played during a scheduled hiatus on BBO, so coverage was initially spotty.

The deals themselves did not initially appear to be exciting enough to stir the commentators from a post-prandial torpor. But after YAMADA broke out of the gates with an overtrick imp, the second board offered the fleeting spectre of interest.

Bd: 2
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 103
 ♥ AKJ106
 ♦ AQJ3
 ♣ 64

West
 ♠ AJ952
 ♥ 9
 ♦ 986
 ♣ A1082

East
 ♠ Q86
 ♥ 432
 ♦ 7542
 ♣ Q73

South
 ♠ K74
 ♥ Q875
 ♦ K10
 ♣ KJ95

Both tables played 4♥, the Chinese from the safe side, South, the Japanese from North. Only the lead of the ♠Q would put that contract in jeopardy. On the actual low spade lead Akihiko Yamada ducked and now the defense was on the sharp end of a Morton's Fork Coup. They could cash their spades to set up a discard for declarer or, shift (as they did) and let declarer get rid of his spade loser and guess clubs for an overtrick. That was still an imp to China since they had made 680 in the Open Room on a passive lead. Well done Hitoshi Nojo, the only player recorded as leading the ♠Q. Tsuneo Sakurai still guessed clubs to make game, but he was made to sweat for it.

Bd: 3
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ K84
 ♥ Q105
 ♦ 986
 ♣ QJ82

West
 ♠ AJ
 ♥ K987
 ♦ Q752
 ♣ A95

East
 ♠ Q7653
 ♥ A64
 ♦ J4
 ♣ K107

South
 ♠ 1092
 ♥ J32
 ♦ AK103
 ♣ 643

A 14-count facing a 10-count is prime territory for a swing. Those playing 14-16 notrumps reach game, those playing 12-14 play partscores, and those who upgrade their 14-counts to 15 (surely 90% of the civilized world these days) also play game. Both pairs in our featured match did not upgrade, and played 1NT making 180; somewhere the Gods were laughing contemptuously. In our second match Yaniv Zack as West did get to show a strong notrump and Amir Levin drove him to game for a 10-imp pick-up against D-MaTK. The datum was +310 for E/W so one third of the field bid game here.

Finally we saw some real action:

Bd: 4
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ KQ753
 ♥ 8
 ♦ 74
 ♣ 107543

West
 ♠ 109
 ♥ KQJ976543
 ♦ J5
 ♣ ---

East
 ♠ J86
 ♥ 10
 ♦ KQ93
 ♣ AJ862

South
 ♠ A42
 ♥ A2
 ♦ A10862
 ♣ KQ9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wang	A Yamada	Sun	Ohno
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
K Yamada	Zhong	Hirata	Zhao
4♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl.
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
5♥	Dbl.	All Pass	

Ohno's decision to pass out 4♥ might have worked I suppose. The problem with such a bid is that even when you have actually achieved the single-dummy par result, as here, since 4♠ can be easily defeated on a club ruff, and is still hard to make on the lead of ♥10, you still lose out in practice. Kaz Yamada's decision to bid 5♥ suffers from the same flaw: all too often you basically hand the opponents a blank check, and ask them to decide whether to take 500 or bid on to 5♠. Both declarers took nine tricks and China led 10-1.

(To make 4♠ on a heart lead you draw trumps and duck a diamond, then ruff out the diamonds and use the clubs as entry. The more practical line of playing on clubs—which probably works if the suit is not 5-0—fails.)

4♠ went down at all but six tables where it was attempted.

Bd: 5	North		
Dlr: North	♠ AK4		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q63		
	♦ 876		
	♣ 9654		
	West		East
	♠ 986		♠ QJ1073
	♥ AJ94		♥ 1085
	♦ 542		♦ 9
	♣ AKQ		♣ J1032
			South
			♠ 52
			♥ K72
			♦ AKQJ103
			♣ 87

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>A Yamada</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Dbl	1NT	2♠	3♦
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>K Yamada</i>	<i>Zhong</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Zhao</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The 3NT contract that was reached by Fu Zhong-Jack Zhao had the ultimate advantage of being absolutely laydown. Whether it was a good contract depends on your definition of whether you'd like to be in a 2-5% contract that can't be set, or if you'd like the imps. Put me in the practical column—for once. The likelihood that the defense will cash out in their seven-card fit is just about small enough that I'm prepared to risk playing game here. It was hard to see any way to reach game unless you follow Zhao's route but the vulnerability hardly makes this automatic. The Chinese led 20-1. Chen Dawei-Kazuo Furuta also reached the game for D-MaTK, and their teammates made 3♠, so the Japanese now led the Israelis 13-10. And for the record 3NT was played at 23 out of 47 tables, quite frequently doubled; yes, partscores are indeed for children.

The next five deals were ideal for a commentator wanting to rush through a match analysis at

breakneck speed. Of the 235 results there were precisely five double-figure swings recorded. At the half-way point in the match—when normal Vugraph service was resumed—D-MaTK led Israel 21-10 and China SMEG led Yamada 28-3.

Bd: 11	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 54		
Vul: None	♥ A987		
	♦ J1096		
	♣ AJ8		
	West		East
	♠ QJ		♠ AK87
	♥ 43		♥ J2
	♦ AK854		♦ Q32
	♣ 6543		♣ KQ109
			South
			♠ 109632
			♥ KQ1065
			♦ 7
			♣ 72

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>A Yamada</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>K Yamada</i>	<i>Zhong</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Zhao</i>
			2♥(1)
Pass	3♥	All Pass	
(1) Two-suiter			

Losing the first five tricks in 3NT is rarely a triumph; here it turned out to be a good save when the defenders slipped slightly and gave up the overtrick in 3♥. When was the last time you saw a pair play 3NT in one room and pass throughout in the other? The 3 imps to China gave them a 31-3 lead.

While Israel declared 4♦ down a trick in one room, a 'finger-fehler' allowed 3NT to make and that was 10 more imps to D-MaTK, up 31-12. The contract also made once when declared by West (Hiroshi Kaku), on a top diamond lead. You will note that even if declarer astutely ducks this, and the suit is continued, there are still only eight tricks.

YAMADA began to claw their way back into their match against SMEG on a deal where a small difference in valuation had a big effect on the final contract.

Bd: 14
 Dir: East
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ 10652
 ♥ K7
 ♦ Q73
 ♣ A1042

West
 ♠ K9
 ♥ A864
 ♦ K95
 ♣ KQ85

East
 ♠ J7
 ♥ 1095
 ♦ J10642
 ♣ 976

South
 ♠ AQ843
 ♥ QJ32
 ♦ A8
 ♣ J3

Bd: 15
 Dir: South
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 543
 ♥ AKQ982
 ♦ Q8
 ♣ 95

West
 ♠ KJ1082
 ♥ J5
 ♦ 932
 ♣ KQ10

South
 ♠ Q6
 ♥ 1074
 ♦ AKJ6
 ♣ J832

East
 ♠ A97
 ♥ 63
 ♦ 10754
 ♣ A764

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>A Yamada</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
			1♠
Dbl	2NT(♠)	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>K Yamada</i>	<i>Zhong</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Zhao</i>
			1♠
Dbl	2♥(♠)	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>A Yamada</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
			Pass
			2♣(1)
			4♥
Pass	1♥	Pass	
2♠	3♥	3♠	
All Pass			
(1) Drury			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>K Yamada</i>	<i>Zhong</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Zhao</i>
			1♦
1♠	2♣(♥)	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

With the ♣KQ onside the defenders can never get their diamond trick going in time. That does not make 4♠ all that beautiful a contract, non-vulnerable. Still, as we have already seen this set, beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but it is hard to imagine anything more beautiful than a score in the "In" column.

Both Wests led a top club. Where Fu was playing 2♠ he took the ♣A and returned the suit and the defenders exited passively with a third club. Ohno ducked the first club and unblocked the ♣J from hand. Both routes led safely to 10 tricks (Ohno of course cashed the ♠A to protect against accidents in the trump suit). 6 imps to Yamada, down 28-9. The same 6 imps went to D-MaTK who bid and made game while Barel-Campanile had a Bergen auction to play 3♠.

Is that North hand worth a drive to the three-level? The field was exactly split on this: a datum of 300 suggests that half the field bid these cards to game. One does not gain either imps or machismo for playing partscores these days.

Yamada came straight back at SMEG with an even bigger swing on Board 15.

Sun's decision to lead a trump on this auction seems to me a surprising one; partner's delayed route into the auction suggests an unbalanced hand with a weak long suit or a hand with a good five-card suit. And if partner had the unbalanced hand with a bad suit at favorable vulnerability, he would be saving against 4♥ now, would he not? [This issue divides the editors; the one who did not know the deal would not lead a spade.] Whether this argument is conclusive, it was certainly reasonable to lead spades at both tables, but only Hirata did so. That was 12 imps to Yamada.

In Israel-D-MaTK the Japanese saved in 4♠x and escaped for 300 by finding the ♠Q. But that was still a 4-imp loss since their teammates collected +170 on a controlled auction to 3♥. The Japanese led 48-19.

(Incidentally, 4♥ made eight times in all, and 3NT by North made once. Of the occasions where a lead is specified on those eight occasions, it is quite remarkable that three of them feature the lead of a black ace.)

Bd: 16
 Dir: West
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ 764
 ♥ KJ6
 ♦ J75
 ♣ KJ64

West
 ♠ 9
 ♥ 5
 ♦ A932
 ♣ AQ109873

South
 ♠ AQ52
 ♥ AQ97
 ♦ Q1064
 ♣ 2

East
 ♠ KJ1083
 ♥ 108432
 ♦ K8
 ♣ 5

Bd: 18
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ AQ983
 ♥ AJ842
 ♦ A2
 ♣ 8

West
 ♠ K6
 ♥ Q963
 ♦ KQ104
 ♣ KJ4

South
 ♠ 7
 ♥ 1075
 ♦ J753
 ♣ Q7532

East
 ♠ J10542
 ♥ K
 ♦ 986
 ♣ A1096

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wang	A Yamada	Sun	Ohno
2♣	Pass	2♠(NF)	Dbl.
3♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
K Yamada	Zhong	Hirata	Zhao
1♣	Pass	1♠	Dbl.
2♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl.
3♣	All Pass		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wang	A Yamada	Sun	Ohno
1♦	2♦(2M)	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
K Yamada	Zhong	Hirata	Zhao
1♦	1♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	2♥	All Pass	

The commentators on BBO were rightly (to my mind) rather contemptuous of Fu's final pass. If your assets are not sufficient to set 3♣, what on earth is partner doing in this auction? Both tables held declarer to seven tricks on a heart lead and trump shift. SMEG led 35-19.

This was nicely done by both defenders; it might be interesting to see what percentage of the field found a less incisive lead or switch. The answer is that 2♣ was doubled on six occasions, 3♣ on nine occasions, and one lucky N/S pair (Lewis-Shah) got to double 4♣. Yes, it was against the Irish. Club contracts were attempted 39 times. They made eight tricks 19 times...and nine tricks once (probably better not to ask how).

D-MaTK doubled 3♣ but only set it one; still good for 3 undertrick-imps. They led Israel 51-19.



The Elephant Lady

The various actions taken by Yamada (the players, not the team) on this deal might be questioned. Although I'm a big fan of the idea that there are no 'in-between' hands unsuitable for Michaels, I also believe that the North hand is grossly unsuitable for a two-suited action. Yes you have both majors, but your defense is most untypical for the call. As against that, sometimes you get to 4♥ when they play 1♠ down at the other table.

And this was indeed such a moment; hearts plays much better than spades, so Akihiko Yamada's decision looks entirely justified, until he took another call with rather less justification. 3♥ went down two tricks on a diamond lead. Declarer won and ducked a club, took the trump shift and started a crossruff but finished up with only seven tricks.

In the other room where Kaz Yamada balanced on an auction where he had no defense to 7♠, he heard his opponents improve their contract dramatically. 2♥ saw the same defense as in the Open Room, but Fu managed an eighth trick by using his high trumps efficiently.

Both tables in Israel-D-MaTK went down in hearts; the undertrick imps gave the home team a further 5 imps. They led 56-29 now.

Bd: 19 North
 Dir: South ♠ KQ2
 Vul: E/W ♥ AJ7
 ♦ 862
 ♣ 6542

West
 ♠ 109743
 ♥ 542
 ♦ AK7
 ♣ 98

East
 ♠ 85
 ♥ K96
 ♦ J10543
 ♣ QJ7

South
 ♠ AJ6
 ♥ Q1083
 ♦ Q9
 ♣ AK103

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
Wang	A Yamada	Sun	Ohno
K Yamada	Zhong	Hirata	Zhao
			1NT

Pass 3NT All Pass

Defending 3NT as East, you see partner lead an unreadable spade—let's say a fourth highest four. Declarer wins the ♠J in hand and passes the ♥10, on which your partner's spot card might suggest a switch. Clubs or diamonds? Which needs less? Or

more precisely, which defense can you recover from if you select wrongly? Let's assume you can read from the spots that declarer has three-four in the majors, thus only six tricks in those suits. If so, then say you play a diamond and find partner with the 'wrong' hand: a 5-2-2-4 pattern with ♣A and ♦Q. You may still set the hand anyway, since declarer will have to let you in before he can take nine winners.

Conversely, if a diamond is essential you may not get another shot. On the actual hand (or if declarer has the ♦K instead of the ♦Q and not the ♣10) you'd better play a diamond now or it is too late. Sun shifted to diamonds, Hirata played the ♣Q; 10 imps to China. That made the match score 53-24, a 21-9 win for them.

D-MaTK gained the same game-swing (both tables led spades against 3NT and only Ino found the killing switch) to go in front 67-29 for a 23-7 win.

Around the room 3NT was declared at every single table—and set on each of the 10 occasions North played it—not an especially challenging feat. Of the 37 times the contract was played by South it made 22 times. Hmm, maybe it is a lot easier with the sight of all four hands.

Looking for an Expert Partner?

If you are looking for a professional partner for the Yokohama Swiss Teams or the Asuka Cup, please contact the Secretariat in Room E206. We will try to make up a partnership with an expert from abroad. Please negotiate with your partner about the fees.

Experts: Do you want to offer professional service to local players? If you are willing to play with local players (on a paid basis or not) in the Yokohama Swiss Teams (2-day team match) on the 10th (Saturday) and 11th (Sunday) or the Asuka Cup (2-session Open Pairs) on the 12th (Monday), please contact the Secretariat in Room E206. Please negotiate with your partner about the fees.

Top O' the Mornin': Meet The Irish Team

The team of Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann, Nick FitzGibbon, Adam Mesbur, Tommy Garvey, and John Carroll were European Open Team quarter-finalists in 2003 and 2005, Olympiad quarter-finalists in Istanbul in 2004 and European Team Silver medallists in Warsaw in 2006.



Tom Hanlon



Hugh McGann

Tom Hanlon was born in 1967. Originally from Rochfortbridge, Co. Westmeath, Tom (aka "Kinder"), now living in Dublin, has been playing bridge since 1981. He got his nickname Kinder while playing in Budapest in 1986. When chatting with a gorgeous barmaid, who was rebuking his amorous advances, all she could mutter was "kinder"—and he still has that look about him. In 2004 he became Ireland's youngest Grand Master (only one of 8). Kinder moved straight from the Irish Junior Team to the Irish Open Team in 1994, following which he regularly represented Ireland in International events. He has 25 National titles under his belt. He won the Camrose 3 times and the Lederer twice. When not playing bridge Tom is fond of the odd game of poker!

Dr. Hugh McGann, also aged 39 (but older than Tom), is from Fermoy, Co. Cork but now lives in Leeds. Hugh works as a doctor specializing in infectious diseases. He formed a partnership with Tom Hanlon in 1991 and won a silver medal in the E.U. Junior Pairs in 1993. He has shared Tom's recent successes with the Irish Open Team. Four years ago Hugh spent some time in Australia. There began his love affair with that country which culminated in the Gold Congress of 2005 in Surfers Paradise, where he met Fiona Brown. A few months later Fiona moved to Leeds to be with Hugh. They just missed out on a medal, finishing 4th in the 2006 World Mixed Pairs in Verona.



Adam Mesbur



Nick FitzGibbon

Adam Mesbur is married to Noelette and has two teenage children. He recently resigned as Head of Derivatives Trading with IIB Bank, Dublin and he is now the director of a Luxembourg property company. He has had a long-standing partnership with Nick FitzGibbon. This was put on hold in 1991 after Killarney but the partnership has resumed since Salsomaggiore in 2002. With Nick, he took a Silver Medal in the Junior European Teams Championships in 1974, bronze in the 1979 European Teams in Lausanne and a Silver medal in the Common Market Pairs of 1980.

Nick FitzGibbon is one of only eight Grand Masters in Irish bridge. His international bridge career predates his partnership with Adam in that he played on the Irish Open Team in the Miami Olympiad in 1972, finishing in 12th position. He has played in 8 European Championships, 6 Olympiads and 3 World Pairs/Rosenblum Teams. His life revolves around the pony-riding career of his daughter Nicola, where he is required to drive the transport. Now he must reorganize as he prepares to represent Ireland in their first Bermuda Bowl.



John Carroll



Tommy Garvey

John Carroll is a Research & Development Manager with a software house based in Dublin. With his regular partner, Tommy Garvey, he has won a number of caps for Ireland on the European stage, most recently on the Irish team that finished

in Silver Medal Position in Warsaw last year. If this wasn't enough to be busy with, he and his wife Ann Marie are expecting the birth of their first child in April.

Tommy Garvey was introduced to bridge about 15 years ago by his father Donal. Tommy works in London as an actuary, returning home to raid for

trophies every so often. He and John made their international debut in Italy at the European Championships in Montecatini in 1997 and in doing so, achieved a distinction shared by only one other family in Irish bridge—the O'Connells from Cork, who until Tommy and Donal appeared, were the only father and son to play on the Irish team together.

12th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue	
Friday (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)		
Saturday (Feb. 10)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (2)	E204	
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break		
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final (1)		
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)		
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams (1)		F203-206
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams (2)		
Sunday (Feb. 11)	10:00-12:20	NEC Cup Final (1) & 3 rd Playoff (1)	E204	
	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)		
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams (2)		F203-206
Monday (Feb. 12)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	F203-206	
	18:00-20:30	Closing Ceremony	F201-204	

Swiss, Quarter- & Semi-Final segments = 20 boards; Final & 3rd place playoff segments = 16 boards

