



NEC Bridge Festival

Monday, February 12, 2007
Bulletin Number 6

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

The Netherlands Wins 2007 NEC Cup

The first quarter went pretty much The Netherlands' way. The second quarter went pretty much Poland/Russia's way. The third and fourth quarters were about as close as any we have seen in many years. So that about describes a match that went right down to the wire. Tied at the half, a 1-imp margin at the three-quarters, and a 5-imp win at the end. Congratulations to The Netherlands and to Poland/Russia for a thrilling battle. Read the story of the first two quarters of the 2007 NEC Cup final in this issue (see page 13); the story of the third and fourth quarters will appear in tonight's issue.



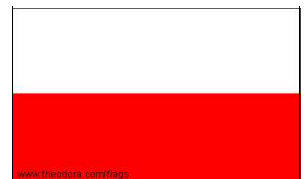
2007 NEC Cup winners



2007 NEC Cup runners-up

NEC Cup Final: Quarter-by-Quarter Results

Team	C/O	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Final
RUSSIA/POLAND	.5	17	39	21	32	109
The NETHERLANDS		43	13	22	36	114



Results of the Yokohama Swiss on page 3

Team Rosters (KOs): 12th NEC Cup

#	Name	Members
1	Poland/Russia:	Adam Zmudzinski, Cezary Balicki, Andrei Gromov, Alexander Dubinin
2	China-Beijing:	Wang Kui, Cheng Zhe, Shi Zhengjun, Ju Chuancheng, Shi Jianxin, Fan Xinyan
3	Hackett:	Paul Hackett, Geir Helgemo, Justin Hackett, Jason Hackett, John Armstrong
4	Israel:	Migry Zur-Campanile, Michael Barel, Amir Levin, Yaniv Zack
5	D-MaTK:	Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura
6	The Netherlands:	Huub Bertens, Ton Bakkeren, Leon Jacobs, Maarten Schollaardt
7	OzOne-Bridge:	Bob Richman, Zoli Nagy, Michael Prescott, Paul Marston
8	Shy Ant:	Yasuhiro Shimizu, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Ryoga Tanaka, Tomoyuki Harada

Note of explanation to players from overseas: JCBL Alert and Convention Regulations

Unlike the NEC Cup, which is an international event in which almost all non-brown-sticker conventions are permitted, the Yokohama Swiss and Asuka Cup are rated as Japanese national events, and the JCBL regulations for domestic events apply strictly. We ask for your compliance with the JCBL Alert and Convention regulations. All overseas players got copies in their complementary briefcase when they registered. If you lost or misplaced your copy ask the JCBL staff for another copy.

If you have any questions about what systems/conventions are allowed, please ask the JCBL staff. Please note that use of unauthorized conventions may be penalized. Thank you for your cooperation.

CONVENTION RESTRICTIONS

In the Asuka Cup, in which each round features two boards against each other pair, you are restricted to "List C" conventions, but in the Yokohama Swiss you can use "List D" conventions (which includes all "List C" conventions, as well as others such as the 2D Multi-opening). Note, however, that use of the Multi-2D (as well as other "List D" conventions) is strictly prohibited in the Asuka Cup and will be subject to penalty.

PRE-ALERT DUTY

If your 1NT opening includes anything outside 15-18 points, you must pre-alert the opponents before each round (before taking your cards out of the board). If you use List D conventions or if your 1NT opening includes anything outside 15-18 points, you must pre-alert the opponents before each round (before taking your cards out of the board) and you and your partner must carry two copies of the official JCBL sample defense for the opponents' use. (You got the sample defense in your briefcase; if you lost it, ask the JCBL staff for another.)

Thank you.

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.

YOKOHAMA SRR & SWISS TEAMS

Flight A 32T, 120A

1. CHINA SMEG	172	Wang Xiaojing, Sun Shaolin, Yang Lixin, Dai Tianming
2-3. PHRAMN	168	Bob Richman, Paul Marston, John Armstrong, Zoli Nagy, Mike Prescott, Paul Hackett
2-3. D-MaTK	168	Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura
4. SHONEN	151	Yasushi Kobayashi, Makoto Hirata, Masaru Yoshida, Hidenori Narita
5. THE LATIN	147	Carlos Pellegrini, Frankie Frontaura, Diego Brenner, Pablo Ravenna
6. POLAND	145	Krzysztof Buras, Grzegorz Narkiewicz, Rafal Jafnewski, Michal Kwiecien
7. ISRAEL	144	Migry Zur Campanile, Michael Barel, Yaniv Zack, Amir Levin
8-9. TAJIMA	143	Mitsue Tajima, Tadashi Teramoto, Masaaki Takayama, Fu Zhong, Zhao Jie
8-9. VEGA*	143	Valerie Gardiner, Brian Challaghan, Wayne Burrows, Michael Ware, Peter Gill
10. HELMAN	140	Leonard Helman, Vazio Kovachev, Victor Aronov, Mark Horton, Kay Enfield
11. IRELAND	137	Nick FitzGibbon, Adam Mesbur, Tommy Garvey, John Carroll, Tom Hanlon, Huh McGann
12. YAMADA	134	Akihiko Yamada, Kyoko Ohno, Kazuhiko Yamada, Takahiko Hirata

Flight B 30T, 120A

1. DARK STAR	180	Yoshinori Kurachi, Jun Cheng, Hideto Yamaguchi, Mark LaForge
2. LANDOLT	163	Noriko Moriwaki, Kyoko Kadono, Toru Amano, Shozo Yamagata
3. CHARADE	162	Shunichi Haga, Kazuo Takano, Misako Fukazawa, Sumiko Sugino
4. Queens & Knights	161	Yuko Yamada, Koji Yamada, Hiroyuki Noda, Yuko Noda
5. MINK	150	Yasuyo Iida, Misae Kato, Atsuko Katsumata, Kimiko Kamakari, Midori Sakamoto
6. ANAZAWA	145	Keiko Anazawa, Shimako Yaji, Kyoko Miura, Yukiko Otani
7. NAITO	137	Sakiko Naito, Kenji Miyakuni, Makoto Kono, Ayako Amano
8. MIYAZAKI	133	Teruo Miyazaki, Masakatsu Sugino, Harumi Shibano, Akiko Kawabata
9. MARUYAMA	132	Yoko Maruyama, Hiroaki Miura, Yuichi Masamura, Yumiko Oda
10. NAKAKAWAJI	130	Toyoko Nakakawaji, Toshiko Hiramori, Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura
11. GOTO	129	Michio Goto, Betty Tajiri, Etsuko Hasegawa, Junko Tsubaki

Flight C 28T, 120A

1. ONISHI	170	Hiroko Onishi, Hideko Kobayashi, Chiaki Sakamoto, Kunihiro Takahashi
2. OKUBO	168	Yukiko Okubo, Keiko Sasaki, Minako Hiratsuka, Hisayo Goto
3. TOKUSHIGE	166	Yoko Tokushige, Junko Takeda, Kimiko Mori, Hiroyuki Hosoda, Ruri Ote
4. SAITO	149	Takako Saito, Haruko Kikuchi, Mayumi Komiya, Noriko Naito
5. ILLINGWORTH	145	Richard Illingworth, Machiko Kanehara, Hideko Takeuchi, Kyoko Okada
6. Honey Hunt	142	Junko Den, Chieko Ichikawa, Kuniko Saito, Yoshiko Murata, Atsuko Kurita
7. YASUHARA	140	Ryoichi Yasuhara, Seiko Morinaga, Kumiko Matsuo, Chieko Shiraishi
8. MY-Bridge	138	Masafumi Yoshizawa, Noriko Yoshizawa, Kuniko Miyauchi, Yoshitaka Agata
9. GRENSIDE	137	Sue Grenside, Takako Nakatani, Taeko Kuratani, Reiko Fukuda
10. KAWANA	126	Kazuhiko Kawana, Junkichi Sawai, Takehiko Takagi, Miyako Suzuki



Yokohama Swiss Flight A 1st



Yokohama Swiss Flight B 1st



Yokohama Swiss Flight C 1st

The Quarterfinals Revisited

Some of the gems from the first half of the quarterfinals were not included in yesterday's article (we'd tell you whose mistake it was...but then we'd have to kill you). So here they are:

Bd: 5	North		
Dlr: North	♠ KJ62		
Vul: N/S	♥ A2		
	♦ Q53		
	♣ J765		
		East	
West		♠ A1095	
♠ 843		♥ 10765	
♥ QJ943		♦ K	
♦ J6		♣ K1093	
♣ Q82			
	South		
	♠ Q7		
	♥ K8		
	♦ A1098742		
	♣ A4		

You'd like to play this in 3NT, not 5♦, but the fall of the ♦K forgives any inaccuracy in the bidding, right? Wrong, or at least not quite right the way you'd expect. Barel-Campanile held the N/S cards and Barel passed in first chair, Campanile opened 1♦ and West overcalled 1♥, an action that would not meet with the approval of many—let's be charitable. After North doubled East bid 2♦ to show a heart raise, South kept her light temporarily under a bushel by doubling, and West felt he had done enough and bid only 2♥. When North bid 2NT South raised to 3NT and East smartly doubled in the pass-out seat. That floated back to North who redoubled (doubt) and South without much doubt let it slide. On a heart lead declarer won in hand, led a low diamond up, and on the sight of the ♦K graciously conceded the ♠A. Quick, everybody, what does that score? Yes, 2200 for 17 imps; and you thought that was a BAD number

to record as declarer.

Bd: 12	North		
Dlr: West	♠ Q98632		
Vul: N/S	♥ 87		
	♦ A4		
	♣ 875		
		West	
		♠ 105	
		♥ AQ106532	
		♦ J3	
		♣ 104	
			East
			♠ J4
			♥ KJ4
			♦ K10976
			♣ KQJ
		South	
		♠ AK7	
		♥ 9	
		♦ Q852	
		♣ A9632	

West	North	East	South
Zack	Jacobs	Levin	Schollaardt
3♥	Pass	4♥	DbI
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Another great deal. On any lead but an early club you are home, but if they lead the logical ♣K you must duck—if you take it you may avoid going down 200 when the suit is four-one but there is essentially no lie of the cards that might succeed. Every declarer fell from grace here except one. Leon Jacobs did make 4♠ by ducking the club; he was the only one to make the play, so kudos where kudos is due, Leon.

The point is that after ducking the club the defenders can't continue clubs or the diamond loser goes away, and on a heart shift and diamond through declarer sets up a diamond discard for the losing club.

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

Bridge Defense - What's Going On (6)?

by Mike Lawrence

North deals, no one vulnerable.

West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	2♥
2♠	Pass	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
NORTH			
♠ A62			
♥ A95			
♦ QJ97			
♣ Q95			
WEST			
♠ 543			
♥ 87			
♦ A6542			
♣ K73			

If you do decide to “give information” about the quality of your suit, do so as emphatically as possible so as to leave partner no doubt about what's happening.

♠ A62	
♥ A95	
♦ QJ97	
♣ Q95	
♠ 543	♠ QJ1098
♥ 87	♥ 63
♦ A6542	♦ 83
♣ K73	♣ AJ104
♠ K7	
♥ KQJ1042	
♦ K10	
♣ 862	

West leads the ♠5. Since West has raised spades, he leads high from three small. If West led the three, East might think West had an honor in the suit. Leading the five won't suggest a doubleton because West wouldn't raise with two small. Dummy plays the ♠A and East plays the queen. Declarer draws trump in two rounds, East following twice. When declarer leads the ♦K, you have to decide what to do.

Win the diamond and switch to a club. Partner's ♠Q is not suit preference of any sort. It is an information play telling you his spades are headed by the QJ. If East had the ♠KQ, he would play a high spot or would discard the king. There is a fine line between suit preference and giving information as done here.

At trick one, East could not tell whether West was leading from the 543 or the K75. East's play of the queen would cater to either holding. Had East played the ten or nine, West could not be blamed for thinking it was an encouraging card. The queen told West what was going on in spades and allowed West to determine the best defense. Once East played the queen, West knew East had the ♣A because East needed it for his overcall. Another way for West to look at the problem is this. East's ♠Q denied the king. Therefore, declarer has it. Declarer is known to have eleven tricks (two spades, six hearts, and three diamonds) if he is given time to get them. West must switch to a club or else.

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

Images of Our Game



“How do our relays work here again?”



“Who threw that pencil at me?”



“Eh...magnifique!”

Discovery Reveals Origin of Bridge

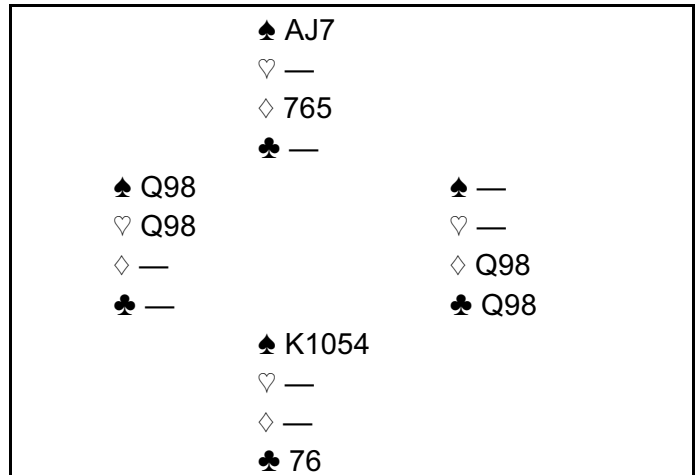
by Richard Pavlicek

The Western World was stunned by an incredible discovery made public last week. Egyptian archaeologists, in a new excavation only two miles from the tomb of Tutankhamen, uncovered artifacts that have a direct bearing on the heritage of bridge.

According to project coordinator, Awadar Habir, "Over a two-month period we unearthed 17 clay tablets. All have been authenticated by electrophoresis and radiocarbon tests, and we welcome verification by outside experts. We are now in the process of deciphering the writings, which are hieroglyphics of the 18th dynasty."

At this writing the United States has officially accepted Mr. Habir's invitation. A team of Egyptologists, headed by Clayton Chernak, Ph.D., of Harvard, will leave Tuesday to participate in the findings. I have been invited as a bridge expert—have shovel, will travel. It sounds exciting.

Habir divulged that the first four tablets contained a treatise entitled "Tut's Bridge Complete," which included many card diagrams followed by explanations. He released the following diagram because the explanation had become fossilized by Tana leaves and the translators were puzzled.



Tutankhamen wrote that five of the six tricks must be won with spades trump and South to lead; but from that point on it was indiscernible. Can you solve the mystery?

Tut's Solution:

There is just one solution. Tutankhamen played a spade to the ace. (The finesse wasn't discovered until centuries later.) He then led a diamond and trumped with the ♠10. West must overruff and return a trump—else the solution is easy—and North's jack is played. Then: (1) If East keeps only one diamond, a diamond ruff establishes the North hand; (2) if East keeps only one club, South overtakes with the ♠K to ruff a club and establish the South hand.

Tut-tut.



"Are you sure this is how Monty Python got started?"

For more of Richard Pavlicek on bridge, visit his web site at: www.rpbridge.net

Images of Our Game



"It's got a telephoto lens, infrared targeting, and you can plug in your I-Pod and download gospel songs."



"Little help here. Can someone help a fella get a drink?"



"Here dearie, let me show you. You just wave your hand over the card and it turns into an extra trump."

NEC Cup Semifinals: ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

by Rich Colker

Second Half:

At the end of 20 boards, in our featured match, ENGLAND+(Hackett) leads The NETHERLANDS by 17 imps, 48-31, while in our other semifinal match POLAND/RUSSIA leads OzOne-Bridge comfortably by 37 imps, 66-29. The *dramatis persona* should by now be familiar to the reader, so off we go—20 boards to the 2007 NEC Cup final.

Bd: 1	North		East
Dlr: North	♠ ---		♠ 109653
Vul: None	♥ KJ10743		♥ A
	♦ Q743		♦ AK85
	♣ 542		♣ K87
West		South	
♠ AK87		♠ QJ42	
♥ Q962		♥ 85	
♦ 92		♦ J106	
♣ J109		♣ AQ63	

ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Justin H</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Jason H</i>
	3♥	Dbf	Pass

4♠ All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	2♥	Dbf	Pass

3♠ Pass 4♠ All Pass

Actions like North's in the Open Room here have become more and more commonplace in high-level bridge. My co-editor extols them (although he admits that this specific hand is flawed for a three-bid) and even I condone them at favorable vulnerability, or in third seat at equal. But if it walks like a weak two, and talks like a weak two... Tactics like this generate too many random results for my taste and give me the impression that bridge belongs to the same class of activity of which demolition derby and "chicken" are charter members. Sigh.

Be that as it may, in this case 3♥ drove E/W to a spade game they might easily have bid on their own but that should go down (though 3NT is cold). But as some hack writer once wrote, "the play's the thing..."

Justin led the ♦3. Bertens rose ace to play a spade

to the ace—ugh—then the ♣J to the queen. Jason now made a critical error by returning the ♠Q (any card other than a high spade would have worked). Bertens won, played a diamond to the ace, ruffed a diamond, crossed to dummy's ♥A, and led the fourth diamond scoring his ♠8 (it would do South no good to ruff high in front of him). He then ruffed a heart and exited with a trump, and had to score two of the remaining tricks. A great +420.

The play went the same way in the Closed Room to the first three tricks but at trick four Schollaardt returned the ♦10 instead of a top spade after winning the ♣Q. Helgemo won in dummy and played a spade, and Schollaardt did very well to duck (if he splits declarer can come to ten tricks; see below). Helgemo won cheaply in hand, played a heart to the ace, the ♣K to the ace, won the diamond return, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart, came to hand with the ♣10, and led a fourth heart, ruffed and overruffed. The trump return now left Helgemo with a heart loser; -50. 10 imps to the Dutchmen.

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	3♥	Dbf	Pass

4♠ All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubinín</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
	3♥	Dbf	Pass

3♠ Pass 4♠ All Pass

In the Open Room Balicki led the ♣5, ducked to the queen, and Zmudzinski played ace and out a club to the king. Nagy played a spade to the ace, a heart to the ace, and a second spade and Zmudzinski erred by splitting his honors in a similar position to the one in which we saw Schollaardt find the winning duck against Helgemo. Now we see why the duck was so crucial. Nagy overruffed, played the ♦AK, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a heart, and led the last diamond. Now Zmudzinski could ruff or not, as dummy was down to all trumps. Plus 420.

In the Closed Room, where 4♠ had been doubled, Marston led a diamond to the ace. Dubinín played a low spade to the eight (nice play, but the contract was still doomed against best defense), a heart to the ace, and a spade. Now it was Prescott's turn to err by splitting. Dubinín won the jack with the ace and now it was his turn to err by not playing on diamonds. (The contract is cold if he just crossruffs the red suits

now.) Instead he led the ♣J to the queen and Prescott now led a second round of hearts, prematurely removing Dubinin's late dummy entry. Eventually Dubinin finished down one, for -100, and 11 imps to OzOne.

Bd: 2
 Dlr: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ K42
 ♥ 1075
 ♦ A2
 ♣ KJ1052

West	East
♠ A1085	♠ J9
♥ Q863	♥ AK42
♦ QJ98	♦ K10763
♣ 4	♣ 96

South
 ♠ Q763
 ♥ J9
 ♦ 54
 ♣ AQ873

ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Justin H</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Jason H</i>
1♥	Pass	1♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass	3♥	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
3♥	All Pass	1♥	Pass

It's not exactly clear what Bertens' 2♠ bid meant here. If it was a game try then why did he carry on to game after Bakkeren rejected it? So that makes us think it must have been some sort of relay and the 3♥ response may have revealed the double fit. In any case there really wasn't much to the play. Justin led the ♣J to the ace and Bertens won the ♠A on the low spade switch. He drew trumps in three rounds, knocked out the ♦A, and claimed; +420.

In the Closed Room Armstrong and Helgemo, playing four-card majors, never discovered their secondary diamond fit and simply bid their high-card values, stopping in 3♥ and taking the same ten tricks. Plus 170 was 6 more imps to the Dutchmen, leading in the set 16-0, down in the match 48-47.

It is better to have poor taste than no taste at all!

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
4♥	All Pass	1♦	Pass

4♥ All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubinin</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
1♥	Pass	1♦	Pass
		2♥	All Pass

Richman's 1♦ in the Open Room showed four-plus hearts. We cannot say whether it is Standard Aussie to bid any game that is likely to have even a remote chance of success (we do strongly suspect it) or whether it was merely a shot in the dark here, but in either case the 4♥ bid is reasonable. Plus 420.

In the Closed Room the Russian style is somewhat more conservative and without knowing about the double fit they did not even sniff at game. We think West must shoulder the blame here since 1♦ is usually at least four and the double fit certainly makes game prospects realistic, even if East is minimum. Certainly at least a game try was called for. Plus 170 and 6 imps to the Aussies, increasing their lead to 17-0 in the set, but trailing 66-46 overall.

Bd: 3
 Dlr: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ 973
 ♥ QJ
 ♦ A87532
 ♣ KQ

West	East
♠ AJ85	♠ K106
♥ K2	♥ 10983
♦ QJ	♦ K1064
♣ AJ764	♣ 95

South
 ♠ Q42
 ♥ A7654
 ♦ 9
 ♣ 10832

ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Justin H</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Jason H</i>
1NT	Pass	Pass	2♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
Pass	2♦	Dbl	2♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
1NT	Pass	Pass	2♥
All Pass			

The twins ran into a buzz saw on this deal but were lucky it did not turn out worse than it did. Jason won the ♦Q lead with the ace and led the ♣Q to the ace. Bertens won and returned to diamonds as Jason ruffed, crossed back to the ♣K, and tried the heart finesse. Bertens won and returned a heart and Jason could have insured down two by ruffing a diamond. But he did not know that Bertens did not have another one so he pitched played a diamond pitching a spade, then pitched a second spade on another diamond, and when West came on lead with a spade claimed two mor tricks for two down, -300.

At the other table Schollaardt balanced directly with 2♥ and Armstrong did not double, perhaps because he feared the opponents discovering a hidden club fit, or perhaps because it would have been takeout. Schollaardt won the ♦Q lead with the ace, ruffed a diamond, and got out with a club. He won the club return and tried to ruff another diamond; Helgemo overruffed with the king and returned a heart to dummy's jack. Schollaardt now ruffed a diamond low, ruffed a club with dummy's ♥Q and scored his ♥A separately. Down one, -50, and 6 more imps to The Netherlands, leading 22-0 in the set, 53-48 overall.

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
1♣	2♦	All Pass	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
1♣	2♦	Pass	Pass
DbI	Pass	2♥	All Pass

The Aussies' play a weak notrump so all hands in the strong notrump range start with a strong club. Richman may have been waiting for a balancing double (otherwise he should have taken direct action) and if so he is still waiting. Against 2♦ he led the ♥10 to Nagy's king, and Nagy continued with ace and a club. Balicki tried ace and a diamond, and Nagy won and played the ♣J, ruffed and overruffed. Richman cashed the ♦K, then played ♠K10 and the defense came to eight tricks; +150.

Someone once said, "Two sides play same contract,

one side crazy." I must now modify that to: "Both sides crazy." Our friend DF claims E/W are entitled to seven tricks in their four-two heart fit while N/S are only entitled to six in their five-two fit. Go figure. At any rate, only Balicki achieved par on this deal (five tricks in 2♦). In 2♥ Gromov managed to take five of the seven tricks he was entitled to (we'd be happy to tell you how he did it but the play record is faulty); -300; 10 imps to OzOne, up 27-0 in the set, down 66-56 in the match.

Bd: 4
 Dlr: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ K10973
 ♥ Q7654
 ♦ 4
 ♣ A4

West
 ♠ 85
 ♥ J983
 ♦ K83
 ♣ KJ96

East
 ♠ AJ
 ♥ K102
 ♦ J9752
 ♣ 832

South
 ♠ Q642
 ♥ A
 ♦ AQ106
 ♣ Q1075

ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Justin H</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Jason H</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

In the Open Room the Twins stopped sensibly in 4♠ and received the ♦2 opening lead. Justin lost the finesse, flew with the ace on the club return, crossed to the ♥A to discard his low club on the ♦A, and crossruffed his way to ten easy tricks; +620.

In the Closed Room Jacobs-Schollaardt tried the more ambitious contract of 6♠. Unfortunately for them, they too played it from the North seat when it can only be made by South. The play developed as in the Open Room so Jacobs finished two down, -200. 13 imps to Hackett, who now trailed 22-13 in the set, but led in the match 61-52.

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Both sides played in 4♠ in the Oz-Alliance duel, but here both teams declared from the South seat where 12 tricks were possible. Prescott took 11 tricks on a club lead but Zmudzinski managed all 12 tricks on the same lead. (Twelve tricks are attainable on any lead. The interested reader can send money for details.) Poland had their first imp trailing in the set 27-1 but up in the match 67-56.

Bd: 5
 Dir: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ AK9532
 ♥ K10
 ♦ KJ
 ♣ A95

West	East
♠ Q874	♠ 10
♥ 976532	♥ QJ4
♦ 97	♦ A865
♣ 10	♣ K7432

South
 ♠ J6
 ♥ A8
 ♦ Q10432
 ♣ QJ86

ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Justin H</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Jason H</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
2♥	1♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♠	5♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

4♠ by N/S is the normal contract and ten tricks the normal result. That is what happened in the Open Room but in the Closed Room Helgemo threw in a frivolous 2♥ overcall and Armstrong couldn't take a joke, bid on to the five level, and got whacked. At least Geir would have to play it. Jacobs led the ♠K and shifted to the ♦K. Helgemo won and exited with a diamond to the queen. The ♠J was covered all around and ruffed. Helgemo now played a diamond and when Schollaardt ducked he pitched his club as Jacobs ruffed. A spade was now ruffed and overruffed and a trump back left declarer with a spade loser for down four, -800. That was 5 moreimps for the Dutchmen, leading the set 27-13 but trailing in the match 61-58.

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Poland/Russia picked up an overtrick imp to double their imp total, trailing 27-2 in the set, up 68-56 in the match.

Most of the remaining boards were pretty dull, with only a couple of swings left in each match. Here are the highlights of those few boards.

Bd: 12
 Dir: West
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 8432
 ♥ 104
 ♦ Q1092
 ♣ KJ2

West	East
♠ AK	♠ QJ7
♥ KJ73	♥ AQ85
♦ J6	♦ A8753
♣ Q10743	♣ 8

South
 ♠ 10965
 ♥ 962
 ♦ K4
 ♣ A965

ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Justin H</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Jason H</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Hearts on the four-four fit is the only game that makes, so naturally someone had to try notrump. It was a dirty job but Helgemo and Armstrong were up to it. The only real chance was to get an intermediate diamond lead from North, duck it to the king, and to then force North to split his remaining honors to allow declarer the timing to set up the ♦87 for a ninth trick. Unfortunately Jacobs led a spade and in short order Helgemo was forced to cash out his eight tricks for -50. That was 10 imps to The Netherlands, ahead at this point 37-19 in the set, 68-67 in the match.

At this point Poland/Russia trailed OzOne 30-6 in the set, but led by 72-59 in the match.

Bd: 15
 Dir: South
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ K9
 ♥ AK10754
 ♦ 7
 ♣ QJ64

West	East
♠ Q6	♠ 854
♥ 863	♥ Q
♦ J92	♦ KQ1086543
♣ A9532	♣ 8

South
 ♠ AJ10732
 ♥ J92
 ♦ A
 ♣ K107

ENGLAND+(Hackett) vs The NETHERLANDS

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Justin H</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Jason H</i>
Pass	2♥	4♦	4♥
5♦	5♥	Pass	6♥
Dbl	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	1NT	5♦	1♠
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	Pass

6♥ is a very reasonable contract—looking at the N/S cards. But Bertens was looking at the West hand and he suspected different. He thought (quite rightly) that Bakkeren would have short clubs since he figured to have most of the high diamond honors yet N/S had blasted into slam and that meant that they had the outstanding high clubs. So he backed up his judgment by doubling. Bakkeren led a club to the ace and obtained his ruff. It was all over in the twinkle of an eye; +200. At the other table the Dutchmen took their four tricks against 5♦ doubled to score up +300. That was good for 11 more imps, now leading 48-19 in the set, 79-67 in the match.

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nagy</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	2♥	5♦	1♠
6♣	Dbl	6♦	Pass
All Pass			Dbl

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Marston</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Prescott</i>
Pass	1♠	4♦	1♥
5♦	6♠	All Pass	4♠

If 5♦x goes down two tricks then 6♦x should go down three. And so it did. The Poles came away with only 500 against the 650 for their heart game.

At the other table Marston suffered the same fate in 6♠ that befell the Twins in 6♥ in the featured match; again a club was led to the ace and returned for a ruff. Plus 100; 12 more imps to Poland/Russia. They trailed 30-19 in the set but led 85-59 in the match.

Bd: 19
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ AJ87
 ♥ AK
 ♦ Q542
 ♣ K62

West	East
♠ KQ109643	♠ 52
♥ Q87	♥ 6
♦ 93	♦ AJ10876
♣ 5	♣ AQJ8

South
 ♠ ---
 ♥ J1095432
 ♦ K
 ♣ 109743

Flattery is the sincerest form of lying

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Nagy	Balicki	Richman	Zmudzinski
3♠	4♥	Dbl	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Dubinin	Marston	Gromov	Prescott
Pass	Pass	5♦	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

He who bids last gets doubled. Against 4♥x Nagy led the ♠K to the ace as Zmudzinski pitched his ♦K. The ♥AK followed after which Zmudzinski ruffed a spade and tried the ♣3: 5, 6, 8. He eventually lost three more club tricks and ended up down two, -300.

Against 5♦x Prescott led the ♥J to the king, and Marston switched to a low diamond to the ace and king. A spade went to the ace and Marston cashed the ♦Q and exited with a diamond. Gromov ran the rest of his diamonds, played a spade to the king and when the jack did not fall led a club to the queen. The king fell on the next round but Prescott still had a fourth-round club trick for down two, -500. That was 13imps to OzOne, bringing the session score to 48-20 and the match score to 86-77.

Board 20, the final frontier.

Bd: 20	North
Dlr: West	♠ K753
Vul: Both	♥ AQ
	♦ 762
	♣ AK106
West	East
♠ 1094	♠ AQ862
♥ J8742	♥ K65
♦ K1093	♦ 85
♣ 3	♣ 874
	South
	♠ J
	♥ 1093
	♦ AQJ4
	♣ QJ952

POLAND/RUSSIA vs OzOne-Bridge
Open Room

West	North	East	South
Nagy	Balicki	Richman	Zmudzinski
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Dubinin	Marston	Gromov	Prescott
Pass	1♣	1♠	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Both tables got to 3NT from the North seat and both declarers received the ♠6 opening lead. Both then led a heart to the queen, but at that point the plays went in quite different directions. In the Closed Room Prescott won and got out with a club. Marston won in hand and tried the diamond finesse but Dubinin won and returned the ♠10, holding, and then cleared the spades for two down, -200.

In the Open Room Richman apparently had a blind spot and ducked the ♥Q, giving declarer his ninth trick. (With five likely club tricks visible in dummy to go with the ♦A, ♠J, and ♥A, the ♥Q had to be trick nine didn't it?) That was +600 for the Poles and a 13-imp pickup to bring the session total to 48-33 OzOne but the match total to 99-77 Poland/Russia.

In then other match the final five boards were totally scoreless making the session result 48-19 for The Netherlands and the match total 79-67 for the Dutch.

So in the final it's Poland/Russia, one of the pre-tournament favorites, against The Netherlands, a team with two practiced partnerships and a lot of success under their belts. Of course by the time you read this the final will be over, but in the following pages and in today's late bulletin we will cover the entire match. Good luck to both teams. We're certain it will be a close and hard-fought affair.

If God had wanted us to travel economy class, he would have made us narrower.



"Where's the hand you held during the auction?"



"Pay attention. You're THE dummy, not A dummy."

NEC Cup Final: POLAND/RUSSIA ve The NETHERLANDS

by Barry Rigal

First Segment (Boards 1-16):

The final features The Netherlands (or "Netherlands" as one obstinate editor would prefer) against Poland/Russia ("The Alliance"). Schollaardt-Jacobs play something akin to a regular strong club with a 14-16 notrump, Bertens-Bakkeren play Standard Expert Dutch : five-card majors, a Polish-style 1♣ opening with Muiderbergh twos (Multi 2♦ and two-suiters). The Poles play Polish Club, the Russians play Precision.

Bd: 1
Dlr: North
Vul: None

North
♠ KJ1082
♥ 73
♦ A8542
♣ 8

West
♠ Q973
♥ AJ1064
♦ ---
♣ 9764

East
♠ A5
♥ Q2
♦ Q10763
♣ QJ102

South
♠ 64
♥ K985
♦ KJ9
♣ AK53

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	2♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Both tables played 2♠; Gromov played it as North on a club lead. He won and led a spade to the jack (a sound play on psychological lines since why would the defense shift to hearts?), then won the club continuation and finessed in spades. He now cashed the ♠K as East pitched a diamond. So far so good. But when declarer now led a diamond to the king (an error that only costs against five-zero diamonds) West ruffed and kept up the club attack and now declarer could make no more than seven tricks.

In the other room Schollaardt as South cashed two top clubs at once and played the ♦K—here the position was far less clear. Zmudzinski ruffed and continued the attack on clubs, and declarer had four spade and two club tricks, and was eventually able to build one more trick but was still one down.

Bd: 2
Dlr: East
Vul: N/S

North
♠ 98732
♥ K76
♦ J86
♣ Q5

West
♠ KJ10
♥ AQ2
♦ KQ10
♣ AK43

East
♠ AQ65
♥ J8
♦ 9752
♣ J102

South
♠ 4
♥ 109543
♦ A43
♣ 9876

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦(1)	Pass	2♥(2)	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

(1) 18+, three spades
(2) Minimum, four spades

The second deal saw both Wests play 3NT on uninformative auctions (Balicki had shown spades). The defenders started life with three winners, but at one table the ♣Q got away (Zmudzinski led a club towards the ♣J10 and Jacobs ducked) and at the other table the ♥K did not score—Gromov took the ♣Q and shifted to that card. No swing, and no score.

Bd: 3
Dlr: South
Vul: E/W

North
♠ Q87
♥ 96432
♦ KJ65
♣ A

West
♠ K106
♥ Q7
♦ 10873
♣ K732

East
♠ J432
♥ AK8
♦ 94
♣ 10864

South
♠ A95
♥ J105
♦ AQ2
♣ QJ95

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
All Pass			1NT

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	1NT

The 12-15 notrump scored well here, when Dubinin transferred facing the wide-range notrump and Gromov could not break the transfer because he only had three trumps. Jacobs, facing a stronger range notrump, invited with 2NT (promising an unbalanced major/minor) and Schollaardt suggested three hearts and a minimum, allowing Jacobs to take a shot at game.

The diamond opening lead by Zmudzinski did no harm—only a spade lead would be fatal. Declarer led a low heart towards his J10x at trick two, but Balicki knew enough to duck and the defenders had no trouble untangling their four tricks. Zmudzinski did not play on spades, and Balicki did so at his first opportunity. 5-0 to the Alliance.

Bd: 5	North	
Dlr: North	♠ KQ106	
Vul: N/S	♥ Q1098752	
	♦ ---	
	♣ 95	
		East
West		♠ A742
♠ J983		♥ K
♥ A3		♦ AQ1043
♦ K86		♣ KJ3
♣ AQ84		
	South	
	♠ 5	
	♥ J64	
	♦ J9752	
	♣ 10762	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
1♠	2♥	2NT(1)	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

(1) Competitive in a minor or strong in spades

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
1♠	2♥	3♠	Pass
4♠	All pass		

After The Netherlands got on the board with an overtrick the Alliance put up the first big swing of the set—and nicely judged too. In 5♠ Bertens naturally played the overcaller for short hearts, though his delayed entry into the auction with a heart bid might have suggested a hand like this. Be that as it may, playing ace and another spade looks normal enough, but was fatal as the cards lay. We can all see that leading a low spade from dummy might have worked well but even then there would have been an ugly guess on the second round of trumps.

This did not appear to be a tragedy; E/W do have a lot of high cards after all and might well get overboard, too. But B/Z bid very carefully to 4♠ and declarer took ten tricks without breathing hard. The reason Zmudzinski did not make a try over 3♠ was that his partner's jump in the competitive auction was potentially shaded; credit Balicki with at least the lion's share of the imps here, in my book.

Bd: 8	North	
Dlr: West	♠ A	
Vul: None	♥ K73	
	♦ Q107	
	♣ AKQJ72	
		East
	West	♠ 9654
	♠ 1073	♥ A10542
	♥ QJ9	♦ 843
	♦ K965	♣ 4
	♣ 965	
	South	
	♠ KQJ82	
	♥ 86	
	♦ AJ2	
	♣ 1083	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	1♣	Dbl(1)	1♠
Pass	1NT(2)	Pass	2♣(3)
Pass	2♦(2)	Pass	2♥(4)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) Majors/Minors
 (2) Relay
 (3) Clubs or balanced
 (4) Minimum balanced

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♥(♠)
Pass	1♠(1)	Pass	2♥(2)
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
(1) Relay			
(2) Minimum balanced			

On this deal the location of the ♣10 would be critical. 6NT by North is as good as anything but on a diamond lead slam is only marginal unless dummy is going to produce ten-third of clubs (and of course if dummy is 5-3-3-2 the ♣10 is critical). Neither table got that close. For the Russians, North showed a good hand, South a five-card spade suit and no real extra values (for both pairs the South hand must have been absolutely on the cusp since extras start at 12, but this hand is VERY well put-together) and now both Norths elected not to explore further—perhaps via a quantitative 4NT.

Almost exactly the same sequence—though there were different bids made to accomplish the job — produced a push and both N/S pairs must have felt that this was an opportunity wasted. This was definitely a deal where finding the full shape of South before the asks would have been a plus. Mark it down, you lovers of Symmetric or Moscito.

Bd: 9	North
Dlr: North	♠ K9875
Vul: E/W	♥ KQJ10
	♦ 6
	♣ KQ4

West	East
♠ A1063	♠ QJ4
♥ 9654	♥ 8
♦ 10	♦ 97543
♣ A875	♣ J1063

South
♠ 2
♥ A732
♦ AKQJ82
♣ 92

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠(1)
Pass	3♦(2)	Pass	4♣(3)
Dbl.	Pass(4)	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) Relay; (2) 5-4-1-3			
(3) KC for hearts; (4) 1 KC			

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT®
Pass	2♣(2)	Pass	2♦(1)
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠(1)
Pass	3♠(3)	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
(1) Relay; (2) 13-15; (3) 5-4-1-3			

Another deal with apparent slam potential followed; both pairs coped well. In the Russian auction Gromov showed his full shape and 4♣ was Key Card. For The Netherlands, Jacobs got to show 13-15 and then full shape and Schollaardt settled for 3NT—which might well have been the big winner on another day (or equally a big loser I suppose). No swing, still 16-1.

Bd: 10	North
Dlr: East	♠ J84
Vul: Both	♥ Q1032
	♦ KJ973
	♣ A

West	East
♠ A10953	♠ Q72
♥ 987	♥ AKJ
♦ 104	♦ 852
♣ 863	♣ KJ54

South
♠ K6
♥ 654
♦ AQ6
♣ Q10972

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♦(1)	Pass	1♥(2)	Pass
1♠(3)	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥(♠)	Pass	2♠	All Pass

- (1) Negative
- (2) 12-14 balanced/hearts
- (3) Relay

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♦(1)	Pass	1♥(2)	Pass
1♠(3)	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	2♦	All Pass	
(1) Negative			
(2) 12-14 balanced/hearts			
(3) Relay			

Finally The Netherlands had a chance to gain some imps; Bertens played 2♠ while Jacobs bought the

hand in 2♦—E/W never really identifying the degree of spade fit. So since 2♦ made 110 on a low spade lead, the Alliance would need to set 2♠ to avoid a swing out. No problem: ♣A lead, encouraged by South, diamond to the queen, club ruff (after all, if partner did not play the suit when you told him to...), diamond to the ace, club ruff, and now declarer misguessed spades—reasonably enough—and lost a trump for down one. Well defended.

2♦ scored +110 on the unfortunate low spade lead; declarer did not have to guess the suit, but he did. No swing, and still 16-0.

Bd: 11	North
Dlr: South	♠ 108654
Vul: None	♥ K8
	♦ 7632
	♣ 53
West	East
♠ Q932	♠ K
♥ 654	♥ AQ107
♦ KQ	♦ A1094
♣ AKJ2	♣ Q986
	South
	♠ AJ7
	♥ J932
	♦ J85
	♣ 1074

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

On the next deal B/Z's auction to 3NT was the practical one, but Bakkeren went looking for the gold at the end of the rainbow and found himself in a quite playable slam (note that this was facing a 15-count. the 3♣ call was systemically no more than a four-card suit, a fine hand for the methods).

Bakkeren had arranged to be declarer here, so on a heart lead he was immediately well-placed. He drove out the ♠K and on a trump shift had the entries to ruff two spades and claim. It was 16-11 now and a really good result for E/W's methods.

Bd: 12	North
Dlr: West	♠ QJ75
Vul: N/S	♥ A64
	♦ 102
	♣ J1092
West	East
♠ A6	♠ K1043
♥ KJ107	♥ Q2
♦ 93	♦ J875
♣ 87654	♣ AKQ
	South
	♠ 982
	♥ 9853
	♦ AKQ64
	♣ 3

Open and Closed Rooms			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	All Pass		

Both tables evaluated their hands identically here; there might be case for bidding 3NT over 2♠—partner won't know what cards are working or not. There again switch the diamond honors and even 2NT is down. Both defenders tried to cash out the diamonds. Balicki pitched clubs from dummy and claimed nine tricks, Bakkeren threw a heart and now the bad club break cost him an overtrick. 17-11 to the Alliance.

Bd: 13	North
Dlr: North	♠ 7
Vul: Both	♥ AQJ952
	♦ A
	♣ 106532
West	East
♠ 62	♠ A853
♥ 874	♥ K63
♦ QJ10952	♦ K764
♣ Q8	♣ KJ
	South
	♠ KQJ1094
	♥ 10
	♦ 83
	♣ A974

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	1♥	Dbl	1♠
2♦	2♥	2NT(G/B)	Dbl
3♦	3♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	1♥	Dbl	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

On the next board did Schollaardt earn his swing in or did Dubinin earn his swing out? The late John Collings used to pose the question "What do you call an eight-card suit? Trumps." Personally I'd look at the South hand and have my 4♠ bid half out of the box after a 1♥ opening unless my RHO bid the suit—and who knows, maybe even then.

That was what Martin thought, but the way the auction timed out Dubinin never really chose to show his spades, and then probably felt his partner would not let him play that suit. So he settled for the partscore, and Gromov took +170, but that was obviously not enough. We had a new leader: The Netherlands 21-17. Maybe Zmudzinski's failure to intervene with 2♦ also takes some of the blame too.

Bd: 14	North
Dlr: East	♠ K3
Vul: None	♥ K8742
	♦ Q752
	♣ A2

West	East
♠ 52	♠ A10987
♥ Q5	♥ AJ106
♦ KJ109	♦ 63
♣ J6543	♣ Q10

South
♠ QJ64
♥ 93
♦ A84
♣ K987

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
		1♠	Pass
1NT	2♦(♦+♥)	All Pass	

On this deal E/W in the Closed Room had the auction you and I would have; 2♠ was a fair spot, but Schollaardt found a sensible defense. After two rounds of clubs he cashed ♦A and led a third club, allowing Jacobs to ruff with the ♠K and force out the ♠A. Now declarer had to cross to the ♦K to pass the

♥Q, ducked all around. On a heart to the ♥10 and a low heart out Schollaardt's ♠6 was the setting trick.

In the Open Room repeated trump leads left declarer in dummy. He led a spade to his king and the ace. Back came a low club and declarer won in hand and led a heart to the queen for a third trump back. Declarer lost two diamonds, a spade, and three hearts, down one. That was just 3 imps to The Netherlands; 24-17.

Bd: 15	North
Dlr: South	♠ KJ
Vul: N/S	♥ Q963
	♦ K753
	♣ K82

West	East
♠ A1065	♠ 32
♥ A874	♥ KJ5
♦ J62	♦ A109
♣ Q4	♣ J10753

South
♠ Q9874
♥ 102
♦ Q84
♣ A96

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Schollaardt's decision to remove 1NT to 2♠ looks a strange one, but 2♠ was a respectable contract. On Zmudzinski's diamond lead declarer tried to build a heart trick without success but ended up scoring two heart ruffs and two spade tricks to go with his three side-suit winners. Down one.

1NT in the Open Room was no fun at all on a club lead. Gromov ducked the first club and won the second then tried to set up spades. Bertens took the second spade and shifted to a low heart, and now declarer had five tricks only. That made the score 27-17 as the last board hit the table.

The tire is only flat on the bottom

Bd: 16
 Dir: West
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ J6
 ♥ Q92
 ♦ J97643
 ♣ 97

West
 ♠ 73
 ♥ J5
 ♦ KQ5
 ♣ KQ10652

East
 ♠ K10542
 ♥ AK64
 ♦ A2
 ♣ AJ

South
 ♠ AQ98
 ♥ 10873
 ♦ 108
 ♣ 843

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	6♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♣(Min)	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣(KC)	Pass
4♥	Pass	6♣	All Pass

Both tables reached slam. Bertens showed clubs and cooperated once, then was driven to slam. Zmudzinski showed clubs and a minimum, then a diamond card, and was also at the six-level immediately.

When Jacobs led a heart Zmudzinski's first reaction was to ask the director what to do. When no help was forthcoming he settled for the legitimate percentage play rather than playing for a defensive error. He rose with the ♥A and played on spades in due course; down one.

Bertens without a flicker played low from dummy and was home. No doubt there was a minute percentage chance that the defenders would not have cashed the ♠A if the ♥Q was wrong. But the fact that a small heart was led was perhaps the decisive factor. It was 43-17 at the end of the set.

Not So Fast

by Barry Rigal

When someone presents you with an auction you have never seen before and tells you that Marshal Miles was at the table, you tend to assume he was the pitcher, not the catcher. Not so on this deal from the second final session of the Nail Life Master Open Pairs in Hawaii this past fall that has attracted a lot of attention. Miles was playing with Leo Bell.

(see top of next column)

So what's so clever about reaching the par contract? Actually, 7♠ doubled down 800 is par, but that's not so easy to achieve, is it?

Dir: West
 Vul: Both

♠ KQJ32
 ♥ KJ8
 ♦ 8
 ♣ 9643

♠ ---
 ♥ 75
 ♦ AKQJ109753
 ♣ 75

♠ 108654
 ♥ Q1094
 ♦ ---
 ♣ KQJ10

♠ A97
 ♥ A632
 ♦ 642
 ♣ A 8 2

West	North	East	South
<i>Bell</i>		<i>Miles</i>	
Pass (!)	Pass	1NT*	Pass
6NT (!!)	All Pass		

*Of the 12-14 variety.

NEC Cup Final: POLAND/RUSSIA ve The NETHERLANDS

by Barry Rigal

Second Segment (Boards 17-32):

The first set had concluded with a series of swings to The Netherlands, but in the new set the boards were very quiet. The difference in approach in the bidding was all that the commentators could find to entertain the BBO audience:

Bd: 17
 Dlr: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ AQ107
 ♥ A1052
 ♦ AQ102
 ♣ 10

West
 ♠ 9532
 ♥ QJ7
 ♦ J3
 ♣ 9762

East
 ♠ K4
 ♥ 43
 ♦ 9654
 ♣ AQ843

South
 ♠ J86
 ♥ K986
 ♦ K87
 ♣ KJ5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	1♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠(♥)
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	1♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Both tables played 4♥ here. In the Open Room Gromov asked and found four hearts in an 8-11 hand. In the other room after the 1NT response Jacobs produced an anti-relay, opting to describe his own hand and let partner decide where to play. Both tables made +420; still 43-17.



"Pay up, mister!"

Bd: 18
 Dlr: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 108
 ♥ J653
 ♦ 93
 ♣ KJ875

West
 ♠ AJ54
 ♥ 42
 ♦ KJ754
 ♣ 64

East
 ♠ KQ92
 ♥ K108
 ♦ AQ6
 ♣ Q109

South
 ♠ 763
 ♥ AQ97
 ♦ 1082
 ♣ A32

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Do you or don't you? There are several players no longer in this event who would double 2♣ for the lead, and maybe that is why they are no longer in contention. Both Norths passed in disciplined fashion and then had to endure the ignominy of having partner poke his head under the screen and ask whether they needed to borrow a red card for the rest of the set.

As you can see, the club opening lead is necessary for the heart shift to set 4♠. On any other lead declarer takes discards on the diamonds after drawing trumps. Those players with an active temperament—who would rather concede the odd 840 while getting the triumph on deals like this—will add the deal to their data base. But let's all try and keep score accurately, though.



"What would Kenji do in this position? I keep asking myself."

Bd: 19
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ KQ
 ♥ QJ2
 ♦ AK98
 ♣ K853

West
 ♠ AJ962
 ♥ 84
 ♦ J42
 ♣ QJ10

East
 ♠ 8743
 ♥ 9765
 ♦ 1063
 ♣ 96

South
 ♠ 105
 ♥ AK103
 ♦ Q75
 ♣ A742

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	2NT(R)	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦(R)	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	3♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	1♥(R)	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♠(R)	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦(R)	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♥	All Pass	3♦(1)

(1) 2-4-3-4

Both tables coped well with a deal where 6♣ must have been a possible contract from Gromov's perspective, but the 12-15 notrump did not give him room to explore. In the other room the 14-16 notrump—or absence thereof—cooled off Jacob's ardor and he opted for the four-three heart fit in the knowledge of the possible spade problem. No swing. Still 43-17 The Netherlands.

Bd: 20
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ 43
 ♥ A9832
 ♦ J97
 ♣ K74

West
 ♠ J5
 ♥ KQ
 ♦ AQ4
 ♣ QJ9853

East
 ♠ AQ1086
 ♥ 75
 ♦ K1063
 ♣ 62

South
 ♠ K972
 ♥ J1064
 ♦ 852
 ♣ A10

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Both teams treated the West hand as a strong notrump and reached a vulnerable game that might be the wrong side of the imp odds on a heart lead—whereas 4♠ would go down far less but might also run into overruffs or trump promotions. Minus 300 at both tables for West, and a flat board. Still 43-17 after four flat boards.

On the next deal an overtrick to the Alliance gave them the first score of the set; 18-43 was the margin.

Bd: 22
 Dir: East
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ KJ52
 ♥ Q975
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ 1032

West
 ♠ 4
 ♥ 106432
 ♦ AJ10742
 ♣ K

East
 ♠ A93
 ♥ AJ8
 ♦ 9653
 ♣ 984

South
 ♠ Q10876
 ♥ K
 ♦ 8
 ♣ AQJ765

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
2♦	3♣(♠)	3♦	1♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	4♣

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	2♦(R)	Pass	2♣
All Pass			4♠

Another competent display by both teams to reach 4♠, but B/Z had not bid at all. Would that matter? Surely yes. Once East showed up with the two aces, declarer would get the clubs right. Well, yes and no. On the shift to the ♣K at trick two declarer could not go wrong, since although he had no entry to dummy for the discard, West had only one spade. Note that on a heart shift and club back declarer does not know who has the ♠A yet—worth remembering next time as East you have the ♣K and not the ♠A. Schollaardt misguessed clubs of course; 28-45 now.

Bd: 23
 Dir: South
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ AQ5
 ♥ AQJ86
 ♦ 3
 ♣ AK108

West
 ♠ 102
 ♥ 73
 ♦ AK8654
 ♣ Q92

East
 ♠ 9876
 ♥ 1095
 ♦ QJ
 ♣ J543

South
 ♠ KJ43
 ♥ K42
 ♦ 10972
 ♣ 76

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
			Pass
2♣(♦)	Pass	2♦	Pass
Pass	Dbf	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥(1)	Pass	2♣(2)
Pass	2♦(1)	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT(1)	Pass	3♦(3)
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

- (1) Relay
- (2) 5-7
- (3) Diamonds

Another good hand for the full-relay approach. The key here is the doubleton club in South. Jacobs could not find out enough at a convenient level so closed his eyes and hoped he would not buy the perfect hand opposite. Afterwards Schollaardt said the system needed to be modified since there were only ace-asking bids after full shape was known. With South having shown a semi-positive there are clearly better schemes available.

By contrast, Bertens had a 2♣ opening—diamonds or strong—and that made his opponents' life harder in a way. But Gromov did excellently to suggest a good hand, then to remove 3NT to 4♥. Dubin could now envision short diamonds opposite; his 5♥ bid focused on diamonds and Gromov bid on, of course. Well done; now all Gromov had to do was to make it.

There are several practical lines, with clubs and hearts both breaking I'm not sure what is best—but

everything works. By drawing two rounds of trumps with the ace and king Gromov committed himself to ruffing a club low in dummy and hoping West was not 2-3-6-2. The calculation as to what is best is always less critical for us when noimps are at stake. The Alliance had picked up their second huge swing in a row; the match score now was 43-41.

Bd: 25
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ J974
 ♥ Q72
 ♦ AJ10
 ♣ 963

West
 ♠ 853
 ♥ 10964
 ♦ 72
 ♣ Q1084

East
 ♠ KQ62
 ♥ J83
 ♦ 8
 ♣ AKJ75

South
 ♠ A10
 ♥ AK5
 ♦ KQ96543
 ♣ 2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
	Pass	1♣	Dbf
Pass	1♠(7+)	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
	Pass	1♣	Dbf
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Dbf	4♣
Dbf	5♦	All Pass	

We all know the problem with a loose club is that you can never 'bid' the suit, only name it. Here the reverse problem arose; Gromov's 2NT makes sense though I much prefer a 3♣ probe, as found in the other room. But over 3♦ surely 3♥ is right. The initial 1♠ bid promised spades and values; there was no reason to drive to notrump after partner's second diamond bid suggested a problem somewhere. Bakkeren untrustingly led the ♣A, received an attitude signal, and cashed out. I like the auction from The Netherlands: both players focused on the problem on the hand and came to a sensible answer. The Dutch were back in front by double digits, 53-41.

Nothing is as easy as it looks
 Everything takes longer than you think
 If anything can go wrong, it will

Bd: 26
 Dir: East
 Vul: Both

West
 ♠ 54
 ♥ 643
 ♦ AK842
 ♣ Q104

North
 ♠ Q8
 ♥ AK9875
 ♦ ---
 ♣ AK987

East
 ♠ AJ109762
 ♥ QJ
 ♦ J763
 ♣ ---

South
 ♠ K3
 ♥ 102
 ♦ Q1095
 ♣ J6532

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
1NT	2♠	3♠	4♣
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	4♣	3♠	Pass
All Pass		Pass	5♣

Reaching 6♣ would be beyond most of us; making it would be even more of a challenge. The non-leaping Michaels (pause for violent exhortation) got Gromov to the right suit, and since he was only in game he did not have to consider whether to take a first-round finesse. At least he had got to a sensible though non-optimal level. Balicki's one-level opening had kept his opponents from ever getting to slam. An overtrick imp gave The Netherlands a 13-imp lead.

After a quiet partscore deal with no swing, both E/W pairs faced another problem in the auction as to strain and level.

Bd: 28
 Dir: West
 Vul: N/S

West
 ♠ J95
 ♥ J1054
 ♦ Q97
 ♣ J43

North
 ♠ Q1064
 ♥ 873
 ♦ J10
 ♣ Q975

East
 ♠ A872
 ♥ KQ92
 ♦ AK642
 ♣ ---

South
 ♠ K3
 ♥ A6
 ♦ 853
 ♣ AK10862

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	2♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2♦	3♣	Dbl	Pass
3♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	2♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2♥	3♣	3♥	All Pass

The two auctions saw West have to decide whether to bid a major at the first turn (right if you can hit a fit, very wrong facing only three). Then each player had the chance (or requirement) to bid again. Both players knew their partner had a stronger initial action available in the Polish Club approach. Mind you, starting with 1♣ on a three-suiter short in clubs is not ideal. The final result was sensible enough in each case; a for-one red-suit break in the suit selected as trumps would have embarrassed both contracts; as it was, 3♥ collected overtrick imps. The match score was 56-44.

Bd: 29
 Dir: North
 Vul: Both

West
 ♠ A84
 ♥ Q1082
 ♦ 105
 ♣ K962

North
 ♠ KQJ106
 ♥ A54
 ♦ AK8
 ♣ Q8

East
 ♠ 32
 ♥ J
 ♦ QJ932
 ♣ A7543

South
 ♠ 975
 ♥ K9763
 ♦ 764
 ♣ J10

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
3♣	1♣	1NT(min)	Pass
All Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦(NEG)
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦(♥)
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

There are some N/S pairs who would be able to stop

at the one level here. not so today for our featured pairs. The two auctions spiraled out of control to 4♠. Schollaardt overbid by at least a jack when he suggested a semi-positive with hearts. Meanwhile the preemption forced Gromov to a mild overbid, but he could hardly do less, and Dubinin felt obligated to bid on with what sounded like a possible trick, plus some potentially useful shape.

Bd: 31	North		
Dir: South	♠ AJ104		
Vul: N/S	♥ 1076		
	♦ AJ76		
	♣ Q6		
	West		East
	♠ Q9732		♠ 6
	♥ Q3		♥ A942
	♦ Q1095		♦ K
	♣ 105		♣ AJ87432
	South		
	♠ K85		
	♥ KJ85		
	♦ 8432		
	♣ K9		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	1♦	3♣	Pass
Pass	3♠	All Pass	Dbl

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Zmud'ski</i>	<i>Jacobs</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>
Pass	1♦	2♣	Pass
Pass	2♠	Dbl	Dbl
			All Pass

The finals had so far featured some pretty accurate bridge with virtue and vice being rewarded as appropriate. But things were about to change. On this deal 2♠x had chances for 670—on best declarer play there are four spades, one heart, two diamonds and a club. Conversely, the defense can take one club, two diamonds, two hearts and a ruff if declarer misguesses the play.

Balicki's double of 2♠ was described by an unbiased source (first name Adam) as bizarre, since he had an unambiguous call of 2NT available to show precisely this hand. If the auction had not worked out well for the Alliance, the defense went like a well-oiled machine: ♣A, a heart to the queen, the ♦10 to the jack and king, ♥A, heart ruff, diamond ruff and the defense had six tricks in with a diamond to come. When declarer misguessed spades (culpably, though maybe he was shell-shocked by now) they had a trump as well. Down 800 dwarfed the result of 3♠ down two from the other room. The match was now level, and with no swing on the final deal the match ended up all square at the half.

JCBL Smoking Policy

NEC Cup:

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

Other events:

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

Smoking area:

Please do not smoke in the area immediately outside the playing rooms (to avoid second-hand smoke entering the rooms). 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.

12th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Monday (Feb. 12)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	F203-206
	18:00-20:30	Closing Ceremony	F201-204