

NEC Bridge Festival

Friday, February 13, 2009
Bulletin Number 4

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

The Netherlands Tops NEC Cup Qualifiers

The Netherlands (Ton Bakkeren, Huub Bertens, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen), with four more wins, tops the qualifiers for today's quarter-final KO round with 240 VPs. They've proved the most consistent team so far in this event, having gone wire to wire in first place. In second place, 5 VPs behind the leaders, is Oz Players (Ron Klinger, Ishmael Del'Monte, Robert Fruewirth, Matt Mullamphy) followed in third place, with 219 VPs, by China LongZhu National Women (Sun Ming, Wang Hongli, Wang Wenfei, Liu Yiqian, Yan Ru, Dong Yongling, Li Guohua [NPC], Ju Chuancheng [Coach]). These three teams all retained their positions from the end of Day 2. Rounding out the quarter-final field in 4th through 8th places are: Japan Open (201), China Evertrust Holding Group (199), JUICE (197), Japan Seniors (196), and SARA (196). The complete final Swiss standings are shown below; individual results for Matches 9-12 may be found on pages 5-6.

NEC Cup: Final Swiss Standings (Twelve Matches)

Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs
1	The Netherlands . . .	240	16/17	HANA	190	33	guriguri	168
2	Oz Players	235	18	LAS FLORES	188	34	Korea Happy Bridge	167
3	China Nat'l Women .	219	19	Yeh Bros	187	35	SKOTII	166
4	Japan Open	201	20	NXST	185	36/37	Losier	164
5	China Evertrust Hold	199	21	Golden beef cutlet .	184	36/37	Dolphin	164
6	JUICE	197	22	Fairy Tale	179	38	ROSEWOOD	163
7/8	Japan Seniors	196	23	MY-Bridge	176	39	Open SESAME	161
7/8	SARA	196	24	HAYATE	174	40	YWC	160
9/12	The Latin	195	25	Venus	173	41	sunflower	158
9/12	NRT	195	26/28	AQUA	172	42	Japan Youth	157
9/12	TAKA	195	26/28	MAKITA	172	43	SIX ROSE 2009 . . .	150
9/12	Hackett	195	26/28	NANIWADA	172	44	PS-jack	141
13	J&J	194	29/30	Kitty's	170	45	CHARMANT	138
14	ABE-chan	192	29/30	Henmi	170	46	Korea Challengers . .	93
15	Israel	191	31/22	Kimura@Yokohama	169			
16/17	ESPERANZA	190	31/32	KinKi	169			

Due to a late appeal, today's 1st VuGraph Match will be announced shortly before game time

NEC Cup 2009: Conditions of Contest

A 12-round Swiss of 14-board matches will qualify the top 8 teams to the Knockout phase; no playbacks.

V.P. Scale WBF 14-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 16-board segments of the quarter- or semi-finals. 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 the open room, E/W in the closed room.

Tie-Breaks At the end of the Swiss, ties will be broken by IMP quotient. If more than two teams are involved, WBF 2008 Conditions of Contest procedures will apply.

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

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

Length of Matches 2 hours will be allotted for each 14-board segment (or 2 hours and 15 minutes for each 16-board segment of the KOs). In addition, a 5-minute grace period will be allotted to each team. Overtime and slow play penalties as per WBF 2008 Conditions of Contest.

Appeals The WBF Code of Practice will be in effect. The Chief Director will have 12C1c authority. Appeals found to be without merit may incur a penalty of up to 3 VPs.

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

KO Draw The team finishing 1st in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 4th-8th. The team finishing 2nd will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 4th-8th group. The team finishing 3rd will then have their choice of the remaining teams.

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

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

Screen Hesitations When a delay in the return of the tray is suspected, a player on the **opposite** side of the screen must be the first to call attention to it (by summoning the TD). If the screenmate of the player responsible for the delay first calls attention to it, the TD will rule that no UI is present. In other words, for the TD to rule that UI is present the delay must be clearly noticeable to the players on the other side of the screen without prompting, as evidenced by one of them being the first to call attention to it.

Team Rosters: 14th NEC Cup

#	Team Name	Members
1	Israel:	Migry Zur-Campanile, Michael Barel, Amir Levin, Nikolay Demirev
2	The Latin:	Frankie Frontaura, Diego Brenner, Federico Goded, Gonzalo Goded
3	Oz Players:	Ron Klinger, Ishmael Del'Monte, Robert Fruewirth, Matt Mullamphy
4	Hackett:	Paul Hackett, Tom Hanlon, David Bakhshi, Artur Malinowski
5	JUICE:	Joey Silver, John Carruthers, Larry Mori, Venkatrao Koneru
6	The Netherlands:	Ton Bakkeren, Huub Bertens, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen
7	Yen Bros:	Patrick Huang, JY Shih, Morris Chang, Harry Lin, Chi-Chung Tsai, Chen Yeh (NPC)
8	China LongZhu National Women:	Sun Ming, Wang Hongli, Wang Wenfei, Liu Yiqian, Yan Ru, Dong Yongling, Li Guohua (NPC), Ju Chuancheng (Coach)
9	China Evertrust Holding Group:	Lin Rongqiang, Jiang Tong, Shi Zhengjun, Li Jie, Hou Xu, Liu Jing
10	Korea Happy Bridge:	Sung Kyunghae, Chan Yiu, Hwang Inryung, Chang Jungbai
11	Korea Challengers:	Kim Jinkyung, Choi Yunjung, Song Insook, Kim Mihyun
12	Japan Open:	Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura, Tadashi Teramoto, Masaaki Takayama
13	Japan Senior:	Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Makoto Hirata
14	Golden beef cutlet:	Ryoga Tanaka, Hiroko Janssen, Sakiko Naito, Kenji Miyakuni, Ayako Amano
15	TAKA:	Kazuhiko Yamada, Takahiko Hirata, Hiroshi Kaku, Makoto Kono, Ari Greenberg, Masaru Yoshida
16	Kitty's:	Yoko Nenohi, Hiroko Sekiyama, Kumiko Matsuo, Makiko Sato, Toshiko Kaho, Kyoko Toyofuku
17	ESPERANZA:	Haruko Koshi, Hideyuki Sango, Nobuko Matsubara, Misuzu Ichihashi, Michiko Iwahashi
18	ABE-chan:	Robert Geller, Setsuko Ogihara, Hiroya Abe, Chieko Yamazaki, Zhao Jinlong
19	MAKITA:	Taeko Kawamura, Sachiko Yamamura, Keiko Matsuzaki, Kimi Makita, Fumiko Kimura, Michiko Ono
20	HANA:	Takeshi Hanayama, Yuki Fukuyoshi, Seiya Shimizu, Yasushi Kobayashi, Yasuhiro Shimizu
21	SARA:	Kumiko Sasahira, Fu Zhong, Liu Zheng, Takeshi Niekawa, Shugo Tanaka, Hiroki Yokoi
22	Fairy Tale:	Kyoko Shimamura, Brian Senior, Ryo Okuno, Akira Ohara, Kazunori Sasaki, Akio Kurokawa
23	Losier:	Michiko Ono, Yayoi Sakamoto, Etsuko Hasegawa, Betty Tajiri, Shimako Yaji, Kyoko Miura
24	J&J:	Natsuko Nishida, Takashi Maeda, Nobuyuki Hayashi, Tadashi Jomura, Hiroyuki Noda
25	sunflower:	Takako Nakatani, Sachiho Ueda, Hiroko Kobayashi, Chizuko Tsukamoto, Yumi Yanagida, Keiko Fuse
26	PS-jack:	Masakatsu Sugino, Akiko Miwa, Masako Otsuka, Teruo Miyazaki, Kunio Kodaira, Akiko Kawabata
27	SKOTII:	Tsuneo Sakurai, Atsushi Kikuchi, Kenichi Asaoka, Takehiko Tada
28	Henmi:	Toru: Henmi, Hideko Takeuchi, Yasuyoshi Toriumi, Aiko Banno, Hideko Kobayashi, Yoko Tokushige
29	LAS FLORES:	Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura, Michiko Shida, Kotomi Asakoshi, Yukiko Umezu, Etsuko Naito
30	NXST:	Kei Nemoto, Kazuo Saeki, Kazuo Takano, Kazuhisa Kojima, Hiroko Yanagisawa, Kai Hiraki
31	Venus:	Chieko Ichikawa, Kuniko Saito, Junko Den, Yoshiko Murata, Atsuko Kurita
32	ROSEWOOD:	Yoko Fukuyama, Takashi Sumita, Hiromu Nishida, Yoshie Nishida
33	HAYATE:	Hiroaki Miura, Tomoyuki Harada, Keisuke Akama, Noriaki Koike
34	Kimura@Yokohama:	Osami Kimura, Kinzaburo Nishino, Koichi Onishi, Mamiko Odaira, Yoko Saito, Setsuko Kimura
35	SIX ROSE 2009:	Natsuko Asaka, Ikuko Arai, Sachiko Ueno, Hideko Shindo, Toshiko Takeuchi, Kiyoko Fushida
36	AQUA:	Shoko Somemiya, Tomoko Sakai, Miyako Miyazaki, Kazuko Okamoto, Yoko Shimominami, Akiko Miyata
37	YWC:	Atsuko Katsumata, Yasuyo Iida, Misae Kato, Kimiko Kamakari, Chisato Kiriya, Reiko Hoshika
38	NRT:	Megumi Takasaki, Sei Nagasaka, Hidenori Narita, Yuichi Masamura, Minoru Mizuta, Yumiko Mizuta
39	CHARMANT:	Takako Fujimoto, Ken Sakiyama, Sumiko Sugino, Kazuko Takahashi, Misako Fukazawa, Yumiko Kawakami
40	NANIWADA:	Masaru Naniwada, Hisami Kataoka, Hikoe Enomoto, Hideo Togawa, Masato Miyake, Toshiro Nose
41	KinKi:	Sonoko Namba, Chizuko Sugiura, Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka
42	Open SESAME!:	Megumi Takasaka, Ryo Namiki, Kyoko Sengoku, Mariko Matsukawa
43	guriguri:	Ryo Matsubara, Mark LaForge, Midori Sakaguchi, Ayako Matsubara, Atsuyo Miyake, Midori Ito
44	MY-Bridge:	Masafumi Yoshizawa, Noriko Yoshizawa, Yoshitaka Agata, Kuniko Miyauchi, Iwao Oishi, Aiko Nabeshima
45	Dolphin:	Michiko Hatoyama, Katsuro Hatoyama, Makiyo Takikawa, Kiyoko Oki, Kazuko Ogawa, Mariko Sakamoto
46	Japan Youth:	Shunsuke Gotoda, Yoshiro Kido, Takashi Matsuda, Koichi Handa, Kentaro Murai, Tomoyuki Watanuki

PCs with Internet access (but no printing capability) are available for player use in the Secretariat (E206), to the left as you enter.

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 14th 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

Convention Regulations for Side Games

(An explanation for foreign players)

Unlike the NEC Cup, which is an international event, and the Yokohama Swiss Teams, in which all non-brown-sticker conventions are permitted, the Yokohama IMP Pairs and Asuka Cup are rated as Japanese regional or national events, for which JCBL regulations for domestic events apply strictly. We ask for your compliance with the regulations explained below. If you have any questions about what is allowed, please ask the JCBL staff. Please note that use of unauthorized conventions may be penalized. We thank you for your cooperation.

All side games at the NEC Bridge Festival (the Yokohama IMP Pairs and Asuka Cup) are restricted to "List C" conventions as described below. The use of the Multi-2♦ is strictly prohibited and will be subject to penalty.

LIST C (Yokohama IMP Pairs/Asuka Cup)

Opening Bids

- 1♣ or 1♦ may be used as an all-purpose opening bid (artificial or natural) promising a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g.: Precision 1♣ and 1♦; Polish 1♣, etc.)
- 2♣ artificial opening bid indicating one of:
 - a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
 - a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
- 2♦ artificial opening bid showing one of:
 - at least 5-4 distribution in the majors with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Flannery, anti-Flannery etc.)
 - a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
 - a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
- Opening suit bid at the two level or higher indicating the bid suit, another known suit, a minimum of 10 HCP and at least 5-4 distribution in the suits.
- Opening notrump bid at the two level or higher indicating at least 5-4 distribution in the minors, 10 or more HCP.
- Opening 3NT bid indicating:
 - any solid suit or
 - a broken minor suit.
- Opening four-level bid transferring to a known suit (e.g., Namyats, etc.).
- Strong opening at the two level or higher, asking Ace, King, Queen, singleton, void, trump quality.

Responses and Rebids

- 1♦ as a forcing, artificial response to 1♣.
- 1NT response to a major-suit opening bid, forcing for one round; may not guarantee game invitational or better values.
- Conventional responses which guarantee game forcing or better values. May not be part of a relay system.
- 2♣ or 2♦ response to 3rd- or 4th-seat major-suit opener asking the quality of the opening bid.
- Single or higher jump shifts (including into notrump) to indicate a raise or to force to game.
- All responses to:
 - artificial strong opening bids with 15 HCP or more.
 - opening bids of 2♣ or higher (weak 2s must guarantee 10 opening points: opening points=HCP + number of cards in longest suit).

- All constructive calls starting with the opening bidder's second call.
- Calls that ask for aces, kings, queens, singletons, voids, trump quality and responses thereto.
- All calls after a natural notrump (including those that have two non-consecutive ranges, neither of which exceeds 3 HCP). No conventional responses are allowed over natural notrump bids with a lower limit of fewer than 10 HCP or with a range of greater than 5 HCP.

Competitive Bids

- Any conventional balancing calls.
- Conventional doubles and redoubles and responses (including free bids) thereto.
- Notrump overcall for either:
 - two-suited takeout showing at least 5-4 distribution and at least one known suit. (At the 4 level or higher there is no requirement to have a known suit.)
 - three-suited takeout (as with a takeout double, at least 3 cards in each of the 3 suits).
- Jump overcalls into a suit to indicate at least 5-4 distribution in two known suits, and responses thereto.
- Cuebid of an opponent's suit and responses thereto, except that a cuebid that could be weak, directly over an opening bid, must show at least one known suit.
- Comic 1NT overcall.
- Defense to:
 - conventional calls (including takeout doubles).
 - natural notrump opening bids and overcalls.
 - opening bids of 2♣ or higher.
- Nos. 5 through 9 under "Responses and Rebids" above apply to both pairs.
- Transfer overcall to show a specified suit at the four level.

Carding

- All leads and signaling methods are approved except for: a) odd-even signals, b) encrypted signals, c) dual-message carding strategies, except on each defender's first discard, d) any method when the pair using it are deemed to be playing it in a manner which is not compatible with the maintenance of proper tempo.

LIST D (NEC Cup/Yokohama Swiss Teams)

Category 3 of WBF Systems Policy applies

Thursday's Match Results

Match 9

The Netherlands (55)	25-5	JAPAN OPEN (15)
Oz Players (26)	17-13	NRT (18)
China LongZhu National Women (35)	19-11	TAKA (17)
HAYATE (13)	4-25	China Evertrust Holding Group (60)
Yeh Bros (35)	14-16	Hackett (40)
Israel (9)	10-20	the Latin (28)
Japan Seniors (40)	23 - 7	Korea Happy Bridge (8)
J&J (18)	12-18	Fairy Tale (31)
ABE-chan (24)	5-25	SARA (64)
NANIWADA (27)	10-20	JUICE (46)
HANA (24)	15-15	Kimura@Yokohama (24)
Golden beef cutlet (51)	21-9	NXST (25)
ESPERANZA (34)	18-12	sunflower (22)
Makita (23)	16-14	Venus (20)
Henmi (21)	16-14	Dolphin (18)
SKOTII (27)	18-12	Kitty's (15)
SIX ROSES 2009 (17)	8-22	guriguri (45)
ROSEWOOD (17)	15-15	KinKi (17)
Japan Youth (9)	5-25	LAS FLORES (48)
YWC (7)	11-19	MY-Bridge (24)
Losier (33)	21-9	CHARMANT (9)
Open SESAME! (1)	5-25	AQUA (41)
PS-Jack (28)	11-19	Korea Challengers (46)

Match 10

The Netherlands (23)	17-13	Hackett (13)
Oz Players (40)	22-8	China Evertrust Holding Group (11)
China LongZhu National Women (23)	15-15	NRT (22)
The Latin (25)	14-16	Japan Seniors (32)
Yeh Bros (33)	14-16	TAKA (40)
SARA (68)	25-3	Fairy Tale (15)
Japan Open (14)	18-12	JUICE (0)
Israel (33)	19-11	HAYATE (18)
J&J (38)	19-11	Golden beef cutlet (23)
HANA (55)	24-6	Korea Happy Bridge (19)
ESPERANZA (17)	16-14	NANIWADA (10)
Kimura@Yokohama (9)	7-23	ABE-chan (43)
LAS FLORES (48)	23-7	SKOTII (16)
Makita (33)	18-12	Losier (20)
guriguri (32)	18-12	Henmi (19)
Venus (36)	19-11	sunflower (18)
Dolphin (3)	7-23	MY-Bridge (36)
ROSEWOOD (35)	16-14	Kitty's (30)
NXST (23)	14-16	AQUA (29)
KinKi (59)	22-8	PS-Jack (32)
SIX ROSES 2009 (3)	1-25	Open SESAME! (64)
YWC (25)	18-12	CHARMANT (14)
Japan Youth (35)	16-14	Korea Challengers (29)

Match 11

The Netherlands (45)	20-10	Japan Seniors (25)
Oz Players (55)	25-4	SARA (11)
China LongZhu National Women (43)	21-9	Yeh Bros (17)
China Evertrust Holding Group (38)	17-13	TAKA (28)
NRT (10)	9-21	Hackett (35)
The Latin (19)	7-23	Japan Open (52)
Israel (31)	19-11	J&J (16)
HANA (38)	18-12	ABE-chan (24)
JUICE (70)	25-0	HAYATE (1)
LAS FLORES (24)	16-14	ESPERANZA (20)
Golden beef cutlet (27)	13-17	NANIWADA (35)
Fairy Tale (38)	21-9	Makita (13)
MY-Bridge (41)	19-11	guriguri (24)
Venus (1)	9-21	KinKi (26)
Korea Happy Bridge (19)	11-19	Kimura@Yokohama (37)
ROSEWOOD (18)	5-25	Henmi (60)
NXST (53)	25-5	SKOTII (12)
Losier (29)	16-14	AQUA (24)
sunflower (26)	14-16	Kitty's (30)
YWC (25)	17-13	Open SESAME! (16)
Dolphin (81)	25-0	Korea Challengers (5)
Japan Youth (39)	20-10	PS-Jack (20)
SIX ROSES 2009 (38)	17-13	CHARMANT (29)

Match 12

Oz Players (22)	16-14	Japan Open (19)
The Netherlands (44)	21-9	Israel (19)
China LongZhu National Women (36)	22-8	Hackett (9)
China Evertrust Holding Group (30)	13-17	SARA (39)
JUICE (31)	16-14	TAKA (25)
HANA (35)	12-18	NRT (47)
Japan Senior (23)	18-12	Yeh Bros (9)
The Latin (55)	21-9	Fairy Tale (29)
J&J (56)	24-6	NANIWADA (20)
LAS FLORES (48)	19-11	MY-Bridge (30)
ABE-chan (61)	25-5	Henmi (21)
ESPERANZA (43)	25-5	KinKi (2)
Golden beef cutlet (44)	21-9	Kimura@Yokohama (19)
NXST (45)	23-7	Dolphin (13)
guriguri (19)	11-19	HAYATE (34)
Makita (38)	16-14	Korea Happy Bridge (34)
Losier (32)	11-19	Kitty's (47)
Venus (23)	20-10	YWC (1)
AQUA (32)	22-8	sunflower (2)
Japan Youth (22)	10-20	Open SESAME! (41)
ROSEWOOD (36)	18-12	CHARMANT (24)
SKOTII (56)	25-3	Korea Challengers (2)
SIX ROSES 2009 (43)	14-16	PS-Jack (48)

Match Eight: Oz Players vs TAKA

by Barry Rigal

Oz had not shone so far on VuGraph. Could their position at the top of the table be threatened by the VuGraph hex? Things started well for them.

Bd: 17 North
 Dlr: North ♠ J82
 Vul: None ♥ 987
 ♦ K98
 ♣ A983

West
 ♠ KQ7
 ♥ A1052
 ♦ 3
 ♣ KQ765

East
 ♠ 109654
 ♥ Q3
 ♦ QJ1075
 ♣ 10

South
 ♠ A3
 ♥ KJ64
 ♦ A642
 ♣ J42

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣*
1♥	1♠(1)	Pass	1NT

All Pass

(1) Take-out; denies 4♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Kaku</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Dbl	1NT	2♠	All Pass

Fruewirth was allowed to declare 1NT on a low club lead. He won and returned the suit, and could eventually endplay West to open up hearts for him and emerge with a rather unlikely +120. By contrast, where Klinger could double a natural 1♦ opening, Mullamphy competed to 2♠. The defenders led trumps and continued the trump attack. Mullamphy went after diamonds (note the convenient fall of the ♦98) and ended up losing just one spade, two diamonds and the ♣A. It was 6-0 to Oz.



"Seriously, you mean I have to look at my hand before bidding?"

Results here were split 50-50 in terms of which side went plus. Nobody managed a score bigger than 140 on either side of the ledger.

Bd: 18 North
 Dlr: East ♠ AQ98532
 Vul: N/S ♥ J8
 ♦ 43
 ♣ Q4

West
 ♠ K
 ♥ AK103
 ♦ K1087
 ♣ K862

East
 ♠ 107
 ♥ 7652
 ♦ QJ9652
 ♣ 3

South
 ♠ J64
 ♥ Q94
 ♦ A
 ♣ AJ10975

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
		Pass	1♣
1NT	3♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Kaku</i>
		Pass	1♣
1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠
3♥	3♠	All Pass	

The results at both tables were excellent for E/W in that N/S missed their laydown game. As against that, the 5♦ save would have been very cheap. It looks to me as if Kono did too little in the Closed Room, Fruewirth too little in the open Room. (Should Del'Monte's action at unfavorable vulnerability be a hand of approximately this strength?) Of course South has seen North in action rather more than the bulletin editor and I'm sure he would have a better idea of how much or how little to expect here.

In our other featured match, Huub Bertens told me the difference between a good partner and a *good* partner. Huub opened the East hand 2♣ (strong or a diamond preempt) and after a double from South West bid 5♦; 5♠ from North, double by West. What to lead. Huub told me that his partnership agreement in such blind-lead cases is the higher unbid suit. But that singleton club looked very tempting. Eventually he led a heart and declarer claimed 11 tricks. Seething, Bertens wrote down -850 on his scorecard and it was only after the match that he discovered that he was defending 6♠x! South had raised 5♠ to

6♠; just the 19-imp difference when teammates were +620 in 4♠ at the other table. Making 620 was worth 8 imps on the Butler scoring, by the way.

Bd: 19
Dir: South
Vul: E/W

North
♠ 10942
♥ A7543
♦ K97
♣ 2

West
♠ AQ53
♥ QJ92
♦ 86
♣ Q65

East
♠ 76
♥ 1086
♦ Q432
♣ AJ43

South
♠ KJ8
♥ K
♦ AJ105
♣ K10987

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>

Pass	1♦(♥)	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy Kaku</i>	

Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠(1)	Pass	2NT

All Pass

(1) INV both majors

Both Oz pairs must have felt unhappy with their result here, since 2NT would have been in severe jeopardy on any lead but Klinger's ♦8 while Del'Monte's decision to convert 1NT to 2♥ backfired spectacularly. Note the number of off-shape 1NT openings and overcalls we've seen this tournament. Is it really necessary to be so macho *all* the time? 2♥ on a spade lead lost the first three tricks with a club and two hearts to follow; eventually declarer tapped himself out in an attempt to make his contract. It was 7-6 to TAKA.

Bd: 21
Dir: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ A1096
♥ 4
♦ 9
♣ AQJ10862

West
♠ 43
♥ K1098
♦ AK52
♣ 953

East
♠ KQ752
♥ J762
♦ Q87
♣ K

South
♠ J8
♥ AQ53
♦ J10643
♣ 74

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
	1♣	1♠	Dbl
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy Kaku</i>	
	1♣	1♠	Dbl
Pass	2♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	3♣	All Pass	

Neither West player really got into an auction where a heart partscore handles very nicely for his side. Instead, both Norths bought the hand in a club contract and Kono guessed trumps for an overtrick. Notice that 3NT by N/S is not without play, though guessing clubs would be beyond most of us. If you get them wrong, as Frontaura discovered, after a diamond lead and spade shift, the defenders cash all the red suits at you and you go for 500 the hard way. (Mind you, once East, an overcaller, turns up with only the ♦Q and ♠KQ you might get clubs right, even though 3NT down five was the "normal" result in that contract.)

Bd: 22
Dir: East
Vul: E/W

North
♠ 63
♥ 7
♦ J854
♣ AKQ863

West
♠ K10952
♥ J32
♦ A32
♣ 75

East
♠ AJ74
♥ K854
♦ K10
♣ J109

South
♠ Q8
♥ AQ1096
♦ Q976
♣ 42

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
		1♣	1♥
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy Kaku</i>	
		1♣	1♥
Dbl(1)	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	3♣	All Pass	
(1) 4+♠			

A missed opportunity at both tables. 3♣ is a favorite, but if the defenders start by cashing their spades can

they then get the diamonds going too? Klinger won his ♠K at trick 2 and did shift to a diamond—but the ♦A, not a low one, and the ruff got away. In the other room Hirata led a heart and Del'Monte won the ♥A and drew trumps, then led a diamond towards the ♦Q and could not go wrong now.

Bd: 23 North
 Dir: South ♠ 874
 Vul: Both ♥ AK75
 ♦ A9876
 ♣ 3

West
 ♠ 32
 ♥ J982
 ♦ J
 ♣ K107642

East
 ♠ AJ965
 ♥ 1064
 ♦ K43
 ♣ AJ

South
 ♠ KQ10
 ♥ Q3
 ♦ Q1052
 ♣ Q985

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
Pass	1♦	1♠	2NT
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Kaku</i>
Pass	1♦	1♠	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Neither Australian pair did anything stupid here, but Kaku's light opening bid scored a huge goal as he reached a delicate 3NT that could not be defeated. He received a spade lead and continuation and led a diamond to dummy, then cleared the diamonds. When East won the second diamond West pitched the ♣7, encouraging, and East cleared the spades, letting declarer cash his nine tricks. Had East played the ♣AJ, would South have played to make and ducked? If the clubs had originally been five-three this was leading to three down instead of one down, on a hand where they might also be going minus in the other room

Since 2NT fetched 150 in the Open Room, TAKA had 10 imps and a lead of 18-7.

Game was only bid and made five times here. An initial club lead from West will surely set the contract unless declarer is psychic.

Bd: 24 North
 Dir: West ♠ K64
 Vul: None ♥ 98
 ♦ Q754
 ♣ AJ76

West
 ♠ Q
 ♥ J7
 ♦ AK632
 ♣ KQ1092

East
 ♠ J10873
 ♥ 642
 ♦ 1098
 ♣ 43

South
 ♠ A952
 ♥ AKQ1053
 ♦ J
 ♣ 85

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
1♦	Pass	Pass	2♥
2♣	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Kaku</i>
1♦	Pass	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

There is something to be said for playing 3NT here; it's the safer game, and indeed Klinger had a chance to make Kaku very uncomfortable in 4♥. Imagine you lead a top diamond and discover partner has an odd number, presumably three. Declarer surely has six hearts, two spades, and the ♣A. Your best shot to set the hand might be to shift innocently to the ♣10. If declarer misreads the position and does not play the jack, a second club will surely be too much for him to cope with.

Klinger actually played the ♠Q at trick 2. Declarer drew trumps, tested spades, then fell back on finding both club honors onside by leading up to the ace-jack and ducking when an honor appeared. TAKA had an imp because 3NT took a painless 400 in the other room. In fact, game was bid and made almost universally here.

Bd: 25 North
 Dir: North ♠ 9
 Vul: E/W ♥ AJ432
 ♦ J98
 ♣ J743

West
 ♠ 54
 ♥ Q85
 ♦ 1064
 ♣ AK1052

East
 ♠ Q8632
 ♥ K
 ♦ KQ732
 ♣ 96

South
 ♠ AKJ107
 ♥ 10976
 ♦ A5
 ♣ Q8

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
	2♦(1)	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	2♠	All Pass

(1) Multi

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Kaku</i>
	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

I know the standard of opening bids has been declining almost as fast as my waist line has been increasing, but for pity's sake does that pathetic 10-count of East's really constitute an opening bid? And at unfavorable vulnerability yet! Matt Mullamphy thought so and played 2♠ undoubled down 200. (I think South has a perfectly fine and unambiguous penalty double of 2♠, but Kaku did not agree.) That was a flat board when Fruewirth wisely did not act strongly over the Multi, and did not double 2♠ because he feared a rescue to a better spot in a minor. Matching 200s and no swing; both declarers lost two red-suit tricks and five trumps.

4♥ made surprisingly often on the N/S cards, although after an unopposed auction (1♠-1NT-2♥-3♥) would South really bid on with all his points in the wrong place (spades)?

Obviously after a top club lead, if the defenders play a second club declarer should find a home for his diamond loser. But if they shift to diamonds at trick 2 the best declarer can do is go to dummy with the ♥A and finesse in spades, trying to pitch dummy's diamonds. West can ruff low and foil that plan, leaving declarer with an unavoidable loser in each minor.

Maybe it is not altogether surprising that where 4♥ was bid, it made only twice in the matches at the top half of the draw, but eight times in the matches in the lower half.

Bd: 26	North
Dlr: East	♠ 842
Vul: Both	♥ ---
	♦ AKQ76532
	♣ J10

West
♠ AK73
♥ AJ9853
♦ ---
♣ K98

East
♠ J5
♥ 10764
♦ 108
♣ AQ763

South
♠ Q1096
♥ KQ2
♦ J94
♣ 542

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♥	5♦	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	5♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Kaku</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♥	4♦	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♥	All Pass

I'm sure that Yamada-Hirata's auction was the most sensible one possible after the maximum preemption from North. In the other room, a frank and full exchange of views as to the necessity of cue-bidding as East at his second turn was doubtless conducted. After all, if slam will make opposite as little as the East hand maybe you owe your partner just one cue-bid. An overtrick imp (Klinger laid down the ♥A while Yamada took the safety play) meant TAKA led 20-6.

Place your bets ladies and gentlemen. How many E/W pairs bid slam, and how many of them who bid it remembered their safety plays? No more bets; the answer is that three pairs bid it and all of them made it (two, I happen to know, after North did not bother to compete to a sensible level). Meanwhile, the most intriguing result was the 2 imp-gain by the Chinese ladies for conceding 650, and beating 4♣ undoubled by seven tricks; and yes, it should have been *nine* undertricks.

At this point in the set Oz had not scored for ten deals. They finally added to their account here after a strange bidding accident in the Open Room.

Bd: 28	North
Dlr: West	♠ AJ2
Vul: N/S	♥ Q9875
	♦ 3
	♣ AK94

West
♠ 543
♥ A102
♦ J97
♣ Q1032

East
♠ K10976
♥ 4
♦ AKQ1064
♣ J

South
♠ Q8
♥ KJ63
♦ 852
♣ 8765

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
	1♥	2♦	3♥
Pass	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy Kaku</i>	
Pass	1♥	2♥	3♥
Pass	4♥	Dbl	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

I like Hirata's decision to bid 2♦, but I think you are supposed to follow up with 4♠ next, or convert 3NT to 4♠. Note that there is a good case for playing that the 3♠ bid shows five spades anyway, and this does not look like the right heart suit on which to bid 3NT as West. Hirata gave his partner credit for better judgment than he actually had. 3NT went quietly down two tricks on a heart lead, while 4♠ lost two trumps and a club and wrapped up 420. It was 20-17 to TAKA now.

Bd: 29	North
Dlr: North	♠ AK6
Vul: Both	♥ J93
	♦ Q543
	♣ AQ4

West
♠ 109
♥ KQ84
♦ K62
♣ J932

East
♠ J854
♥ A75
♦ 10987
♣ K6

South
♠ Q732
♥ 1062
♦ AJ
♣ 10875

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy Kaku</i>	
	1NT	All Pass	

Quite the dullest of deals, wouldn't you say? The normal line of play is to receive a diamond lead and take the second diamond on table, at which point hearts are surely four-three. So your sole aim on the deal is to get two club tricks before the opponents have seven winners. If spades are three-three or the club finesse wins you are home. What if neither comes in? How should you play clubs to develop an extra trick before you lose two?

According to Jack Zhao on BBO it is right to run the ♣7 at trick 3. This loses when West has the ♣Jx but it gains when he has ♣J9x(x), of which there are far more examples. More importantly, it works here (percentage tables, we don't need no stinkin' percentage tables).

The most curious thing of all about the deal is that the only declarers I could find who actually guessed clubs to make the contract were Fu Zhong (Jack's partner) and Ricco van Prooijen, an ex-teammate/countryman of Jack's, who spends a lot of time in The Netherlands. Do Fu and Ricco have a secret BBO private line? I think we should be told.

At the tables in our featured match both declarers mundanely led a club to the queen and went down. No swing.

Bd: 30	North
Dlr: East	♠ J1065
Vul: None	♥ A75
	♦ KJ75
	♣ 98

West
♠ 3
♥ QJ10962
♦ AQ10
♣ Q106

East
♠ KQ94
♥ 8
♦ 9832
♣ J542

South
♠ A872
♥ K43
♦ 64
♣ AK73

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Fruewirth</i>
		Pass	1♣*
1♥	Dbl.	Pass	2♠
3♥	3♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Mullamphy Kaku</i>	
		Pass	1♣*
1♥	Dbl.	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Did Yamada do well for pushing his opponents to a challenging partscore? Yes, but that was the easy part. 2♠ was easy for Kaku. He won the heart lead in dummy, played a spade to the ace and a diamond up, and could later ruff clubs in dummy and diamonds in hand.

In the other room against 3♠ Yamada also led a top heart. Fruewirth won in dummy, led a club to the ace and a diamond to the king. Back came a diamond to West's ace and a second heart, rather curiously ruffed by East for a club through. Now declarer just cashed the ♠A and crossruffed. East had to follow suit throughout and the defenders just scored the last two tricks with the ♠KQ. The match ended 20-18 to TAKA; a moral victory but a 15-15 draw.

Match Nine: Israel vs The Latin

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 1
Dir: North
Vul: None

North
♠ J874
♥ J1076
♦ A52
♣ 54

West
♠ AK52
♥ 82
♦ K763
♣ K76

East
♠ 63
♥ AKQ543
♦ J984
♣ 2

South
♠ Q109
♥ 9
♦ Q10
♣ AQJ10983

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
	Pass	1♥	3♣
Dbl.	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
	Pass	1♥	2♣
Pass	Pass	2♥	3♣
Dbl.	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Both E/W pairs took a normal route to a normal game, one that might survive four-one trumps if the ♦A was right. (Declarer might be able to single in all the small trumps and take two spades, six trumps and one trick in each minor.) Not today; game going down at least one trick looks to be the normal result, and was duly achieved in our match.

As if to prove that a little learning is a dangerous thing, one defender in the North seat found an ingenious way to let through 4♥. South had preempted in clubs, so after two rounds of clubs were won in dummy and two trumps had produced the bad news, declarer tried a diamond to the king, and it held, North playing South for ♦J10 not ♦Q10. Declarer, duly impressed, ruffed a club (North pitching a spade) and played three rounds of spades before exiting with a diamond. South played the ♦Q. North could overtake and concede a trick to the ♦J or duck and let declarer score a trump *en passant* at trick 12.

Another N/S pair did considerably worse; they reached 3NT from the South seat, against the China Open team, which was duly doubled for penalty and redoubled to show doubt. There was not much doubt about the outcome though; -2200 does have a way of clearing up any residual uncertainties. Two E/W

pairs played 3NT and managed to make it, which seems fair, I suppose, given that they could make it on defense.

Bd: 3
Dir: South
Vul: E/W

North
♠ AK9
♥ 532
♦ 864
♣ J965

West
♠ Q876
♥ KQJ10
♦ K953
♣ K

East
♠ 52
♥ A
♦ AQJ102
♣ AQ1073

South
♠ J1043
♥ 98764
♦ 7
♣ 842

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
	Pass	2♦	Pass
1♦	Pass	3♥(spl)	Pass
2NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
3NT	Pass		Pass
4NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
	Pass	2♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	4♣	Pass
3♦	Pass		Pass
5♦	All Pass		

Two competent auctions to sensible spots. Yes, 4NT might be set on a very bad day but just simply avoiding slam was the target here. Today's first challenge: how many pairs reached slam here? Answer: 25 pairs got to slam; one played a partscore —to gain 6imps. I bet they told their teammates they were expecting to gain more because the slam should have been doubled, but chutzpah will only get you so far.

Bd: 4
Dir: West
Vul: Both

North
♠ AQ
♥ 1093
♦ KQJ10
♣ AJ107

West
♠ 94
♥ KQ87
♦ A4
♣ 96432

East
♠ K8632
♥ A52
♦ 952
♣ K8

South
♠ J1075
♥ J64
♦ 8763
♣ Q5

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

You and I might find a way to beat 1NT, but after a spade lead to the queen and a diamond to West, it is far from clear to play back a spade, looking at dummy's holding in that suit. Fernando and Demirev both shifted to a club and declarer gratefully cashed out for +120 a moment later. Would a Smith Echo (don't shift) work from East? It is not clear that East should send that message, I think. On other layouts a club or heart play might be necessary.

Eleven tables did beat 1NT by North; curiously, the defenders at the top tables almost never found the winning defense. Do you think that suggests you're supposed to let it through?

Bd: 5	North
Dlr: North	♠ 863
Vul: N/S	♥ KQJ
	♦ KQ2
	♣ 6543
West	East
♠ Q4	♠ 10975
♥ 1042	♥ A9753
♦ AJ84	♦ 95
♣ 10872	♣ KQ
	South
	♠ AKJ2
	♥ 86
	♦ 10763
	♣ AJ9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
	Pass	2♦(♥+♠)	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣*
Pass	1♦	1♥	2♦
2♥	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Getting to 3NT is easy; making it...not so much. Frontaura was able to bid diamonds naturally and invite in notrump as a passed hand. Brenner liked his 13-count enough to accept. On a heart lead could declarer work out enough about the heart and club holdings to get spades right? Are you kidding? In the text books yes; in real life Frontaura took the spade finesse at once and a heart back doomed him. The defenders had three hearts and two side-suit tricks before declarer could get anything going and indeed declarer could manage only seven tricks now. Israel led 8-2.

Fu Zhong, playing for SARA, reached 3NT here after the unopposed auction: Pass-1♦; 2NT-3NT. I guess South knows that the formula for success is to put Fu in game and let him make it. He won the heart lead (taking West's ten with the queen), then played a spade to the king, a diamond to the king, and a club up, ducking the queen. East hoped to find partner with the ♥J, and so led a second diamond, and West won to return a heart, ducked. At this point declarer cashed the club and diamond winners and paused for a reassessment. East had a 4=5=2=2 pattern, had passed initially, and had already disclosed nine points. So he led a spade to the ace; contract made. The only declarer to record +600.

By contrast, when the Dutch defended 2NT on a similar auction Huub Bertens did not duck his ♦A at trick three; he hopped up with the ace to play a second heart, ducked. Declarer had no reason not to take the spade finesse for his eighth trick and ended down one. (And yes, he should have made it.)

The Latin scored overtricks in a superior partscore to claw back to 8-5. Then came a Pyrrhic victory.

Bd: 7	North
Dlr: South	♠ AKJ93
Vul: Both	♥ AJ962
	♦ Q5
	♣ 5
West	East
♠ 75	♠ Q64
♥ 10	♥ K854
♦ K942	♦ A76
♣ AJ10972	♣ K43
	South
	♠ 1082
	♥ Q73
	♦ J1083
	♣ Q86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
2♣	2♥	3♣	Pass
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
3♣	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Personally, I would not have thought that Yarborough was worth a response as South, but Levin dug up a 1NT bid and soon found himself putting down the dummy in 3♥. Declarer was tapped a trick 1 and in a desperate attempt to make the hand turned his six tricks into five by finessing in spades, then letting East pitch his last spade on the clubs. Down 400.

All of that meant 4♠ down two was a positive triumph for Frontaura. 4♠ really deserved to get doubled by somebody, but it was hard for the defenders to work that out. Fiveimps for The Latin, up 10-8 now. Incidentally, two E/W pairs bid and made 3NT here; well done Greenberg-Yamada and Miyakuni-Amano. The key is to test diamonds before clubs. When North turns up with two, the club finesse is indicated.

Bd: 8
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ Q96
 ♥ 95
 ♦ AKQ83
 ♣ 1097

West	East
♠ J108	♠ K7543
♥ KQ1043	♥ 762
♦ 102	♦ 4
♣ KJ4	♣ AQ52

South
 ♠ A2
 ♥ AJ8
 ♦ J9765
 ♣ 863

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
Pass	1♦	1♠	2♠
3♥(1)	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣(1)	Pass	2♠	All Pass

2♠ was an undramatic affair. Declarer ended up scoring three spades, four hearts and a club. The contract was never in jeopardy and the overtricks were not vital. In the other room, by contrast, 3♥ was a far tighter affair. On a top diamond lead followed by a club shift Fernando won in hand, ruffed a diamond to dummy and played a heart to the king. Now he was prepared to gamble on the ♠A being right, so instead of tangling the entries by leading a club to dummy he led a low heart from hand. That meant he lost one spade, two hearts and a diamond. Contract made and an 11-8 lead for The Latin now.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ 84
 ♥ Q742
 ♦ A98
 ♣ Q763

West	East
♠ K72	♠ 109
♥ A5	♥ J9863
♦ K107542	♦ Q6
♣ J9	♣ K852

South
 ♠ AQJ653
 ♥ K10
 ♦ J3
 ♣ A104

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

You can get worked up over whether South should bid 2♠ or 3♠ here but in my book it is too close to call. (Obviously what you *should* be getting worked up about is the need to play better methods here; transfers or Gazilli perhaps). Both tables played 4♠. Demirev's diamond lead gave his opponents no chance. Fernando led the ♥A and continued the suit. Curiously, Gonzalo followed to discourage and then played his lowest heart at trick 2. Had declarer been prepared to rely on a misdefense he might have led trumps from hand. But he crossed to the ♦A to take his discard and the defenders now had four tricks without needing to guess what to do next. Still 11-8.

Patrick Huang playing for Yeh Bros made 4♠ here. The defenders led the ♣J, covered all around, and Huang returned the ♠A, then the ♠Q to West. After all, if West was going to make a mistake on opening lead maybe he would compound his error. Indeed, he did. He played a second club and now the spots were such that dummy's ♣76 represented a discard for the losing diamond.

Bd: 10
 Dir: East
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ 10974
 ♥ Q1054
 ♦ QJ73
 ♣ 7

West	East
♠ 32	♠ Q86
♥ AK982	♥ J
♦ A65	♦ K104
♣ 853	♣ AKQJ96

South
 ♠ AKJ5
 ♥ 763
 ♦ 982
 ♣ 1042

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
1♦(♥)	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	5♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
1♥	Pass	1♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	5♣	All Pass

Well bid by both pairs, in a sense, except for the trifling matter that with clubs three-one a trump lead challenges 5♣ while 3NT would have 10 tricks. But where's the elegance in playing 3NT; that never wins you awards does it? Not surprisingly, though, neither South aspired to the mantle of the late John Lowenthal, who never saw a sequence he liked when on opening lead. He would have led a trump, but only if he wanted a ruff. No swing after both Souths cashed their spades and both declarers claimed as soon as it was decent to do so. Still 11-8 and the crowd was getting restless.

Two tables defeated 5♣ here. At one table on a declarer error after a top spade lead; at the other table South did the right thing for the right reasons. Toyofoku-Matsuo duplicated the Israeli auction to 5♣ except that East bid 5♣ over 4♣ instead of cue-bidding 4♦. Envisaging that declarer would have ♠Qxx and dummy a singleton or doubleton spade, Atsushi Kikuchi duly led the small trump that appears to be the best chance to defeat 5♣. In fact, declarer can recover in two ways, the simplest being a heart-diamond squeeze. Better technique is to win the club and play the ♥A and ruff a second heart at once. Now, when you give up a spade, South must win to return a trump. You can win in dummy and ruff a heart to hand. Then you draw the last trump and have two discards in dummy. That does not take away from the elegance of the lead, does it?

"Give us some action" was the cry emanating from every corner of the Press room, and an answer came here.

Bd: 11	North		
Dlr: South	♠ A93		
Vul: None	♥ A2		
	♦ Q52		
	♣ 76543		
		West	East
		♠ Q74	♠ K10
		♥ QJ65	♥ K109873
		♦ K64	♦ 1098
		♣ QJ10	♣ 92
			South
			♠ J8652
			♥ 4
			♦ AJ73
			♣ AK8

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
			1♠
Pass	1NT(F)	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
			1♠
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

2♠ collected an unremarkable +140 but 4♠ got the VuGraph commentators salivating about intra-finesses. (Win the club lead and cross to the dummy to lead a spade towards the jack. Then pin the ♠10 or drop the ♠K on the next round.) But Levin, like Baldrick, had a cunning plan. He won the club lead and led a thoughtful ♠5 to the nine. He won the heart return (yes, a diamond might have been better) and played two rounds of clubs to West. Back came a heart and Levin ruffed, led the ♠6 to the ace, and ran clubs. If West ruffed he would be endplayed; alas for declarer, West could pitch twice and come down to a trump, a heart and the ♦Kx. Had dummy held another heart South would have been able to ruff a heart and exit with a trump for the endplay, but it did not. A near miss, and the horseshoes and hand-grenades faction muttered sympathetic plaudits to both sides. It was 16-8 to The Latin now.

So how many players managed the intra-finesse, apparently the only legitimate way to make the hand? 4♠ making 420 was recorded at seven tables. Step forward for the roll of honor Louk Verhees (who won the heart opening lead in dummy and was thus in the right hand to make the trump play without having to go the extra mile of crossing to the board) and even more honorably Kyoko Shimamura (who received a club lead, crossed to the board with a heart at trick 2 to make the trump play, then pinned the ♠10 on the next round for her contract). *Bien joue, Omigoto*. (My Dutch is not good enough to congratulate Louk, but then again neither is my Japanese without more than a little help.)

Bd: 12	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 1075		
Vul: N/S	♥ KJ104		
	♦ A1053		
	♣ Q2		
		West	East
		♠ QJ94	♠ K3
		♥ 986	♥ A75
		♦ KQ9	♦ 42
		♣ J84	♣ K109763
			South
			♠ A862
			♥ Q32
			♦ J876
			♣ A5

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	2♦
All Pass			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2NT	All Pass		

The problem in 2♦ revolves around the trump guess but with ♦KQ9 inside declarer could hardly go wrong. By contrast, 2NT was an ugly affair. Should East convert back to 3♣ here? After three rounds of hearts Demirev stole a spade to the ♠Q. Should he now guess clubs or assume he has been given an entry for just this reason? Declarer did misguess clubs and Brenner returned a high diamond spot. Now the defenders cashed out somewhat inaccurately for down two instead of down four. No swing; still 16-8.

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

Bd: 13 North
 Dir: North ♠ KJ2
 Vul: Both ♥ Q9532

♦ 7
 ♣ QJ82

West
 ♠ 96
 ♥ AK10
 ♦ AKQ843
 ♣ 95

East
 ♠ 4
 ♥ 8764
 ♦ 10952
 ♣ A643

South
 ♠ AQ108753
 ♥ J
 ♦ J6
 ♣ K107

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
	Pass	Pass	3♠
Dbl.	4♠	Pass	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠
3♦(STR)	3♠	5♦	5♠
Dbl	All Pass		

5♦, undoubled, went quietly down 200 in the Open Room. Since 4♠ was making easily enough, this looked a decent result for E/W. At the other table, though, E/W put themselves in position for an even better result. Demirev sawed off 5♠, took a top diamond (East following with what ought to be a suit-preference ♦2), and shifted to the ♥K, asking for

count. Some partnerships might play the ♥8, some the ♥7. I'm not sure if this (new) partnership had an agreement here or not. All we can say for sure is that Demirev's continuation of the ♥A did not trouble declarer unduly. Had Demirev led a heart first and shifted to diamonds he would surely have read the ♦2 as suit preference. Plus 850 meant 12imps for The Latin instead of 9imps the other way, and saw them win by 20-10 in VPs, 28-9 overall.

There is still time for one more deal of interest from another match.

Bd: 14 North
 Dir: East ♠ 1093
 Vul: None ♥ A
 ♦ KQJ10932
 ♣ 108

West
 ♠ A82
 ♥ 7
 ♦ A54
 ♣ AKQJ95

East
 ♠ QJ654
 ♥ K52
 ♦ 8
 ♣ 7643

South
 ♠ K7
 ♥ QJ1098643
 ♦ 76
 ♣ 2

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Levin</i>
<i>Demirev</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Migry</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
5♣	All Pass	Pass	4♥

5♣ yielded an irrelevant overtrick in one room but when Fu Zhong and Kumiko Sashira were N/S they defended 6♣ (on the above auction North bid 5♦ over 5♣ and East went on to 6♣). Fu led the ♦K, suggesting to West that hearts were nine-zero and thus it seemed quite reasonable to win and draw two rounds of trumps. Now what? A heart up would apparently accomplish nothing so declarer ruffed a diamond to dummy and advanced the ♠Q. That went 7, 2, 9. Now what? Declarer tried the ♠J to pin the nine and had turned +920 into -50. But let's give the defenders mucho credit too. 6♣ made every other time it was attempted.

Registration Required for the Yokohama Swiss Teams

The Yokohama Swiss Teams will be held tomorrow: Saturday, February 14. Those planning to play in the event must register by 21:00 hours (9 pm) today in the Secretariat (E206).

Match Ten: Japan Open vs Israel

by Rich Colker

Bd: 17
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ J7
 ♥ 542
 ♦ A10973
 ♣ K87

West
 ♠ 104
 ♥ AJ87
 ♦ J8542
 ♣ 65

South
 ♠ KQ863
 ♥ 93
 ♦ Q
 ♣ AQ943

East
 ♠ A952
 ♥ KQ106
 ♦ K6
 ♣ J102

Fifteen N/S pairs declared spade contracts (from one to three) and every one scored +140. Three other N/S pairs declared club partials; two scored +13, the other +150. In most of the remaining matches E/W were allowed to play heart contracts, usually scoring +110 with the occasional -50.

Bd: 18
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 4
 ♥ Q10863
 ♦ QJ7
 ♣ J987

West
 ♠ 962
 ♥ 9
 ♦ A932
 ♣ KQ1053

East
 ♠ AKQJ1075
 ♥ J42
 ♦ 1065
 ♣ ---

South
 ♠ 83
 ♥ AK75
 ♦ K84
 ♣ A642

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♠
Dbl	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♣

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♠
Dbl	Pass	2♥	All Pass

We're from the school that bids twice with the South hand, so over 2♥ we would have bid 3♣. Yes, yes, we know that RHO opened 1♣. But we just do not trust a 1♣ opener to deliver "the goods" in that suit these days. In fact, we've become almost equally suspicious of diamonds. In the Closed Room Paul Hackett and Tom Hanlon wimped out and defended 2♥. Hanlon led his stiff ♦Q to the ace, ruffed the ♦3 return, then played ♣A and a club to Hackett's queen hoping for a second ruff. But Hackett knew that East had no more diamonds either, so he switched to the ♠J. Bertens won his ace, drew two rounds of trumps, then pitched a spade on the ♦J and ruffed a diamond to hand. Even though he still had a spade to lose, he managed to take eight tricks without breathing hard to come home with +110.

In the Open Room Louk Verhees wimped out too but was rescued by Ricco van Prooijen, whose balancing double stirred up Verhees enough to venture a 3♣ bid. Now the proof was in the pudding. Artur Malinowski led a club to the ten and queen and Verhees exited with a spade to the jack and ace. David Bakhshi cashed the ♥K, then led a heart to Malinowski's jack. Verhees ruffed the ♥A at trick 5, cashed the ♠Q, ruffed a low spade with dummy's ♣8, cashed the ♣K and ♦A, ruffed a diamond to hand, drew the last trump, and claimed 10 tricks for +130. 1♣—bah, humbug! A well-deserved 6 imps and a good start for The Netherlands.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		4♠	Dbl

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
		4♠	All Pass

Verhees' double looks normal to us, so it was odd to see the auction die undisturbed in 4♠ in the Closed Room. Hanlon led the ♥K, then switched to the ♦4. Bertens called for a low club from dummy to give Hackett a chance to rise with the ace if he had it (and not the jack). But there was really no defense against 4♠ now: Declarer could simply ruff his two remaining hearts in dummy and concede two diamond tricks. Indeed, no lead beats 4♠.

In the Open Room Verhees made the "normal" double and Prooijen decided to defend. The South hand clearly has all the defense his double promised, and he could easily have had a bit more. Thus it is difficult to fault Prooijen for sitting it out when his diamond holding could have carried more weight on defense and bidding 5♥ could easily have turned a plus into a minus. The play was virtually identical to that in the Closed Room, but this time it cost 590. That was 5 imps back to Hackett, trailing now by 1 imp at 6-5. Oh, by the way, while 5♥ doesn't make it's a reasonable save against 4♠. Note that if North's minor-suit lengths were reversed the hand could be stripped out and West endplayed in clubs for down one (unless East is clairvoyant enough to find the low spade lead to West's nine for a club ruff). But the big upside is that on some days bidding 5♥ might get

E/W to bid on to 5♠, which can be set.

Spade games were overwhelmingly the norm here, scoring anywhere from 420 to 450 to 590 to -100 (twice in 5♠x). In the few cases where N/S declared heart contracts (always at the five level undoubled) N/S scored +100 or +200.

The next five boards were generally uninspiring, but there is a point of interest worth noting on Board 21.

Bd: 21	North		
Dlr: North	♠ J1092		
Vul: N/S	♥ ---		
	♦ AK85		
	♣ AK832		
		East	
West		♠ Q7	
♠ 85		♥ AJ10874	
♥ 6532		♦ 10976	
♦ Q4		♣ 4	
♣ J10976			
	South		
	♠ AK643		
	♥ KQ9		
	♦ J32		
	♣ Q5		

In our featured match both N/Ss reached the good 6♠ after East had preempted in hearts. But some pairs may overreach to 7♠, which is clearly a poor contract given East's preemption, with the increased likelihood of three-one trumps with the queen offside. On most auctions N/S should be able to stay out of 7♠ (yes, we know this time it makes). For example, suppose the auction goes:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	2♥	2♠
4♥	5♥	Pass	6♠
Pass	?		

From North's perspective, South must have good spades for his 6♠ bid and not the ♥A (else he might have bid 6♥ on the way), which makes it really tempting for North to bid the grand. But with a good hand lacking controls, for example ♠AKxxx ♥Kxx ♦QJx ♣Qx, there is a non-negligible danger that West may have a trump trick. North should not risk 7♠ since South's hand, though it rates to be a good one, cannot be counted on to have exactly "the right stuff."



"I keep my flask in the lining of my big, bulky coat."

Most pairs played 6♠ but three played seven—one failing. Two other pairs failed in 6♣ thanks to the 5-1 trump split.

When Board 24 was placed on the tray the score was 11-5, The Netherlands.

Bd: 24	North		
Dlr: West	♠ K2		
Vul: None	♥ 10954		
	♦ K103		
	♣ AK104		
		West	East
		♠ 1098	♠ AQJ43
		♥ 8732	♥ AKQ
		♦ AQ	♦ 9852
		♣ 9873	♣ 2
			South
			♠ 765
			♥ J6
			♦ J764
			♣ QJ65

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
Pass	1♦	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

So, who is to blame (if anyone) for E/W missing the good 4♠ contract? East seems to have been looking for help in diamonds and in our never-to-be-humble opinion West has that help. To see why, change one of East's diamonds into the jack and make his ♥Q a second low club. Now game is on little more than the spade finesse. (If South leads a diamond you play the ace to protect against a diamond ruff by South, as Baskhshi will do below.) So we think West should have at least made a counter-try by bidding 3♥ (Last Train?). Now from East's perspective, if West has two small diamonds, four trumps, and no other high cards game will likely make. Would West bid 4♠ over 3♦ holding ♠xxxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣xxxx? Hardly. How about if we change one of West's small trumps into the king? Would he bid it then? Not even. So East really cannot count on West to bid game with many hands that will make game cold, or at least give it good play. We apportion the blame 65% to East, 35% to West.

With 4♠ cold, Verhees led a diamond against 3♠. Bakhshi rose with the ace, played the ♦Q to the king, and Prooijen got out with the ♠2. Bakhshi ducked this round to dummy and set about ruffing his diamond losers using hearts as hand entries: heart, diamond ruff, heart, diamond ruff, heart. Verhees ruffed and played his last diamond, allowing Prooijen

to score his ♠K and holding Bakhshi to nine tricks. Of course once the spade finesse wins at trick three there is no reason to bank on three-three hearts if you wish to make ten tricks. Declarer comes to hand with a heart, ruffs one diamond, then plays a second trump from dummy to pick up the king. Eventually he'll lose two diamonds and a club and will avoid the problem Bakhshi ran into here.

In the Closed Room Hanlon led the ♥J against 4♣ since Hackett had opened 1♥ (playing four-card majors). Bertens won, took the losing diamond finesse, won the heart continuation, cashed the ♦A, played a spade to the queen, ruffed a diamond, then led a second spade to the king and ace and soon he was writing 420 in his private score. That was 7 imps to The Netherlands, who extended their lead to 18-5.

Twenty-five pairs played in 4♣ and 12 of them made it. Most of the other pairs played in spade partials.

Hackett struck back in a series of 1- and 2-imp gains over the next four deals. When the next-to-last board was placed on the tray The Netherlands' lead was down to 7 imps at 18-11.

Bd: 29 North
 Dlr: North ♠ 7
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ53
 ♦ AK52
 ♣ AJ94

West
 ♠ A109863
 ♥ AJ2
 ♦ J9
 ♣ Q8

East
 ♠ QJ
 ♥ 10864
 ♦ Q106
 ♣ K1072

South
 ♠ K542
 ♥ 97
 ♦ 8743
 ♣ 653

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♦
1♠	Dbl	Pass	2♦

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
	1♥	Pass	Pass
2♠	Dbl	3♠	All Pass

It is difficult to imagine E/W allowing the opponents to play in 2♦. One of us (BR) thinks that West should not bid 2♠ over 2♦ but that East has a mandatory 2♠ balance. The other editor thinks that bidding 2♠ over 2♦ with the West hand is perfectly acceptable—perhaps even *de rigeur*—but that East should also act if 2♦ comes back around to him. In that case a balancing double would be quite acceptable and would also lead to a likely 2♠ contract.

Against 2♦ Malinowski led the ♠A, and seeing dummy's singleton spade, he switched to the ♣Q. Verhees ducked, won the club continuation with the ace, and led the ♥K. In with the ♥A, Malinowski switched back to spades, Verhees pitching a club from dummy as he won in hand. He now played on trumps, conceding a trump and one other trick to the defense for +90.

Against 3♣ Hackett led the ♦A, then switched to the ♥K. Bakkeren won and set about drawing trumps, playing the ♠A followed by a spade to the queen and king. Back came a heart to the queen and the defense scored a heart ruff in addition to the ♣A and another diamond for down two, +200 for N/S. That was 3 more imps to Hackett, trailing now 18-14.

Twenty-seven E/W pairs played either 2♠ or 3♣, with varying results. Only seven N/S pairs were allowed to play in 2♦; three of them made either +90 or +110.

Bd: 30 North
 Dlr: East ♠ 9
 Vul: None ♥ QJ9
 ♦ AJ743
 ♣ K1063

West
 ♠ KJ7532
 ♥ 1054
 ♦ 10
 ♣ A98

East
 ♠ A1086
 ♥ A832
 ♦ 82
 ♣ QJ4

South
 ♠ Q4
 ♥ K76
 ♦ KQ965
 ♣ 752

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		1♣	1♦
1♠	3♠	Dbl	4♦
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
		Pass	Pass
2♥(♠)	Pass	2♠	All Pass

Here nine tricks was the limit of the hand and the number of tricks E/W took at both tables. Plus 140 and -50 resulted in 5 imps to The Netherlands, who won the match 23-14.



"Three more matches and my castle will be finished."

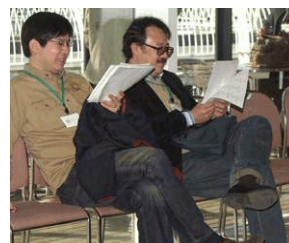
Most E/W pairs played in spades, the majority in a partscore. Eleven played in 4♠ and two made it.

One of the deals that we passed by, which involved just a couple of overtricks in our feature match, was defended very nicely to produce a game swing in the match between Oz and China Evertrust It deserves a quick look.

Bd: 28	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 96		
Vul: N/S	♥ A82		
	♦ 763		
	♣ Q8432		
West		East	
♠ KQ1054		♠ J8	
♥ KQ10		♥ 4	
♦ AKQ95		♦ 10842	
♣ ---		♣ AKJ976	
	South		
	♠ A732		
	♥ J97653		
	♦ J		
	♣ 105		

East declared 3NT here (as did both tables in our feature match) where most E/W pairs played in diamonds, at the five level or higher. (In our feature match 3NT made at both tables, in one case declarer taking nine tricks and in the other case 11 tricks.) Fruewirth, South, led a low heart and when declarer played the king Del'Monte ducked, signaling an even(!) number of cards. Declarer led a spade to the jack and Verhees won (if he ducks that is declarer's ninth trick) and led another heart. When declarer tried the queen, Del'Monte pounced on it with the ace and the defense rattled off four more hearts to set 3NT two tricks, +100. Nice defense, guys.

Three other E/W pairs played notrump games; one went down. Twelve other pairs bid 6♦; six made it.



"We've really got to work on our coordination."

Match Eleven: China Evertrust Holding Group vs TAKA

by Barry Rigal

With two rounds to go, the 5th-place team had 169 VPs and three teams were tied for 6th-8th with 168. Close behind them were eight teams, all fewer than 9 VPs behind. All 12 of these teams would be in the running for those four places, and someone from below might still sneak in with two maximums.

We will be featuring China Open against TAKA.

Bd: 1	North		
Dlr: North	♠ A		
Vul: None	♥ AJ874		
	♦ 1083		
	♣ 7532		
West		East	
♠ 10865		♠ J2	
♥ Q105		♥ K32	
♦ 754		♦ KJ62	
♣ Q96		♣ AK108	
	South		
	♠ KQ9743		
	♥ 96		
	♦ AQ9		
	♣ J4		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♠
Pass	Pass	2NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♠
3♥	All Pass	Dbl	Pass

Both teams gave early warning that they were not prepared to give in on partscore deals when the East players reopened with a minimum and a bad spade holding; but one action worked rather better than the other. Hirata's 2NT—we speculated that this was "unusual," and certainly it was an unusual position for the action—got him to that spot on a top spade lead from South. That crashed the spade honors and now came the ♦8 to the jack and queen, and the ♥9. Hirata put up the ♥Q to kill the suit and eventually could take one spade, one heart one diamond and four clubs. Down one and a triumph compared to the 3♥ contract in the Closed Room. I must say that as North I would have awarded this one the axe, but of course we've all seen weaker bids of 2♠ than the hand that Kako had.

Only 11 E/W pairs ended up declaring on this deal, and only one of them ended up plus. Congratulations to Misako Fukazawa for CHARMANT, who played and made 1NT from the East seat. The only other plus scores for E/W, three of them, came when N/S got overboard and went down.

Bd: 2
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

West
 ♠ Q65
 ♥ A10
 ♦ A8743
 ♣ 984

North
 ♠ K9872
 ♥ KQ
 ♦ QJ106
 ♣ 105

East
 ♠ A103
 ♥ J9854
 ♦ K9
 ♣ QJ2

South
 ♠ J4
 ♥ 7632
 ♦ 52
 ♣ AK763

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
		1♥	Pass

1NT All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
		Pass	Pass

1♦ 1♠

All Pass

1NT handled beautifully when Yamada won the top diamond lead in dummy and played a heart to his ace after winning the ♦K at trick 1. That got him 120; not enough. The defense to 2♣ saw the ♥A lead and a trump shift. Declarer knocked out one diamond honor, won the trump return, and tried a spade to the king and ace. Now he could run the hearts and West could get all his losers away, and overruff South. Down 400, 7-3 China.

Two other E/W pairs collected 200s defending N/S partscores; the rest of the E/W field mostly played in partscores making. Two N/S pairs went plus declaring: Joey Silver made 2♠ as North for JUICE and Sato Makiko made 1NT as South for Kitty's. Four E/W pairs beat various N/S partscores for +50.

If you thought the first deal featured an unusual unusual notrump, the next deal featured the opening notrumper showing the minors at the *four* level.

Bd: 3
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

West
 ♠ AQ7
 ♥ KQ54
 ♦ Q8
 ♣ A643

North
 ♠ K865
 ♥ 32
 ♦ AJ652
 ♣ 105

East
 ♠ 10432
 ♥ A10976
 ♦ 103
 ♣ J8

South
 ♠ J9
 ♥ J8
 ♦ K974
 ♣ KQ972

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
		1NT	Pass
	2♣(♦)	2♥	4NT
	4♥	Pass	All Pass
		Db1	
	5♦	Db1	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
		Pass	Pass

1♣(STR) 1NT(1) Pass 2♦
 Pass Pass 2♥ 3♦
 All Pass
 (1) ♦+♠ or ♥+♣

Our second unusual notrump in three deals by a notrump opener; Hou's undisciplined actions turned +200 into -300. And when Shi did not compete to 3♥ over 3♦, TAKA had plus scores in both rooms and 9imps to lead 12-7.

Two tables were allowed to make 4♥ when the defenders set up spades for diamond discards, but the normal result here was a heart partscore. The two gamers were Koneru-Mori for JUICE and Matsubara-Sakaguchi for guriguri.

Bd: 4
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

West
 ♠ 6532
 ♥ A4
 ♦ 87632
 ♣ J7

North
 ♠ J7
 ♥ Q95
 ♦ KQ109
 ♣ AK95

East
 ♠ AK
 ♥ J8762
 ♦ 5
 ♣ Q10432

South
 ♠ Q10984
 ♥ K103
 ♦ AJ4
 ♣ 86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3NT

With a blind opening lead both Easts misguessed, making the normal attack of a club, not a heart, though as we can see the heart lead would have worked better. Declarer could knock out the two spade stops and come to nine tricks. But on a heart lead the play is more fun. At double dummy declarer can win and cash four diamonds at once. East must keep three clubs and two spades, so must let go one heart. Declarer now reverts to spades but East wins to play a third heart and collects a club at the death.

An unimportant overtrick imp meant TAKA led 13-9.

Mostly 600s with a few 630s characterize the result here. Two N/S pairs played spade partscores and eight pairs managed to somehow go down in 3NT.

Bd: 5
 Dlr: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ J982
 ♥ Q103
 ♦ K873
 ♣ 65

West
 ♠ A43
 ♥ J875
 ♦ J1062
 ♣ 74

East
 ♠ K10
 ♥ A96
 ♦ Q94
 ♣ AKQ93

South
 ♠ Q765
 ♥ K42
 ♦ A5
 ♣ J1082

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
1♥	Pass	1♣	Pass
		2NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
1♦(WK)	Pass	1♣(str)	Pass
		1NT	All Pass

Hou on lead to 2NT (does that mean Hou was on first?) selected a top club lead and now eight tricks were the limit. Kako was happy not to have been defending a game when his low club lead went around to the nine. That was two overtrick imps to China Evertrust, 13-11, TAKA.

With one exception (no names absent consideration) every E/W pair played in notrump; 13 of them below game.

Bd: 6
 Dlr: East
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ K9642
 ♥ A75
 ♦ Q875
 ♣ 6

West
 ♠ AJ75
 ♥ 9
 ♦ AKJ9
 ♣ Q853

East
 ♠ Q1083
 ♥ KQ10
 ♦ 106
 ♣ AKJ7

South
 ♠ ---
 ♥ J86432
 ♦ 432
 ♣ 10942

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
3♥(1)	Pass	1NT	Pass
6♠	All Pass	4♠	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
2NT(1)	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♣(2)	Pass
(1) ♣ or...		3NT	All Pass
(2) Three-suiter, short in hearts			

Well bid by the Chinese, who got to the best game and were more than generously rewarded by the lie of the cards. It is not the worst slam we've ever seen, but it was not a happy contract for Hirata. On a heart lead 6♠x went for 500 (six out of the six times it was bid and doubled, though in one case it went for 800); 13 imps to China, up 24-9.

Bd: 7
 Dlr: South
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ 1043
 ♥ K7654
 ♦ A9
 ♣ KQ3

West
 ♠ A875
 ♥ J102
 ♦ 10432
 ♣ A10

East
 ♠ K2
 ♥ Q983
 ♦ KQJ85
 ♣ 52

South
 ♠ QJ96
 ♥ A
 ♦ 76
 ♣ J98764

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	2♦	1♠
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Li's takeout/penalty doubles were alternating great success and great failure. This one looks like cards, not a trump stack, but Hou was happy to try to defend, expecting heart ruffs and a better hand opposite. (But if so why the pass of 1♠?) 2♦x made 180 when the heart ruff got away after a heart lead and club shift. Since 1NT lost 100 when the defense took its top tricks on a diamond lead, that overtrick was very expensive. It was 20-24 in favor of China now.

Most N/S plus scores where the result of E/W failing in some contract—typically 3♦—though one N/S pair (Sakurai-Kikuchi for SKOTTI) managed 300 against 2♠.

There was more carnage to come, again involving

doubles.

Bd: 8
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ 42
 ♥ 94
 ♦ 1092
 ♣ J97654

West
 ♠ K98
 ♥ AK3
 ♦ J8
 ♣ AK832

East
 ♠ 1065
 ♥ QJ8762
 ♦ 654
 ♣ 10

South
 ♠ AQJ73
 ♥ 105
 ♦ AKQ73
 ♣ Q

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	2♣(UNT)
Dbl(1)	Pass	2♥	Dbl
3♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl

All Pass

(1) Support...or not

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
1♣(str)	Pass	1♦(wk)	1♠
1NT	Pass	2♦(♥)	Dbl.
2♥	Pass	Pass	2♠
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	All Pass		

How manyimps would you expect to gain for missing your cold game? I'd be prepared to settle for 14 every time that happened to me. Obviously the problem came in the other room when West thought he was showing three hearts and a strong hand and East thought his partner had a massive club one-suiter. 3♣x went for 800 on less than inspired declarer play.

With about a dozen exceptions, E/W played in heart contracts—most often games—and emerged with ten tricks. Plus 800 was by far the largest plus score for N/S.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ AJ32
 ♥ 93
 ♦ J842
 ♣ K42

West
 ♠ Q87
 ♥ AKJ54
 ♦ A53
 ♣ Q7

East
 ♠ 96
 ♥ Q872
 ♦ Q976
 ♣ A98

South
 ♠ K1054
 ♥ 106
 ♦ K10
 ♣ J10653

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass

1NT All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣

1♥ Dbl 2♥ 2♠(!)

All Pass

A *kakodaimon* is an evil spirit (the little demon who sits on your shoulder and tells you what bad things to do). Kako certainly seems to have been possessed during our next deal where he borrowed an ace or two and emerged from the septic tank smelling of roses. His 2♠ contract made eight tricks when West cashed two hearts and shifted to a trump, clearing up one guess. Declarer led a club to the king early on after drawing trumps and now could not misguess diamonds. Since 1NT made exactly seven tricks on a diamond lead it was 5imps and the lead for China was down to 38-25.

About two-thirds of the field played in 4♥ E/W, with only about a third of those going plus.

TAKA picked up a couple of overtrick imps in a quiet game to make it 38-27 and then the deals went very quiet, with a series of flat games. This one had potential:

Bd: 13
 Dir: North
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ 75
 ♥ 87543
 ♦ 98
 ♣ J1082

West
 ♠ Q4
 ♥ KQJ106
 ♦ K64
 ♣ Q76

East
 ♠ 98
 ♥ A9
 ♦ AQ10752
 ♣ A43

South
 ♠ AKJ10632
 ♥ 2
 ♦ J3
 ♣ K95

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
		1♦	3♠

4♥ All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
		1NT	3♠

4♥ All Pass

Both Souths took a slightly conservative position; both Wests had a comfortable 4♥ bid available and made it; no swing, but elsewhere there was far more action.

Bd: 14 North
 Dir: East ♠ J86
 Vul: None ♥ Q76
 ♦ A43
 ♣ 10872

West
 ♠ 97
 ♥ AK105
 ♦ Q10976
 ♣ Q3

East
 ♠ A432
 ♥ J8
 ♦ K5
 ♣ A9654

South
 ♠ KQ105
 ♥ 9432
 ♦ J82
 ♣ KJ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Hirata</i>	<i>Hou</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shi</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Kako</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	All Pass		

Kako this time used his good angel to select the ♠5 at trick one. Partner came through with the goods, and the contract had to lose three spades and one trick in each suit. That was simple enough. 2NT on a club lead and continuation put Yamada in with a chance of making sweet music. He won the second club, led a diamond to the king, and cleared clubs. The defenders shifted to spades, but South won the queen and continued with the king, blocking the suit when North failed to pitch the ♠J. Yamada took the second spade, cashed his club, and saw South pitch the ♦J. What to do? The obvious play would have been to come down to two diamonds and three hearts—had he done so, North would have pitched a diamond and declarer would have had an awkward guess. Instead he pitched a diamond and *now* North pitched the ♠J. Declarer went back in the tank, and eventually took a heart finesse; down one and just 2 imps to TAKA and a 38-26 win for China.



"Some days just drag on, and on, and..."

Match Twelve: China LongZhu National Women vs Hackett

by Barry Rigal

When the round started, the top three teams were safe enough though the Chinese Women needed to avoid being blitzed to guarantee advancing. But the next 13 teams were fighting for five places. A big win would do it for any of them; lose, and go home.

Bd: 17 North
 Dir: North ♠ 876
 Vul: None ♥ AQJ5
 ♦ 1043
 ♣ A72

West
 ♠ Q10543
 ♥ 10632
 ♦ 5
 ♣ 1086

East
 ♠ AK92
 ♥ 97
 ♦ Q92
 ♣ K543

South
 ♠ J
 ♥ K84
 ♦ AKJ876
 ♣ QJ9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♦
1♠	Dbl	2♠	3♦
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
	1♥	Dbl	Rdbl
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♠
Dbl	Pass	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

If you open the balanced garbage that is part of standard Precision, I don't understand why you would not open the North hand. Sun passed and her opponents put up enough of a barrage that it certainly did not look like a game hand to Hongli. 3♦ played for 130; not a great result. Somehow I'd rather get that result than 230 from passing a clearly forcing bid, which is what Paul Hackett did. He played it better than he bid it, taking the diamond finesse and collecting +230. 3 imps to Hackett.

Joey Silver passed the North cards and heard his partner overcall 1♣ with 1♦. He bid 1♥ and raised 3♥ to 4♥. The defense led a top spade and shifted to a devious ♦9. Silver did not mind losing to the ♦Q and a ruff, so he finessed, and was both pleased and surprised when his ♦10 scored trick 2. That was a cool 480. Even that was not the best N/S score here. Sekiyama-Sato bid and made 6♥ for 980 against Kitty's; imagine having that result tied on you on the

very first deal.

Bd: 18
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ Q92
 ♥
 ♦ AKQ107
 ♣ 109875

West
 ♠ 10873
 ♥ J876
 ♦ 965
 ♣ AJ

East
 ♠ A4
 ♥ KQ1032
 ♦ 82
 ♣ K432

South
 ♠ KJ65
 ♥ A954
 ♦ J43
 ♣ Q6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski Sun</i>		<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
2♥	Dbl	1♥	Pass
Dbl	All Pass	Pass	4♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
3♥	Dbl.	1♥	Pass
All Pass		Pass	4♠

Malinowski was prepared to double the spade game, on the principle that he had a trick and an opening bid guarantees two and half honor tricks. Oops, wrong century. Emerging from the time warp Malinowski led a heart. Declarer ruffed and advanced the ♠Q. East won and the defenders cashed their clubs and sat back to wait for the second trump trick.

By contrast, the preemptive raise made Hackett's double a little riskier. Still, if the opponents have a fit.... Here, too, 4♠ went down one on very similar lines. 6-0 for Hackett.

Rather more than half the field went down in game here, or let E/W make a partscore.

Bd: 19
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ J9752
 ♥ 74
 ♦ 10632
 ♣ J7

West
 ♠ Q
 ♥ QJ1093
 ♦ KQ7
 ♣ Q853

East
 ♠ K86
 ♥ K62
 ♦ J5
 ♣ K10942

South
 ♠ A1043
 ♥ A85
 ♦ A984
 ♣ A6

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski Sun</i>		<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	1NT
All Pass			3♠

Operation successful (keeping E/W out of their partscore) but the patient died, since 3♠ was DOA. There was no way to force the opponents to surrender their rightful five top tricks in either room. Incidentally, half the field were allowed to buy the hand in 2♠ here and if that does not make you think about breaking the transfer here, it should. The score was still 6-2 to Hackett.

Bd: 20
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ A98
 ♥ ---
 ♦ J76
 ♣ AKJ8652

West
 ♠ 104
 ♥ AQJ10973
 ♦ A832
 ♣ ---

East
 ♠ KQ72
 ♥ K854
 ♦ KQ109
 ♣ 3

South
 ♠ J653
 ♥ 62
 ♦ 54
 ♣ Q10974

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski Sun</i>		<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
1♥	2♣	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
6♣	Pass	6♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
1♥	2♣	4♣	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Which do you prefer, science or speed? Wenfei took a real flier here but had reached the best spot and saved a round of bidding. Neither table found the sacrifice and it is admittedly not clear that they would ever know to do so. Only one pair saved in 7♣; Frontaura-Brenner gained 8imps for their -1100 against 1430 from the Godeds. Less than half the field bid slam.



"Some day all this will be yours."

The nightmare continued for both N/S pairs, but it got appreciably worse for one of them than for the other on the next deal.

Bd: 21
Dlr: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ 2
♥ AQ7542
♦ QJ75
♣ AQ

West
♠ AQ87
♥ 108
♦ A2
♣ J10964

East
♠ 94
♥ K96
♦ 1093
♣ 87532

South
♠ KJ10653
♥ J3
♦ K864
♣ K

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Dbl	All Pass		

It is hard to blame Hongli for selling out so cheaply but her hand does look like it is worth a 3♦ bid, and that would have got North to bid 3♥ and South to raise to 4♥. This was the successful auction at quite a few tables. 2♦ collected 150; not good, but at least it was a plus score.

Hanlon thought for quite a while before letting 3NT play; he was never getting to hearts but 4♦ would have saved a lot of embarrassment. To my mind passing 3NTx suggests no faith in the opponents, but maybe that's okay from time to time. 3NTx went down 500, a poor return against their own game. China Women led 12-6.

As usual, you can wager a few simoleons on the accuracy of the N/S bidding. Guess how many pairs bid 4♥ here. Almost exactly half the field; that's pretty good, I'd say. Even more impressive is the pair who made ten tricks in 3NT as N/S. Well, their card play must have been better than their bidding.



"Gee, look, a jelly bean."

Bd: 22
Dlr: East
Vul: E/W

North
♠ Q1043
♥ 1065
♦ A3
♣ AJ43

West
♠ A8762
♥ KJ982
♦ 9
♣ Q8

East
♠ J9
♥ A7
♦ KQJ62
♣ 10765

South
♠ K5
♥ Q43
♦ 108754
♣ K92

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥(inv)	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	All Pass

2♥ is the best place to stop here, but how can you do that? Malinowski's five-five invitation got him to hearts but the trump lead by Sun was clearly best. Declarer tried to set up diamonds but the defense took their minor-suit winners, played a second trump and Malinowski ended up with just seven tricks.

2♠ was a more suitable level. Hackett led a top club and continued the suit, Wenfei pitching her diamond on the third round. After this start declarer had three inevitable trump losers, and lost them. But still, 3 imps to China, leading 15-6.

Note that 3NT might be easier to make than a suit-contract at the three level, but going plus with the E/W cards was hard to do.

Bd: 23
Dlr: South
Vul: Both

North
♠ KQ105
♥ A5
♦ Q653
♣ 753

West
♠ AJ94
♥ K942
♦ A7
♣ KQ8

East
♠ 63
♥ QJ8
♦ J84
♣ J10942

South
♠ 872
♥ 10763
♦ K1092
♣ A6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
1NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Both tables defended sensibly against 1NT, leading a spade as North and continuing the suit when South got in with the ♣A, with North shifting to a diamond when in with the ♠10. That was down one and a flat board. Half the field set 1NT here; there were a surprising number who must have set up a spade trick unnecessarily for declarer.

What was already a miserable set for Hackett-Hanlon was just about to get a lot worse.

Bd: 24	North
Dlr: West	♠ A
Vul: None	♥ 10987
	♦ A9542
	♣ Q85

West
♠ K63
♥ AKQ53
♦ J83
♣ A6

East
♠ Q985
♥ 62
♦ Q106
♣ KJ42

South
♠ J10742
♥ J4
♦ K7
♣ 10973

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
1♣	1♥	Dbl.	All Pass

3NT by Malinowski was immediately sunk on repeated diamond leads. Malinowski tested hearts but had to knock out the ♠A when the suit did not behave, and Sun cashed out. Hackett's artificial overcall showing the reds or blacks got him to 1♥x; unlucky, but not *that* unlucky. Wenfei had the hand to pass, and on a trump lead declarer was struggling to avoid three down. He did not manage it, though he came close. Eventually the defenders took four hearts, three clubs and one trick in each of the other suits.

Four pairs were allowed to make 3NT here, three of them from the East seat where the diamond lead is hard for South to find. (And note that the game would have been played by East had Hackett passed over

1♣.)

It was 27-6 to China and the Hackett team's plane tickets were being rapidly rescheduled.

Bd: 25	North
Dlr: North	♠ 763
Vul: E/W	♥ 986
	♦ J8765
	♣ K5

West
♠ K9
♥ 7432
♦ 1032
♣ AQ64

East
♠ J42
♥ KQ10
♦ AKQ9
♣ J72

South
♠ AQ1085
♥ AJ5
♦ 4
♣ 10983

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	Pass	1NT	2♠
Dbl	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
	Pass	1NT	2♠
Dbl	Pass	3♦	All Pass

What a difference a point makes. Malinowski was prepared to gamble out 3NT facing 15-17, while Wenfei facing 14-16 was not. On the imaginative ♠Q lead from Hongli declarer won and crossed to the ♥K, which held, then finessed in clubs. Had it held...but it did not. The defenders ran the spades, forcing East down to two cards in each suit. Now two rounds of diamonds would have returned the favor by squeezing South, but declarer cashed out in the wrong order and made only six tricks.

3♦ was supposed to be only slightly more fun, but there's many a slip.... Liu received a club lead and finessed. Hackett won to shift to the ♥9 to the king and ace (surely an error) for a club back. Declarer took two top trumps to find the bad news. A spade towards the king saw Hanlon take the ace (again, a mistake) and now he could not prevent declarer from using the clubs to pitch a loser from hand. After much thought he played back a heart, and that was an easy ninth trick for Liu. The defense had a long trump to come but no more. It seems to me that if South ducks the ♠A he can win the next spade and let North ruff a club to lead a third trump. South gets strip-squeezed, but that is for down one. Regardless, that was 9 imps for China and well-earned too.

There were only two partscores and two pairs letting through game to give E/W a plus score here.

Bd: 27
 Dir: South
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ KQ765
 ♥ KJ953
 ♦ 876
 ♣ ---

West
 ♠ A1042
 ♥ 86
 ♦ QJ
 ♣ 109852

East
 ♠ J
 ♥ A74
 ♦ A109532
 ♣ AJ6

South
 ♠ 983
 ♥ Q102
 ♦ K4
 ♣ KQ743

Bd: 28
 Dir: West
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ AKJ754
 ♥ J10
 ♦ A1093
 ♣ 8

West
 ♠ Q
 ♥ K8542
 ♦ J8765
 ♣ 75

South
 ♠ 98632
 ♥ 76
 ♦ KQ2
 ♣ A104

East
 ♠ 10
 ♥ AQ93
 ♦ 4
 ♣ KQJ9632

Open Room

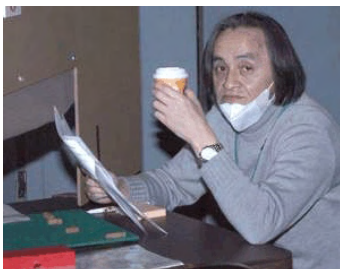
West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	2♥(MAJs)	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
	1♠	2♦	2♠

All Pass

3NT on three rounds of hearts had eight tricks and no more. (Bakhshi broached diamonds by leading the suit from hand and giving up on the finesse.) 2♠ made +140 on the lead of the ace and another diamond. Hackett led a trump to hand and a heart to dummy for a second spade to his hand. Then he changed tack to play on hearts and had 140; it was 9-36, but the boards were running out.



Still Life: Masked Man & Cup

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
Pass	1♠	2♣	3♠
Pass	4♠	5♣	Dbl

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>
	1♠	2♣	4♠

Pass
 All Pass

A number of decisions taken by N/S in this match surprised me. Here Hanlon's actions robbed his partner of the chance to make an intelligent call, but even so might Hackett have considered bidding 5♠? Given that 6♠ would surely make whenever it was bid, the +100 achieved against 5♣, which in itself required accurate defense, was hardly a good return on investment. No swing; still China women by 27.

Two flat boards at the end meant a crushing 22-8 defeat for Hackett. Would the 8 VP be enough for them to scrape through? No, his team had 195, but the field bunched on 197, 196 and 195imps. Both Hackett and The Latin would fail to make it by a single VP.

NEC Bridge Festival Smoking Policy

NEC Cup:

Once play in a qualifying-round match or a KO-round session starts, smoking is not permitted (including when a player leaves the playing room to go to the bathroom), except with permission from the TD.

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:

Smoking is only permitted outside the building. Penalties for violations may be assessed by the Director.

14th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Friday (Feb. 13)	10:00-12:15	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (1)	E204
	12:35-14:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (2)	
	14:50-16:00	Lunch Break	(16-board segments)
	16:00-18:15	NEC Cup Semi-Final (1)	
	18:35-20:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)	
	10:00-17:00	Open IMP Pairs	F203-206
Saturday (Feb. 14)	10:00-12:15	NEC Cup Final (1)	E204
	12:35-14:50	NEC Cup Final (2)	
	14:50-16:00	Lunch Break	(16-board segments)
	16:00-18:15	NEC Cup Final (3)	
	18:35-20:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams	F203-206
Sunday (Feb. 15)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	F203-206
	18:30-20:30	Closing Ceremony	F201-204

Qualifying Swiss: 12 rounds of 14-board matches
 Quarter- & Semi-Finals: two 16-board segments
 Final: four 16-board segments

Images of Our Game

