

# NEC Bridge Festival

Sunday, February 15, 2009  
Bulletin Number 6

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

## China LongZhu Women are 2009 NEC Cup Champions

They came, they saw, they conquered. China LongZhu National Women (Sun Ming, Wang Hongli, Wang Wenfei, Liu Yiqian, Yan Ru, Dong Yongling, Li Guohua, NPC, and Ju Chuancheng, Coach) treated us to a thrilling, back-and-forth, nail-biting final yesterday that came down to the last few boards. The Women got off to a slow first half, trailing by 86-57 at the break. But the rest must have invigorated them as they blew the match wide open with a 51-12 third quarter to take the lead by 10. But Japan Open (Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura, Tadashi Teramoto, Masaaki Takayama) re-took the lead with just a few boards left to play and it looked like the home town favorites were going to win after all. But once again the ladies from China staged a final comeback to win by 8imps, 130-122. Congratulations to both teams for an exciting and entertaining match. We hope to see you both back here next year.



2009 NEC Cup Champions

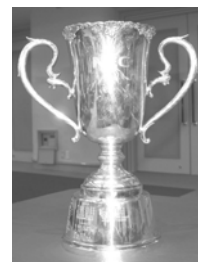


2009 NEC Cup Runners Up



### NEC Cup Final: Quarter-by-Quarter Results

Team	C/O	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Final
Japan Open		38	48	12	24	122
China LongZhu Women	.5	25	32	51	22	130



**The final results of the Yokohama Swiss Teams is on page 4**

### 14<sup>th</sup> NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sunday (Feb. 15)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	F203-206
	18:30-20:30	Closing Ceremony	F201-204

# 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. 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. 2♣ artificial opening bid indicating one of:
  - a) a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
  - b) a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
3. 2♦ artificial opening bid showing one of:
  - a) at least 5-4 distribution in the majors with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Flannery, anti-Flannery etc.)
  - b) a strong hand, balanced or unbalanced
  - c) a three-suiter with a minimum of 10 HCP (e.g., Roman 3-suiter, etc.)
4. 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.
5. Opening notrump bid at the two level or higher indicating at least 5-4 distribution in the minors, 10 or more HCP.
6. Opening 3NT bid indicating:
  - a) any solid suit or
  - b) a broken minor suit.
7. Opening four-level bid transferring to a known suit (e.g., Namyats, etc.).
8. Strong opening at the two level or higher, asking Ace, King, Queen, singleton, void, trump quality.

### Responses and Rebids

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

7. All constructive calls starting with the opening bidder's second call.
8. Calls that ask for aces, kings, queens, singletons, voids, trump quality and responses thereto.
9. 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

1. Any conventional balancing calls.
2. Conventional doubles and redoubles and responses (including free bids) thereto.
3. Notrump overcall for either:
  - a) 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.)
  - b) three-suited takeout (as with a takeout double, at least 3 cards in each of the 3 suits).
4. Jump overcalls into a suit to indicate at least 5-4 distribution in two known suits, and responses thereto.
5. 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.
6. Comic 1NT overcall.
7. Defense to:
  - a) conventional calls (including takeout doubles).
  - b) natural notrump opening bids and overcalls.
  - c) opening bids of 2♣ or higher.
8. Nos. 5 through 9 under "Responses and Rebids" above apply to both pairs.
9. Transfer overcall to show a specified suit at the four level.

### Carding

1. 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

## 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.

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## Team Rosters (KO): 14<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup

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#	Team Name	Members
1	The Netherlands:	Ton Bakkeren, Huub Bertens, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen
2	Oz Players:	Ron Klinger, Ishmael Del'Monte, Robert Fruewirth, Matt Mullamphy
3	China LongZhu National Women:	Sun Ming, Wang Hongli, Wang Wenfei, Liu Yiqian, Yan Ru, Dong Yongling, Li Guohua (NPC), Ju Chuancheng (Coach)
4	Japan Open:	Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura, Tadashi Teramoto, Masaaki Takayama
5	China Evertrust Holding Group:	Lin Rongqiang, Jiang Tong, Shi Zhengjun, Li Jie, Hou Xu, Liu Jing
6	JUICE:	Joey Silver, John Carruthers, Larry Mori, Venkatrao Koneru
7	Japan Senior:	Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Makoto Hirata
8	SARA:	Kumiko Sasahira, Fu Zhong, Liu Zheng, Takeshi Niekawa, Shugo Tanaka, Hiroki Yokoi

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

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## Leave Your Bid Cards on the Table, Please.

The JCBL (effective 1 Nov 2007) has adopted a new rule regarding bidding boxes. Namely:  
The bidding cards are to be left on the table without being moved until the opening lead has been turned face up (i.e., after the leader's partner has asked whatever questions he/she may have). Only after the opening lead has been faced are the bidding cards to be returned to the bidding box.

—Robert Geller, Chairman, JCBL Laws Commission

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## NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 14<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.bridgebase.com)

## Yokohama Swiss Teams: Final Standings

Rank	VP Total	Team Members
1	191	Frankie Frontaura, Gonzalo Goded, Federico Goded, Ruri Ote
2	181	Ton Bakkeren, Huub Bertens, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen
3	179	Kumiko Sasahira, Fu Zhong, Hiroki Yokoi, Shugo Tanaka
4	174	Lin Rongqiang, Jiang Tong, Shi Zhengjun, Li Jie, Hou Xu, Liu Jing
5	169	Takahiko Hirata, Kazuhiko Yamada, Masaru Yoshida, Ari Greenberg
6	168	Yoko Nenohi, Zhang Shudi, Hiroko Sekiyama, Yoichi Ito
7	166	Paul Hackett, Tom Hanlon, David Bakhshi, Artur Malinowski
8	157	Joey Silver, John Carruthers, Larry Mori, Venkatrao Koneru
9	154	Migry Zur Campanile, Michael Barel, Amir Levin, Nikolay Demirev
10	151	Robert Geller, Setsuko Ogihara, Hiroya Abe, Chieko Yamazaki, Zhao Jinlong
11	149	Nobuko Matsubara, Hideyuki Sango, Michiko Iwahashi, Sachiko Yamamura
12	148	Kazunori Sasaki, Shunsuke Morimura, Ryohei Orihara, Naoko Orihara
13/14	146	Chieko Ichikawa, Kuniko Saito, Atsuko Kurita, Yoshiko Murata
13/14	146	Kazuko Takahashi, Kazuko Kawashima, Tomiko Nakai, Hisae Takayama
15	143	Yumiko Oda, Yuichi Masamura, Masakazu Hirota, Shuko Umeda
16	142	Sayuri Ichinose, Kazuhisa Kojima, Sanae Matsumoto, Teruko Yoshida
17	140	Mutsue Kokubo, Akira Matsuda, Nobuya Tsuji, Nobuyoshi Katsumura
18/19	139	Keiko Matsuzaki, Kimi Makita, Yukiko Umezu, Etsuko Naito
18/19	139	Hiroko Onishi, Kunihiro Takahashi, Chiaki Sakamoto, Atsushi Kuwabara
20/21	138	Makiko Sato, Hidenori Narita, Sei Nagasaka, Katsuhiko Ueki
20/21	138	Mariko Matsukawa, Sachiho Ueda, Yoko Maruyama, Keisuke Akama
22	137	Ron Klinger, Ishmael Del'Monte, Robert Fruewirth, Matt Mullamphy
23/24	136	Mikiko Ito, Noriko Tanaka, Yoko Ota, Junko Yamashiro
23/24	136	Natsuko Nishida, Makoto Kono, Midori Sakamoto, Tadashi Jomura, Koji Ito
25	135	Hiroaki Miura, Noriaki Koike, Takeshi Hanayama, Yuki Fukuyoshi



Winners: Yokohama Swiss Teams



2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Yokohama Swiss Teams



3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Yokohama Swiss teams

## A Three-Pipe Problem

by Rich Colker (with "help" from Barry Rigal)

In Saturday's bulletin we reported on an interesting deal that occurred in the semi-final match between The Netherlands and Japan Open. Boy, did we (that's the editorial "we" for BJR) underestimate the difficulty of the position. This was the situation.

Bd: 16	North		
Dir: West	♠ AK643		
Vul: E/W	♥ Q106		
	♦ AJ		
	♣ Q92		
West		East	
♠ QJ109		♠ 52	
♥ 9852		♥ AJ3	
♦ Q3		♦ 108762	
♣ 1076		♣ AJ4	
	South		
	♠ 87		
	♥ K74		
	♦ K954		
	♣ K853		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>v. Prooijen</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	1NT	Pass	3NT

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bertens</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Bakkeren</i>	<i>Chen</i>
	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

After a diamond lead into the tenace, the play went in an almost identical fashion at both tables. Both Norths ducked a spade, covered the ♥9 return with the ten, and won the ♥J with dummy's king. They then unblocked diamonds and set up the spades, producing this ending as the fourth (losing) spade was led.

	♠ 43		
	♥ Q6		
	♦ ---		
	♣ Q92		
♠ Q		♠ ---	
♥ 852		♥ A3	
♦ ---		♦ 108	
♣ 1076		♣ AJ4	
	♠ ---		
	♥ 74		
	♦ K9		
	♣ K85		

The contract will fail if East now throws a diamond, but the Dutch declarer saw East throw a club, giving declarer a chance. Do you see why? Declarer must pitch the ♥7, not the four, from dummy. Why would that matter? Well, if the ♥7 is left in dummy, when West leads a low heart and declarer ducks, as he must, East can compliment his partner's defense by *letting the ♥7 hold!*

Beautiful, isn't it? If declarer cashes the ♦K earlier he sets up the ♦10 for East. If he plays a low club East takes the queen with the ace and locks the lead in dummy. And if declarer plays the ♣K from the board he never scores the ♦K.

Ton Bakkeren did better as East; he threw a diamond on the critical trick. What is dummy to discard now? If a heart, the defenders play a heart, East takes his ace, plays back a diamond and the defense gets two clubs at the death. If a club, West wins the spade and plays back a club to the jack and king. If dummy cashes the diamond winners North is squeezed; if not, declarer must lose two clubs at the end when he is thrown in with a heart.

But let's go back still further in the hand, to the point where declarer wins dummy's ♥K and cashes the ♠AK to find the bad news. He does have a winning line, though we can't imagine how anyone would ever find it at the table.

	♠ K43		
	♥ Q6		
	♦ J		
	♣ Q92		
West		East	
♠ QJ		♠ ---	
♥ 852		♥ A3	
♦ 3		♦ 10876	
♣ 1076		♣ AJ4	
	South		
	♠ ---		
	♥ 74		
	♦ K95		
	♣ K853		

At this moment we thought declarer could come home by cashing a spade, pitching a club from dummy, then crossing to the ♣K to which East must follow small. Declarer takes the ♣K, finesses in hearts, and East is in. What is he to do? If he exits with a diamond or a heart declarer wins and cashes his other red-suit winner, then endplays East with a club. That player has two club winners to take but then must revive dummy with a diamond to take the

last two tricks. Can you see the defensive riposte? East cashes the ♣A!

We've seen a play like this before. In fact, BJR wrote a series of articles with Stefan Ralescu discussing this sort of play, which commits North to a premature unblock, but we've never seen a real life position of this sort on defense.

What is North to do on the ♣A? The unblock achieves nothing because East cashes the second club and plays a heart. When North does not unblock in clubs the heart exit from East leaves him in his hand with diamonds blocked and West with a spade and heart winner. Finally, if declarer overtakes his ♦J East takes the last two diamonds.

In the ending shown above declarer succeeds by pitching a heart: let's say the ♥7 for clarity. Then a

club to the king follows. For completeness, let's point out that if East plays the ♣J on the first round declarer wins and leads a club to the nine. East wins and tries to cut communications by exiting with a diamond but declarer returns the favor by winning the ♦J, ♣Q, and getting out with a spade. The defenders must then lead hearts and when declarer finesses successfully either dummy or his hand is high.

After the ♣K holds, a heart to the six prevents East from exiting with the ace and another club or a heart; dummy has an extra club winner now. If East cashes the ♣A and plays a diamond then declarer wins in hand and concedes a spade and his hand is high. If East plays anything but the ♣A North wins his ♥Q and ♦J and gets out in clubs. East takes the club winners but then has to concede the diamonds to dummy.

## Asuka Cup Entries

Those wishing entries for the Asuka Cup, held on Sunday, February 15, should purchased them today at 21:00 hours (9 pm) in the Secretariat (E206).

## LongZhu: Thank Zhu

The China LongZhu National Women, along with their captain and coach, would like to thank their sponsor, the Shenzhen LongZhu Hospital, a private hospital located in Shenzhen Provence, for their support and encouragement. Xie Xie.

## Narita Bus Schedule

From the Intercontinental  
(120 minutes)  
¥3,500

06:40  
07:40  
08:40  
11:40  
12:40  
14:10

From the YCAT  
(90 min)  
¥3,500

Every 15-20 minutes from  
05:15 to 19:30



# NEC Final (1<sup>st</sup> quarter): Japan Open vs China LongZhu Women

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 1  
Dlr: North  
Vul: None

North  
♠ J954  
♥ AQ10  
♦ J2  
♣ A632

West  
♠ AK10  
♥ K82  
♦ AKQ7  
♣ KJ5

East  
♠ 87  
♥ 974  
♦ 1093  
♣ Q9874

South  
♠ Q632  
♥ J653  
♦ 8654  
♣ 10

Bd: 2  
Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ KJ92  
♥ Q962  
♦ Q8  
♣ AJ5

West  
♠ 8  
♥ AKJ754  
♦ A  
♣ Q10976

South  
♠ A753  
♥ 108  
♦ 109632  
♣ 43

East  
♠ Q1064  
♥ 3  
♦ KJ754  
♣ K82

## Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	1♦*	Pass	Pass

3NT All Pass

## Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
	1NT	Pass	2♣
	2♠	3♣	Pass

3NT All Pass

Whenever you pick up a 23-count in fourth chair these days you really expect both opponents to have bid by the time it is your turn to speak. Both Wests had to face some competition and both drove to 3NT at almost their earliest opportunity. On a spade lead they won and tested clubs, North holding up till the third round as Hongli pitched diamonds, Imakura spades. Both Norths shifted to the ♥A and ♥Q, but Dong took the second, Chen the third. Both uttered a small prayer and tested diamonds; when the jack appeared they claimed the balance; China had a 1-0 lead.

Throughout this event we've seen Furuta-Chen defy gravity with the lightness of their opening bids. This next deal confirmed that unless somebody ties sandbags to Furuta he is going to float away.



Kazuo Furuta



Dawei Chen

## Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

## Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
		Pass	Pass
		1♠	Pass
1♥	Pass		
2♣	All Pass		

2♣ handled nicely enough for +150. Even playing a standard system East might consider passing 2♣ non-vulnerable at teams, I suppose. Furuta got the auction he deserved after intrepidly opening his powerhouse. Not that 3NT was without play. On the lead of the ♥10 declarer won in dummy, ran the ♣10, then played on clubs till Sun took the third. Back came a low spade and the defenders went back to hearts, locking declarer in dummy to concede two hearts, two spades and a club. Operation successful and China had a 6-0 lead.

Incidentally, did you ever before see a person open a hand that his counterpart did not deem worthy of a rebid in an unopposed auction?



"It's a good thing he's sitting between us..."

Bd: 3  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ AKJ542  
 ♥ A97  
 ♦ Q2  
 ♣ 93

West  
 ♠ 98763  
 ♥ 4  
 ♦ 8753  
 ♣ 764

East  
 ♠ Q  
 ♥ 10862  
 ♦ AKJ6  
 ♣ AQ85

South  
 ♠ 10  
 ♥ KQJ53  
 ♦ 1094  
 ♣ KJ102

Open Room

<b>West</b> <i>Chen</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Sun</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Furuta</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Hongli</i>
Pass	1♠	Dbl	Pass
Pass	2♥	All Pass	2♦(♥)

Closed Room

<b>West</b> <i>Dong</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Ino</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Yan</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Imakura</i>
Pass	1♠	Dbl	Pass
2♦	2♠	3♦	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	Rdbl

The Chinese again took the low road here, with 2♥ in the Open Room being a very comfortable spot. In 4♥ declarer has nine top winners and chances in both minors and spades for a tenth. On any lead but a trump declarer seems able to ruff a diamond and a club in dummy, but on a trump lead declarer might well have had to guess spades. Even a trump shift after a minor-suit lead might do. Yan simply cashed her winners at the table after Dong's club lead, and then played a trump. Too late. Imakura simply led winning spades, overruffed East, ruffed a diamond took, a club finesse and ruffed a second club, then claimed 420. 7-6, Japan.

Larry Cohen would love the next deal; I'm sure it either fits the LOTT precisely or else he would be able to adjust it to do so (just kidding, Larry).



Tadashi Imakura



Masayuki Ino

Bd: 4  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ AQ743  
 ♥ 2  
 ♦ KJ5  
 ♣ KJ73

West  
 ♠ KJ2  
 ♥ AQJ76  
 ♦ 762  
 ♣ 102

East  
 ♠ 105  
 ♥ K95  
 ♦ 10943  
 ♣ AQ98

South  
 ♠ 986  
 ♥ 10843  
 ♦ AQ8  
 ♣ 654

Open Room

<b>West</b> <i>Chen</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Sun</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Furuta</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Hongli</i>
1♥	1♠	2♠	Pass
3♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

<b>West</b> <i>Dong</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Ino</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Yan</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Imakura</i>
1♥	1♠	2♥	2♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
3♥	3♠	All Pass	

Sun overcalled 1♠ and saw no reason to act at her second turn; there was no guarantee either of fit or of high cards opposite. She led a trump, for want of anything better to do, and declarer was in with a chance. Should he play for the double club finesse or the ♠Q onside? To my mind the club play is better (no double of 2♠) but I can see all four hands. When Sun impassively ducked the ♣10 declarer changed tack by playing the ♣Q from dummy and taking a spade finesse. Down one.

Meanwhile, it is far from clear to sell out to 3♥ if you hear partner raise. One editor feels strongly that North is worth a game-try over the 2♠ raise (that is far less clear if 2NT by South would be a constructive spade raise, but even if that were so it would normally show *four* trumps and there are some three-card raises that make game good). Ino passed 2♠ but competed to 3♠, a perfectly respectable contract till both club honors turned up offside and the ♠10 was in East and not South. Does this hand fit the Law of Total Tricks? Those black nines make it hard to judge; 5 imps to China, leading 11-7



"Go." "No, you Go."



Bd: 5  
Dlr: North  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ A5  
♥ QJ1076  
♦ KQ10  
♣ AQ8

West  
♠ 76  
♥ AK3  
♦ J9853  
♣ 1032

East  
♠ Q943  
♥ 42  
♦ A6  
♣ J9764

South  
♠ KJ1082  
♥ 985  
♦ 742  
♣ K5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	1♣*	1♥(1)	Dbl
2♣	2♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) Black suits or red suits

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
	1♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

It is not clear where you want to be here. 4♥ might need help in diamonds or spades if the defenders play to stop a ruff in South. 3NT on a club lead came down to the spade position.

The defenders threatened their ruff by leading the ace and a second diamond. Declarer countered by cashing three clubs and pitching the diamond from dummy. Easy enough to do but at 11:15 AM there is always a risk of not being awake enough to protect against the unexpected.

In 3NT on repeated club leads Sun knocked out the ♥AK, then ran her hearts. East was squeezed down to the ♦A, one club and three spades. Sun could have risked the contract by playing for two overtricks (given the +620 from the other room she would lose an imp if she were wrong and gain an imp if she were right) but naturally she settled for her contract by knocking out the ♦A and claiming nine tricks.



Ming Sun



Hongli Wang

Bd: 6  
Dlr: East  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ 1064  
♥ Q932  
♦ K  
♣ Q8743

West  
♠ AK73  
♥ 105  
♦ 9752  
♣ J109

East  
♠ QJ95  
♥ A7  
♦ Q1064  
♣ AK5

South  
♠ 82  
♥ KJ864  
♦ AJ83  
♣ 62

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Do you or don't you? Vulnerable at teams one editor insists on driving to game facing a spade fit if the notrump is in the 15-17 range, but inviting to game in any other circumstance. Conversely, facing a 14-16 notrump he would invite game. The other editor would pass a 14-16 notrump and only invite even if a spade fit were found, thinking that it is closer to passing 1NT than bidding. Who's right? Only the Shadow knows. Game here was poor because of the matching doubletons but still it was only the bad diamond break that doomed it. Both tables went down a trick; no swing, still 11-8 China.

Both tables bid a mundane game that was little better than a finesse, and wrapped up 10 tricks when it worked, to leave the score unchanged. Then came an opportunity for judgment—and both teams failed the test.

Bd: 8  
Dlr: West  
Vul: None

North  
♠ Q1097  
♥ 9  
♦ A42  
♣ AQJ65

West  
♠ A43  
♥ 82  
♦ KQ953  
♣ K72

East  
♠ J52  
♥ AK763  
♦ 6  
♣ 10843

South  
♠ K86  
♥ QJ1054  
♦ J1087  
♣ 9

# Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
1♦	2♣	Dbl	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	All Pass

To my mind Furuta was taking a decidedly anti-percentage view to bid here, while the fact that the 1♦ opening was Precision made it slightly more attractive to bid for Yan—but only slightly. If partner is short in clubs he will reopen; if he is long in clubs do you really want to get involved? Both tables voted for action and maneuvered themselves into a five-two fit splitting badly. Each declarer managed one diamond trick, one spade trick, and two heart tricks after a club lead and spade shift. Matching –200s; not such a great score, since 2♣ looks hopeless after a heart lead and diamond shift.

Bd: 9  
Dlr: North  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ 52  
♥ 76532  
♦ J104  
♣ 943

West  
♠ 10763  
♥ K8  
♦ Q862  
♣ K62

East  
♠ AKJ84  
♥ ---  
♦ K753  
♣ AQ105

South  
♠ Q9  
♥ AQJ1094  
♦ A9  
♣ J87

## Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
3♥	4♥	5♥	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♠	All Pass

## Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
Rdbl(1)	3♥	1♣*	Dbl(♥)
4♠	All Pass	3♠	Pass

(1) Balanced positive

Bridgida the Goddess of Fate randomly assigns the imps; it is our job to keep on her right side. But after yet another very light limit raise from Chen-Furuta, Kazuo Furuta basically drove to slam after consulting partner and being told not to do so. Had Hongli led anything but the ♦A we would have been able to console her for her bad luck. As it was, after the ♦A lead declarer still had to guess trumps so in that

sense he deserved his good fortune. The inference that South might have led a passive trump even with a singleton (why should the opponents be off a trump honor?) was not lost on him.

The controlled auction from the other table merely resulted in a 13 imp loss, but nobody did anything wrong. 21-11 for Japan Open now.

Bd: 10  
Dlr: East  
Vul: Both

North  
♠ K2  
♥ AQ102  
♦ J8532  
♣ 92

West  
♠ Q1086  
♥ 97654  
♦ A  
♣ J75

East  
♠ AJ9  
♥ J  
♦ KQ64  
♣ AKQ84

South  
♠ 7543  
♥ K83  
♦ 1097  
♣ 1063

## Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
1♦(♥)	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

## Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
1♦*	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥(1)	Pass	3NT	All Pass

(1) INV both majors

Both tables led the ♦10. Both declarers elected to play for overtricks. Yan passed the ♠10 early on. Furuta advanced an early ♠Q. When the ♠Q was covered Furuta did not have to risk the contract, whereas Yan was jeopardizing 3NT by finessing. Both ran their 12 winners. Sun kept the ♦J for trick 13 and Ino did not. It was 21-12 now for Japan.



Ru Yan



Yongling Dong

Bd: 11  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ K5  
 ♥ Q965  
 ♦ 74  
 ♣ Q10963

West  
 ♠ J1097  
 ♥ 74  
 ♦ AKJ6  
 ♣ AK7

East  
 ♠ AQ62  
 ♥ 82  
 ♦ 109532  
 ♣ 82

South  
 ♠ 843  
 ♥ AKJ103  
 ♦ Q8  
 ♣ J54

Bd: 12  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ 32  
 ♥ ---  
 ♦ KQ987  
 ♣ AQJ853

West  
 ♠ K1084  
 ♥ AKJ10876  
 ♦ A2  
 ♣ ---

East  
 ♠ A975  
 ♥ 32  
 ♦ J64  
 ♣ 9742

South  
 ♠ QJ6  
 ♥ Q954  
 ♦ 1053  
 ♣ K106

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>

Dbl. 3♥ All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>

Dbl 2♦(♥) Pass

3♠ All Pass

The East hand is very close to a 4♠ bid over 3♠; it all depends on how classical your takeout doubles are as to whether you believe you have extras or not for your 2♠ bid. If you were told partner had a balanced 16-count you still would not know what to do. But there again if partner had wasted heart cards he might not invite. And with 2/3 hearts I suppose there are some hands where he might have bid 1NT on the first round with a hand in the appropriate range. The editors are just about united in their decision to invite as West and accept as East. If we both agree it must be wrong. Since Sun had achieved a first in the match of silencing her opponents when they each had marginal actions, 3♥ down three earned China 2 imps. 21-14 now for Japan.

After what seemed like a fairly accurate match thus far, both tables departed from double-dummy—to a surprising degree.



"They told me they were bookends."

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>

1♥ 2NT Pass 3♣

4♥ 5♣ Pass Pass

5♥ All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>

1♣\* 1♠(1) Dbl Pass

2♥ All Pass(!!)

(1) Majors/Minors

At table one it was the Energizer Bunny (just keeps going and going...) versus "6-5 come alive." Hongli doubled 5♥, no doubt with some hopes of a bigger payday. The top diamond lead did not hurt; declarer lost her diamond and heart early and her spade trick late. Should East have acted over 5♣? Doubling with nothing in the minors seems extreme, but maybe the 5♥ bid is too much. Then again, if East's assets were the ♠QJ instead of the ♠A, 5♣ would be cold.

In the other room the Good Fairy of Yokohama came down and sprinkled fairy dust to send all the players to sleep at their second turn. North's pass of 2♥ looks bizarre, and my guess is that East's pass of 2♥ is anti-systemic (if West had thought partner was allowed to do that would she have bid 2♥ and not 4♥?). If I were West I'd settle for collecting 7 imps in exchange for missing my game. 21-21 now, and it seems an appropriate moment to mention that China Longzhu had a ½ imp carryover by virtue of their higher finish in the qualifying group, the carryover existing to avoid the necessity of overtime.

Next, the match rapidly untied itself.

**Bridge players do it on the table**

Bd: 13  
 Dir: North  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ A7  
 ♥ Q107  
 ♦ AKQJ3  
 ♣ AJ2

West  
 ♠ ---  
 ♥ AJ943  
 ♦ 1074  
 ♣ K10753

East  
 ♠ J105432  
 ♥ K8652  
 ♦ 6  
 ♣ 4

South  
 ♠ KQ986  
 ♥ ---  
 ♦ 9852  
 ♣ Q986

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	1♣*	1♠(1)	Dbl
4♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

#### Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
	2NT	Pass	3♥
Dbl.	Pass	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
Pass	6NT	Dbl	All Pass

4♥x had play, but after a club to the jack and two rounds of diamonds declarer could do little more than crossruff spades and clubs. The fall of the ♣A in three produced an ending where he could claim if trumps split. So he cashed the ♥K and when the bad split came to light he went to the ♥A and ran the clubs, losing a trump and a diamond at the end. Down one was a potentially terrible result for N/S given that 6♦ would make (7♦ by South); it did not work out that way.

The Closed Room auction shown here features some poor judgment by both North and South (the 4♣ bid may keep N/S out of diamonds where they belong). But if South were going to drive to slam a 5NT bid (pick a slam) might have gotten them to diamonds. North did well to convert the double of 6♠ (and yes, I do have some sympathy with East whatever the final result) to 6NT. East led the ♥2 playing fourth-highest leads as dummy pitched a diamond. West shifted to a diamond and declarer cashed five diamonds and two spades. East pitched the ♠4, ♥5, ♥6 and then the ♠5. Maybe this left West with a mistaken impression about her partner's heart length. When declarer cashed the spade winner East played the ♠10, not the jack. Yan had thus missed many opportunities to signal loudly for hearts.

At this point Dong tanked for upwards of five minutes. The commentators could see that declarer could not have had ♠Ax ♥KQ10x ♦AKQJx ♣Ax; that was too many high-cards. So partner had to have a heart guard left and a club discard was indicated. But Dong did not see it that way and pitched a club allowing declarer to finesse and run the club suit. 16 imps and a lead by that number instead of 12 imps the other way.

The blame was thus equally divided between the players. I'm not inclined to intrude on private grief and come down one way or the other, but I suppose faulting East's double will be easy to those who don't like to double one slam when they cannot beat any other one in their own hand.

Bd: 14  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ 97  
 ♥ K9  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ KQJ107643

West  
 ♠ KQJ82  
 ♥ 1073  
 ♦ AQJ95  
 ♣ ---

East  
 ♠ 654  
 ♥ QJ42  
 ♦ K872  
 ♣ A5

South  
 ♠ A103  
 ♥ A865  
 ♦ 1063  
 ♣ 982

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♠	4♣	Dbl	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

#### Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dong</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Yan</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♠	2♣	Dbl.	3♣
3♦	4♣	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♣	Dbl.	All Pass

5♣ went down after diamond leads and continuations (yes, spades would have made the defenders' lives easier) when E/W kept their heart guards. 4♥, a bizarre choice by Chen, did have some play. On a top club lead Chen ruffed in hand and led a low trump up. Sun won the ♥K and naturally shifted to a diamond. Declarer won and drew trumps, but had only five diamonds, a club and three trump tricks; South had a long club left so declarer could not get a spade winner. Had declarer tried to steal a spade trick earlier, after the second round of trumps, by

going to dummy in diamonds and leading a low spade, it might have given South a sterner test.

Bd: 15  
Dlr: South  
Vul: N/S

West	North	East	South
♠ J103	♠ 65	♠ KQ97	♠ A842
♥ AK82	♥ 1065	♥ J43	♥ Q97
♦ Q85	♦ A1043	♦ J72	♦ K96
♣ 652	♣ QJ87	♣ K109	♣ A43

and a club but could not maneuver a diamond or the fourth heart. 1 imp to Japan, up 38-25.

Bd: 16  
Dlr: West  
Vul: E/W

West	North	East	South
♠ AKQJ94	♠ 8753	♠ 1062	♠ ---
♥ Q753	♥ J84	♥ 109	♥ AK62
♦ AQ3	♦ K84	♦ J1097	♦ 652
♣ ---	♣ Q62	♣ AJ109	♣ K87543

Open Room

<b>West</b> <i>Chen</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Sun</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Furuta</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Hongli</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣ (R)	Pass	2♠(1)	All Pass

(1) Minimum, 4 spades

Closed Room

<b>West</b> <i>Dong</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Ino</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Yan</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Imakura</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

On the lead of the ♠J and a spade continuation Imakura took the second round and cleared clubs. He pitched two hearts from dummy, and that persuaded Yan to shift to the ♥J. Dong took the ♥AK and declarer claimed seven tricks. It is hard to see the defense doing better, with the diamonds lying as they do, though passive defense after winning the ♣K on the second round, cashing the spades, and exiting in clubs might do it.

In the other room in 2♠ Furuta won the heart lead cheaply in hand and played trumps. Hongli ducked twice, won the third, and played on hearts again. Declarer could not draw the last trump and cash the heart; he ended up with three spades, three hearts,

Open Room

<b>West</b> <i>Chen</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Sun</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Furuta</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Hongli</i>
1♠	Pass	2♠	Dbl
Rdbl	Pass	Pass	3♣
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass

4♠ All Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b> <i>Dong</i>	<b>North</b> <i>Ino</i>	<b>East</b> <i>Yan</i>	<b>South</b> <i>Imakura</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♦	2♣
2♠	3♣	3NT	4♣
4♠	All Pass		

Both Wests judged to get to 4♠ by a long and winding route. Chen received a trump lead, which looks best but warned him of the breaks. He ducked a heart; Sun won and returned a heart. Hongli was forced to win the next heart and shifted to a diamond to the queen and king. Declarer claimed now with six spades, three diamonds and a trump.

Dong won the club lead in dummy, pitching a heart, then played a heart to South's king and won the diamond return with the ace, which looks strange. She drew one trump, but was unable to claim when the suit was four-zero. Instead, she gave up a heart and was relieved to find there was no diamond ruff against her. No swing, 38-25 at the break.



"Oy, are you a Czech, mate?"



# NEC Final (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter): Japan Open vs China LongZhu Women

by Rich Colker

The second quarter saw both teams change one of their pairs. Ino-Imakura remained N/S in the Closed Room while Takayama-Teramoto replaced Furuta-Chen for Japan Open. Sun-Hongli remained N/S in the Open Room while Liu-Wenfei replaced Yan-Dong for China Women. Japan Open began the quarter with a 13-imp lead, 38-25.

Bd: 17  
Dlr: North  
Vul: None

North  
♠ AKJ85  
♥ Q102  
♦ J974  
♣ K

West  
♠ Q92  
♥ J953  
♦ K3  
♣ AJ109

East  
♠ 3  
♥ AK64  
♦ Q62  
♣ 87652

South  
♠ 10764  
♥ 87  
♦ A1085  
♣ Q43

Both N/S pairs played a spade partial here. There were four tricks there for the taking on defense (two hearts, one club and one diamond) but in the Closed Room, after the ♥A held trick 1, Teramoto switched to the ♣8. Takayama, who failed to appreciate that his partner had led high from five, ducked letting one of the defense's tricks get away. Serious partnership should work out in advance what to lead in cases such as this. Some pairs lead attitude and some count, but the key is for both players to be on the same wavelength. Oh well, it was only an imp—one miserable overtrick—since N/S were not in game. Surely no one ever won (or lost) a championship by a single imp!? Japan still leading, now 38-26.

Bd: 18  
Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ 5  
♥ AJ10  
♦ QJ9876  
♣ K64

West  
♠ A102  
♥ 9  
♦ K103  
♣ AQ10873

East  
♠ KJ764  
♥ K5432  
♦ 5  
♣ 52

South  
♠ Q983  
♥ Q876  
♦ A42  
♣ J9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Takayama	Sun	Teramoto	Hongli
		Pass	Pass
1♣	1♦	Dbl	2♦
2NT	3♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Liu	Ino	Wenfei	Imakura
		Pass	Pass
2♣	2♦	Dbl	3♦
3NT	All Pass		

In the Open Room Teramoto made a negative double to show both majors. Most top pairs play that this double shows specifically four-four, but that is obviously not the case here since Teramoto was five-five. It would seem that if one is going to use the E/W pair's treatment here East should have been willing to pull 2NT to 3♥ (pass-or-correct), after which the good 3♠ contract can be reached instead of defending the opponents' cold 3♦. Teramoto led a club to the jack and ace and Takayama switched to the ♥9. Sun, who may not have appreciated the fact that East could hold five of the suit, ducked and Teramoto won the king and returned the ♥5 (suit preference for spades). Takayama ruffed, cashed the ♠A, and continued with the deuce planning to put Teramoto in with the king for a second heart ruff. But perhaps he also did not appreciate how many spades his partner might hold, for if he had he would surely have underled the ♠A the first time. Sun ruffed the second spade, then led a diamond to the ace and a second diamond before claiming eight tricks. Down one, and a sloppy 100 for the Japanese.

In the other room the Precision 2♣ opening accelerated the auction and Liu-Wenfei quickly found themselves in 3NT, a contract that had little play on a diamond lead, and that was as close to guaranteed on their auction as one can get. Sure enough, Ino was up to the task and led the ♦Q, ducked to the king. Liu cashed the ♠A and followed it with the ten, planning to finesse if North had followed. When North tabled the ♣4, for some reason Liu did not go up with the ♠K and play a club, hoping to make her contract if the KJ were doubleton onside. (The risk of taking the ♠K and going after clubs is that one might trade -150 for -250 or -300; the upside, of course, is that one might trade -100 for +400.) Instead, Liu played for down two (or worse if diamonds weren't five-four) and ducked the ♠10 to the queen. The defense now cashed the rest of their diamonds and the ♥A for down three. Another sloppy plus score, this time +150; 6 imps to Japan, now leading 44-26.



Bd: 19  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ K764  
 ♥ J63  
 ♦ QJ9  
 ♣ 1053

West  
 ♠ 102  
 ♥ K952  
 ♦ A43  
 ♣ Q862

East  
 ♠ QJ95  
 ♥ A874  
 ♦ K1076  
 ♣ 9

South  
 ♠ A83  
 ♥ Q10  
 ♦ 852  
 ♣ AKJ74

Bd: 20  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ J63  
 ♥ K84  
 ♦ A  
 ♣ J87653

West  
 ♠ Q102  
 ♥ 96  
 ♦ KQ952  
 ♣ AK9

East  
 ♠ K8  
 ♥ QJ10532  
 ♦ 843  
 ♣ 42

South  
 ♠ A9754  
 ♥ A7  
 ♦ J1076  
 ♣ Q10

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Takayama	Sun	Teramoto	Hongli
			1NT

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Liu	Ino	Wenfei	Imakura
			1♣

Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
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All Pass

Against Hongli's 1NT Takayama led the ♣2 to the jack. Hongli played back a low club to the queen (East pitching a heart) and now Takayama tried the ♠10, which Hongli allowed to hold. She won the spade continuation in hand and led the ♥Q. Teramoto won the ace and played back the ♠9 to the king. Hongli now overtook the ♣10 and cashed the rest of the suit, but when she exited with the ♥10 the defense claimed for down one, -100.

In the Closed Room Liu led the ♠10, attacking dummy's bid suit rather than leading from king-fourth in an unbid suit (hearts). And she was right since after a heart lead and continuation declarer can take the losing club finesse and claim seven tricks (four clubs, two spades and a heart). Imakura won the ♠K in dummy, played a low club to the jack and queen, ducked the spade continuation, won the third spade and placed the ♥10 on the table. With seven defensive tricks now available between them, both women ducked and Imakura had his seventh trick. Plus 90 and 4 more imps to Japan Open, up now by 21 at 48-26.



"Let's go climb Mt. Fuji."

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Takayama	Sun	Teramoto	Hongli
1♦	Pass	1♥	1♠

Pass	2♠	3♥	Pass
------	----	----	------

4♥	All Pass		
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Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Liu	Ino	Wenfei	Imakura
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass

2♥	All Pass		
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In the Open Room, when Teramoto competed to the three level in his six-card heart suit in a highly competitive auction, Takayama punished him for his audacity by raising to game, despite holding dubious values (the ♠Q) in the suit bid and raised by the opponents. The contract was down off the top and Teramoto must have felt at least partially to blame for the poor result, but he could have had a lot more in the way of values (e.g., ♠xx ♥QJ10xxx ♦Ax ♣QJx) and there would still have been four top losers. Perhaps the use of a conventional 2NT bid over 2♠ here (saying: "I want to compete in some suit and I have at least constructive/invitational values"; a direct suit bid says "I want to play here; proceed at your own risk.") would have solved their problem. After all, how often is it that you want to bid an invitational 2NT when the opponents have bid and raised a suit? The defense led clubs, eventually taking their four top tricks (and giving up on a diamond ruff) for +100 N/S.

Against Liu's 2♥ Ino led the ♦A and switched to a club to the queen and ace. Imakura won the first round of hearts with the ace and played back a diamond for Ino to ruff, after which they collected two more tricks to hold declarer to two, +110. 5 imps to China Women, the lead now 17 at 48-31.

The next three boards were pushes, including nice auctions by both N/S pairs to reach 7♦ on the layout below.

Bd: 22  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ AK85  
 ♥ KQ54  
 ♦ A965  
 ♣ 3

West  
 ♠ 72  
 ♥ J98  
 ♦ 1084  
 ♣ J9654

East  
 ♠ J109643  
 ♥ 763  
 ♦ J7  
 ♣ Q7

South  
 ♠ Q  
 ♥ A102  
 ♦ KQ32  
 ♣ AK1082

Bd: 24  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ 107  
 ♥ KJ953  
 ♦ A32  
 ♣ J54

West  
 ♠ KJ  
 ♥ Q4  
 ♦ K10965  
 ♣ K963

East  
 ♠ AQ63  
 ♥ A8  
 ♦ Q74  
 ♣ AQ82

South  
 ♠ 98542  
 ♥ 10762  
 ♦ J8  
 ♣ 107

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
Pass	2NT*	Pass	1♣*
Pass	3NT*	Pass	3♦*
Pass	4♦*	Pass	4♣*
Pass	5♥*	Pass	4NT*
Pass	7♦	Pass	5NT*
Pass		All Pass	

#### Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Liu</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♣
Pass	3♦(FG)	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♥	Pass	5♦
Pass	7♦	Pass	6♣
Pass		All Pass	

We do not know the exact meanings of all the bids in Sun-Hongli's Precision auction, but that won't stop us from guessing. 2NT likely showed North's strength and/or pattern (a three-suiter) and by the time the auction had reached the four level diamonds had been agreed as trumps. 4NT was probably ace-asking (Keycard?) and Sun showed two key cards without the ♦Q. 5NT said we've got all the key cards and the ♦Q and said she was looking for seven. Sun's next bid said "You've found it, babe."

The natural auction in the Closed Room is a bit easier to interpret. The first four bids were natural while the next three were cue-bids. 4NT was ace-asking (everyone knows it's illegal to bid a slam without using some form of Blackwood) and 4♦ showed zero or three key cards. 5♥ asked about the ♦Q and 6♣ showed that card and the ♣K.

Well done by all.

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
1♦	1♥	Dbl	3♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♣	All Pass

#### Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Liu</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♠	Pass	6♣	All Pass

Takayama received a heart lead from Sun after Hongli's preemptive raise and ducked it around to his queen. He drew trumps in three rounds ending in his hand and noting South's discard (♥6) on the third round. He then unblocked the spades, crossed to the ♥A, pitched two diamonds on the ♠AQ, and the time had come to take a position in the diamond suit knowing that Sun had the length there, having already shown up with two spades, three clubs, and five hearts by inference. So he led a diamond to the king and ace and when a low diamond was led back he finessed; -50.

Again we do not know the meanings of many of E/W's bids here but Wenfei's 2♠ bid must have been some sort of game force asking about distribution. Our best guess is that 2NT showed either four-plus clubs or both minors and 3♦ asked about major-suit length or strength. 3NT either showed no four-card major, a second diamond suit, or a minimum. In any case, 4♣ probably set clubs as trump and 4♠ was a control bid, after which Wenfei placed the contract. Wenfei won the spade lead with the king, then drew trump in three rounds ending in dummy. With nothing to go on but the fact that North had three clubs to South's two, she led a diamond to the queen and a

diamond back; +920 when the jack appeared. That was 14 very useful imps to the Women, who had closed to within 3 imps of Japan Open at 48-45.

Bd: 25 North  
 Dlr: North ♠ 62  
 Vul: E/W ♥ J2  
 ♦ K10975  
 ♣ Q1054

West  
 ♠ AQJ98  
 ♥ Q1053  
 ♦ Q642  
 ♣ ---

East  
 ♠ 4  
 ♥ AK97  
 ♦ 8  
 ♣ AK98732

South  
 ♠ K10753  
 ♥ 864  
 ♦ AJ3  
 ♣ J6

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♠
Dbl	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

#### Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Liu</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

The Japanese men continued to display their aggressiveness in the bidding, as we may have mentioned in previous bulletins, and drove to the precarious slam. 3♠ was a splinter inferentially agreeing hearts, and 5♦ asked about the ♥Q. 6♥ showed the queen but denied a side king. Sun got off to the unfortunate lead of Hongli's bid suit, spades, and Hongli could not work out not to give up the king at trick 1. Declarer won the ace, advanced the ♠J in case Sun had led a singleton, and pitched dummy's diamond when she followed. Then came a trump to the ace, a club ruff, a heart to the queen and a third heart to the king. When everyone followed to the ♣A Takayama could claim losing just one club when they split four-two and not three-three. Plus 1430.

Liu-Wenfei's system (Precision) should have made bidding the slam easier, but it appears to have had just the opposite effect. After the natural 2♣ opening Wenfei showed extras (in the context of a non-1♣ opening) and secondary hearts in response to Liu's

2♦ asking bid. Liu simply raised to game, unable to appreciate the value of her club void (it would not have been so valuable if Wenfei's clubs had been headed by, say, the king-jack instead of the ace-king), and Wenfei, with her extreme distribution and excellent controls, acquiesced. Just as well (as we'll see shortly). Imakura led a low spade and declarer inserted the jack, which held. Next she cashed the ♠A, pitching her diamond, and for some reason ruffed a spade, perhaps looking to play along crossruff lines. Then came the ♣AK (diamonds from dummy) and a third club, South pitching a diamond, followed by a diamond ruff and a second club ruff as South pitched the ♦A. Dummy's last diamond was ruffed with the ♥K, South pitching a spade, and yet another club was ruffed with the ♥Q. A spade ruff with the ace was declarer's final trick when North's ♥J prevented declarer from scoring the ten *en passant*. Plus 650, but 13 imps to Japan Open, extending their lead to 16 at 61-45.

The two tables played identical contracts on each of the next three boards, with the only swing being an overtrick imp to the Women. When Board 29 was placed on the tray the score stood at 61-46.

Bd: 29 North  
 Dlr: North ♠ A65  
 Vul: Both ♥ Q765  
 ♦ 1087  
 ♣ Q62

West  
 ♠ ---  
 ♥ AJ932  
 ♦ AQJ6  
 ♣ AK74

East  
 ♠ KJ432  
 ♥ K108  
 ♦ K93  
 ♣ J5

South  
 ♠ Q10987  
 ♥ 4  
 ♦ 542  
 ♣ 10983

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♣(1)	Pass
2♦(2)	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

(1) Drury

(2) Not minimum (natural-ish)

#### Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Liu</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Teramoto's 2♠ bid must have really turned Takayama off since he quickly signed off in game with his huge three-suiter. He won the opening ♦7 lead in hand with the queen and played a low heart inserting...the eight from dummy. With two low clubs that could usefully be ruffed in dummy it seems odd not to use dummy's low trumps for the purpose of ruffing. But hey, too many overtricks just make your bidding look bad. Next he cashed the ♥K, getting the bad news, then played the ♥10 to the ace followed by a low club toward dummy's Jx. At that point the defense conceded 11 tricks, +650 for E/W.

Liu also received the ♦7 lead against her slam and left the lead in dummy when the nine held. Next she cashed the ♣AK, ruffed a club in dummy, ruffed a spade back to hand, ruffed her last club and cashed the ♥K. She returned to her hand with a diamond and played the ♥A, getting the bad news, then played on diamonds conceding down one; -100. That was 13 imps to Japan Open, whose lead was now 29 at 74-46.

The slam can be made in any of several ways, all involving setting up a possible endplay against North in the end game. Declarer's line was fine up to the point where she ruffed a spade back to hand after ruffing her first club in dummy. Now she should cash two more diamonds ending, say, in hand (ending in dummy works, too; the key is cashing the third diamond *before* she plays her last club so that North can't pitch a diamond), to reach the diagramed position below.

♠ A6	
♥ Q765	
♦ ---	
♣ ---	
♠ ---	♠ KJ43
♥ AJ93	♥ K8
♦ Q	♦ ---
♣ 7	♣ ---
♠ Q1098	
♥ 4	
♦ ---	
♣ 10	

Now declarer plays her last club (the last diamond works too) and North is fixed. He cannot usefully ruff, so he pitches his low spade. Declarer ruffs in dummy and can cash the ♥K, ruff a spade, and exit with the last diamond. North must ruff and is now endplayed to lead from his ♥Qx into declarer's ♥AJ. Several variations are possible, all involving an equivalent of the threatened endplay position just described.

Bd: 30  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ 102  
 ♥ QJ9  
 ♦ AK97  
 ♣ J1043

West  
 ♠ J75  
 ♥ 106532  
 ♦ 1042  
 ♣ 97

East  
 ♠ KQ83  
 ♥ K84  
 ♦ QJ53  
 ♣ 65

South  
 ♠ A964  
 ♥ A7  
 ♦ 86  
 ♣ AKQ82

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	1♣
Pass	3♣(1)	Pass	2♣
Pass	3NT(2)	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♣

All Pass

(1) 11-13, 4♣+4 other

(2) ♣+♦

#### Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Liu</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Imakura</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2NT

Takayama led a low heart against Hongli's 6♣ and Teramoto allowed dummy's queen to hold. A spade was led to the ace and a second spade out. Takayama won the jack and got out with a diamond to the ace. Hongli now came to hand with a trump, ruffed a spade high in dummy, played another club to hand, and could ruff her last spade with dummy's remaining trump. Plus 920.

Ino-Imakura in the Closed Room never even sniffed at slam. Liu led a heart to the queen, which held, and Imakura cashed his clubs, Liu pitching three hearts and Wenfei two spades and a diamond. Imakura now played a low spade toward dummy, Liu rising with the jack and crashing Wenfei's queen. Wenfei played a low heart to Imakura's ace but the spade position allowed declarer to take the rest. Plus 490, and 10 imps back to the Women; 74-56.

**Bridge players do it with finesse**

Bd: 31  
Dlr: South  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ AKJ9  
♥ 9765  
♦ A862  
♣ 8

West  
♠ Q107  
♥ J42  
♦ QJ1053  
♣ J3

East  
♠ 8654  
♥ KQ83  
♦ 974  
♣ Q10

South  
♠ 32  
♥ A10  
♦ K  
♣ AK976542

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Hongli</i>

Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
------	-----	------	-----

All Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Liu</i>	<i>Ino</i>	<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Imakura</i>

Pass	1♥	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

Crime and punishment. Hongli never bid her eight-card suit naturally (1♣ was Precision) but partner had a singleton so no harm, right? Wrong. The suit split two-two and 7♣ was cold. But even had trumps been three-one dummy has enough to cover all the side losers, so 6♣ still rolls. 3NT!? Bah, humbug.

Teramoto led the ♣Q (someone had to have them; why not partner?) and when the top clubs brought rain Sun claimed all the tricks for a measly 720.

Ino-Imakura's auction was (relatively) short and sweet to 6♣. Liu led a spade and again declarer had no trouble taking all the tricks; +1390. 12imps back to Japan Open, leading by 30 at 86-56.

The last deal was a boring 3NT on which the Women managed to score an overtrick imp. The second quarter ended with Japan Open leading the China LongZhu National Women by 29, 86-57.

Thirty-two boards left to determine the 2009 NEC Cup champions.

## NEC Final (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter): Japan Open vs China LongZhu Women

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 33  
Dlr: North  
Vul: None

North  
♠ A4  
♥ 932  
♦ J873  
♣ 9872

West  
♠ 10863  
♥ K8654  
♦ Q  
♣ 653

East  
♠ KQJ752  
♥ AQ  
♦ 64  
♣ KQ10

South  
♠ 9  
♥ J107  
♦ AK10952  
♣ AJ4

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>

2♠	3♦	4♠	All Pass
----	----	----	----------

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>

Dbl	3♣	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

It is hard to blame either North for taking it slowly with a defensive trick and no shape; 5♦ is only cheap because the club honors lie well. Both tables wrapped up 420; neither set of defenders indulged in the fantasy of underleading a diamond at trick 1 for the club shift; probably the product of a disordered imagination, not a play that would have succeeded in doing anything today but entertain the kibitzers.

We've seen Chen and Furuta in such aggressive mode throughout this event that the following deal is hard to explain.

Bd: 34  
Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ 952  
♥ 975  
♦ J85  
♣ J1094

West  
♠ QJ763  
♥ A32  
♦ 742  
♣ Q7

East  
♠ ---  
♥ QJ864  
♦ K96  
♣ AK863

South  
♠ AK1084  
♥ K10  
♦ AQ103  
♣ 52

# Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
		1♥	Dbl
2♥	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♥	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
		1♥	1♠
2♥	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Chen's actions suggest he was trapping or simply missaw his hand (he had an artificial way to show a constructive raise of hearts). When he passed 2♠ was he really expecting the auction to end there? In 3♥ Furuta ruffed the spade lead and crossed to the ♣Q to pass the ♠Q and pitch a diamond. Hongli won and played back a spade, letting declarer pitch a second diamond. Furuta cashed a second club and exited with the ♦K. Hongli won and played another top spade, ruffed by Furuta. A club was ruffed with the ♥10, the last spade was pitched from dummy, and Furuta ruffed a second round of diamonds in his hand. At that point declarer had scored six tricks. He led a fourth club, overruffing South's ♥K with the ace and had the ♥QJ in hand for nine winners.

Would Liu find a way to make 10 tricks in 4♦? What appears to be Mrs Guggenheim's line works fine: ruff the spade lead and finesse in trumps. Pass the ♠Q to pitch a diamond. Eventually draw a second trump and pitch your diamond on the ♠J, ruff out the clubs and claim four hearts, five clubs and a spade.

Liu started well enough by duplicating the play from the other room up to trick 4. But now she needed to come to hand and take a heart finesse. When she played the ace and another heart (a line that in essence needed the heart finesse right or a diamond through would force her) she ran out of trumps. A fourth spade reduced her to one spare trump. She needed clubs three-three now and the cards did not forgive. 5 imps to Japan instead of 7 imps the other way; 91-57 for Japan.

Bd: 35	North
Dlr: South	♠ J1042
Vul: E/W	♥ J105
	♦ A54
	♣ A65
West	East
♠ K	♠ Q865
♥ AK8763	♥ Q42
♦ 102	♦ K98
♣ Q1072	♣ J43
	South
	♠ A973
	♥ 9
	♦ QJ763
	♣ K98

# Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
			Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Dbl
3♥	3♠	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
			Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Dbl
Rdbl	2♠	Pass	Pass
3♥	3♠	All Pass	

Both Norths competed intrepidly to 3♠ and were right to do so since there seems to be no sensible way to defeat 3♥ here. Against Teramoto's 3♠ Liu led a heart and Wenfei won and shifted top a club. Teramoto took this in hand, passed the ♠J, won the club return, then led a diamond to his ace and a spade to the nine. The four-one break left him with a fifth top loser (even had he put in the ♠7 he would have had no re-entry to hand). Sun began trump by leading low from her hand to the nine and stood no chance now either. No swing and still 91-57.

Bd: 36	North
Dlr: West	♠ AK3
Vul: Both	♥ AJ96
	♦ 53
	♣ Q542
West	East
♠ 10865	♠ QJ2
♥ K543	♥ Q2
♦ KJ64	♦ AQ82
♣ 7	♣ K1063
	South
	♠ 974
	♥ 1087
	♦ 1097
	♣ AJ98

# Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	1NT	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Both tables played 1NT. With no miracle in clubs (well, not the miracle you are going to play for) the only problem on the deal is to take three heart tricks. That requires you not to block the hearts artificially by leading the ten from hand and following with the six; that play would then force you to win the second



heart in North not South. Sad to say, both editors observed a cow fly by during this deal. BJR thinks Jersey, RC thinks Holstein. Sun did block the hearts in unrecommended fashion and was punished by a lie of the cards that meant it cost her 5 imps. 96-57 now.

Bd: 37  
Dlr: North  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ 1042  
♥ K8765  
♦ 5  
♣ 8743

West  
♠ 76  
♥ J42  
♦ Q10863  
♣ Q65

East  
♠ J9853  
♥ A10  
♦ AK92  
♣ J10

South  
♠ AKQ  
♥ Q93  
♦ J74  
♣ AK92

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
	Pass	1♠	1NT
Pass	2♦	Dbl.	2♥
3♦	Pass	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

Both tables elected to overcall 1NT as South here and I'm not really sure why, though nothing bad happened as a result of that decision. Nine tricks are likely to be the limit in hearts if played by South, as on a spade lead you cannot cross to dummy to play hearts to best advantage. Wenfei led a trump against 3♥ and that let through the overtrick. In the other room the spade lead saw declarer advance the ♥Q from hand at trick 2, which also got the job done for 140. An imp to Japan, up 97-57.

Bd: 38  
Dlr: East  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ A85  
♥ J7  
♦ K9742  
♣ Q43

West  
♠ KJ109  
♥ Q2  
♦ Q865  
♣ 985

East  
♠ Q64  
♥ 953  
♦ A103  
♣ J1062

South  
♠ 732  
♥ AK10864  
♦ J  
♣ AK7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
		Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT(F)	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
		Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠(1)	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

The opening lead to 4♥ would determine the number of chances South would get to make. Hongli received a club lead and elected to win in hand and cash one top heart (picking up a stiff ♥Q on both sides but not the ♥9 to her left), then lead a diamond to dummy's king when West played low. One chance down. Back came a club. She won in dummy and finessed trump; the best line. but all she earned for that was -50.

In the other room Wenfei's incisive spade lead meant declarer could not exploit the diamonds. She had to win the second round and take an immediate trump finesse by running the ♥J. Down one and no swing.

Bd: 39  
Dlr: South  
Vul: Both

North  
♠ 6  
♥ Q10  
♦ AKJ  
♣ AK109543

West  
♠ 432  
♥ 965  
♦ Q108765  
♣ 6

East  
♠ AKJ10987  
♥ 872  
♦ 2  
♣ Q7

South  
♠ Q5  
♥ AKJ43  
♦ 943  
♣ J82

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
			1♥
Pass	2♣	3♠	Pass
4♠	6♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣	3♠	Dbl
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

Teramoto did very well here to earn a flat board, whereas Sun had both an opening bid and a spade

raise by the opponents to comfort her in her decision to bid slam as a solo venture. I think Teramoto gets a lot of credit here—and all for noimps.

Bd: 40  
Dlr: West  
Vul: None

North  
♠ QJ6  
♥ Q954  
♦ AJ103  
♣ 75

West  
♠ K85  
♥ AKJ32  
♦ Q92  
♣ A9

East  
♠ 1094  
♥ 1086  
♦ 654  
♣ QJ108

South  
♠ A732  
♥ 7  
♦ K87  
♣ K6432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣(1)	Pass	2♥	All Pass
(1)16+ or ♥+♣			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♦*	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Furuta's response might have got him way too high were it not for the Gazilli gadget that let him show 0-7 at his second turn. Even 2♥ was uncomfortable, of course. On the ♠Q lead to the ace Chen unblocked the ♠K to get an entry to dummy. After three rounds of diamonds the defenders took their second spade and got out with a third. Chen finessed in clubs (good) then in hearts (rats!). Down one and 4imps to China when Wenfei's decision to conceal her hearts got her that suit led a trick 1. In dummy with the ♥8 she played a club to her hand, drove out the ♥Q, and collected a spade winner for her seventh trick when North shifted to that suit. Yes, had the defenders worked out not to lead spades they might have taken four diamonds and a trick in each suit. Easier said than done. 98-61 for Japan Open.



Yiqian Liu



Wenfei Wang

Bd: 41  
Dlr: North  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ A2  
♥ AK653  
♦ Q63  
♣ A65

West  
♠ QJ653  
♥ Q4  
♦ J5  
♣ 10842

East  
♠ 84  
♥ J102  
♦ 10982  
♣ KQJ9

South  
♠ K1097  
♥ 987  
♦ AK74  
♣ 73

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
Pass	1♣*	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

A wheel came off the Closed Room auction; 3♥ was intended as forcing but not so interpreted. (North assures me that it is in the system file as signoff.) Fortunately it was only a non-vulnerable game. The Chinese had a strong club auction and were never going to miss game, or indeed get too high. Just the 6imps, but it was somewhat closer at 98-67 now.

A quiet game followed with no excitement at either table but the match was just about to heat up.

Bd: 43  
Dlr: South  
Vul: None

North  
♠ 982  
♥ A7  
♦ K109754  
♣ 96

West  
♠ Q73  
♥ J83  
♦ AJ63  
♣ 432

East  
♠ AKJ1054  
♥ Q104  
♦ ---  
♣ AQJ7

South  
♠ 6  
♥ K9652  
♦ Q82  
♣ K1085

# Open Room

West	North	East	South
Chen	Sun	Furuta	Hongli
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

# Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wenfei	Teramoto	Liu	Takayama
Pass	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣(1)	Pass	4♦(SPL)	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

In the Open Room Hongli (you can't fool me; I'm too ignorant) led a mundane fourth highest. It has worked for most of us for most of our lives and this deal was no exception. Partner congratulated her for her enterprise by winning the ♥A and returning the suit. One ruff and the ♣K later the Chinese were inscribing +50 neatly on their scorecards.

Takayama was from the school of "A little learning is a dangerous thing." His choice of the ♦Q as an opening salvo was not calculated to paralyze declarer. That was 10 imps to China Longzhu and the match was closer at 98-77.

Seat belts were being fastened, breath was being drawn in, nails were being bitten...and that was only by the commentators.

Bd: 44 North  
 Dir: West ♠ A92  
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q976  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ AKJ32

West  
 ♠ KQJ863  
 ♥ 853  
 ♦ AKJ10  
 ♣ ---

East  
 ♠ 104  
 ♥ 10  
 ♦ Q9532  
 ♣ Q9875

South  
 ♠ 75  
 ♥ AKJ42  
 ♦ 876  
 ♣ 1064

# Open Room

West	North	East	South
Chen	Sun	Furuta	Hongli
1♠	2♣	Pass	2♥
2♠	4♦	4♠	5♣
5♠	6♥	Pass	Pass
6♠	Dbl.	All Pass	

# Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Wenfei	Teramoto	Liu	Takayama
1♣*	Pass	1♦*	Pass
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♥
2♠	4♥	Pass	Pass
4♠	Dbl	All Pass	

The strong club silenced Teramoto initially; indeed, if East had responded to 1♠ N/S would have been out of the auction for good. But as it was, Takayama balanced with 2♥ and Teramoto drove to 4♥, letting Wenfei take a somewhat unilateral sacrifice on an auction where it could not have sounded to N/S like the contract could have a prayer. North led a top club and did not like what he saw. Declarer ruffed and played a heart. Now, when South won to lead a spade to Wenfei's eight, North needed to cover with the nine. Declarer would win in dummy and ruff a club, then ruff a heart, and would then have to come to hand with a diamond to draw trumps. North could win the ♠A and lead a heart to collect a diamond ruff for down one. But North played ace and another trump and declarer claimed ten tricks.

Remarkably, setting the contract one would not have made that much of a difference. The auction in the Closed Room saw Hongli bid hearts, then raise clubs, and from both West's and North's perspective that suggested there were going to be a lot of tricks available in the rounded suits. When Chen saved in 6♠ (should Furuta have doubled 6♥ to stop this happening?) Sun doubled and led a diamond. The defenders won the first heart, took their diamond ruff, and played two rounds of trumps at their next turn. That was 500 and 14 imps. The match margin was now 7 imps at 98-91. Could there be more swings around the corner? You'd better watch out, you'd better take care.



Masaaki Takayama



Tadashi Teramoto

Bd: 45  
 Dir: North  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ 4  
 ♥ AK875  
 ♦ AKJ9865  
 ♣ ---

West  
 ♠ Q107  
 ♥ J9  
 ♦ Q103  
 ♣ AQJ75

East  
 ♠ K9652  
 ♥ Q1042  
 ♦ 7  
 ♣ 986

South  
 ♠ AJ83  
 ♥ 63  
 ♦ 42  
 ♣ K10432

Bd: 47  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ J865  
 ♥ 973  
 ♦ A863  
 ♣ J10

West  
 ♠ A32  
 ♥ J85  
 ♦ 1074  
 ♣ Q432

East  
 ♠ Q9  
 ♥ Q106  
 ♦ KJ952  
 ♣ A75

South  
 ♠ K1074  
 ♥ AK42  
 ♦ Q  
 ♣ K986

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
	1♣	1♠(1)	2♣
2♠	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♦

All Pass

(1) Majors or Minors

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♠
2♣	2♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

So far in this match the Japanese feather-weight interventions over a strong club had been leading a charmed life. Eventually it caught up with them in an unexpected way. It was not that anything terrible would have happened to E/W in a spade contract. But at her final turn, Sun knew that partner had at most two diamonds and that the hearts were not splitting. I still think she did remarkably well to pass 5♦. Both tables played to ruff hearts in dummy and lost a diamond and a heart. But China had 12 imps and had taken the lead after scoring 46 imps in six deals without response.

The Japanese stopped the bleeding on the next deal with a quiet notrump partscore, 16 HCP facing 7 HCP, making 150 in each room. But there was more to come.

#### Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Sun</i>	<i>Furuta</i>	<i>Hongli</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenfei</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Liu</i>	<i>Takayama</i>
			1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♦(SPL)
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

It pains me to see an action like a 14-16 notrump with the South cards gaining imps, but 2♥ handled surprisingly well on a club lead. Hongli won the second club and advanced the ♣9, ruffing in dummy when West played low impassively. Now a spade to the nine, ten, and ace and a diamond back saw Hongli take a second spade, then the two top trumps, leaving the ♥Q and ♥J out. Now she ran the spades and let the defenders take their two trumps separately.

In 3♠ on a heart lead Teramoto won in dummy and crossed to the ♦A to misguess clubs. The defenders cleared hearts, declarer cleared clubs, and Liu cashed the heart winner and played a third club. Declarer ruffed his winner to get to hand to lead a spade to the ten and ace, but the fourth round of clubs re-promoted the ♠Q for down one.

When the set concluded with a flat partscore deal China had scored 51 imps without reply and now led 108-98.

Due to space and time considerations our coverage of the fourth quarter of the 2009 NEC Cup finals will appear this evening in Bulletin 7. Be sure to tune in...same bat time, same bat channel.