



# NEC Bridge Festival

Saturday, February 13, 2010  
Bulletin Number 5

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

## It's Zimmermann vs Lavazza in Today's NEC Cup Final

The top three seeds all moved on to the semi-finals (the third and fourth seeds couldn't *both* make the semis when they played each other in the quarters). Congratulations to Zimmermann (Pierre Zimmermann, Fulvio Fantoni, Claudio Nunes, Cezary Balicki, Adam Zmudzinski, Franck Multon), Lavazza (Maria Teresa Lavazza, Norberto Bocchi, Agustin Madala, Giorgio Duboin, Antonio Sementa, Guido Ferraro; Massimo Ortensi, Coach), The Netherlands (Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen, Bob Drijver, Merijn Groenenboom) and the fifth seeded Bulgarian All Stars (Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Stefan Stefanov). In the semis, Zimmermann cruised into the finals when the Bulgarians withdrew at the half, down 54 imps. Lavazza had a far tougher time of it but won a low-scoring match to set up one of the most highly anticipated finals any of us can remember.

### Quarter-final Results

| Team                | Carry | 1-16 | 17-32 | Final      |
|---------------------|-------|------|-------|------------|
| Zimmermann          | .5    | 37   | 61    | <b>98</b>  |
| SARA                |       | 7    | 28    | 35         |
| Lavazza             | .5    | 50   | 40    | <b>90</b>  |
| Kendrick            |       | 18   | 46    | 64         |
| The Netherlands     | .5    | 53   | 64    | <b>117</b> |
| Oz Players          |       | 33   | 6     | 39         |
| Bulgarian All Stars | .5    | 44*  | 40    | <b>84</b>  |
| South Sweden        |       | 46   | 27    | 73         |

\* After the imposition of a 4-imp time penalty

### Semi-final Results

| Team                | Carry | 1-16 | 17-32 | Final     |
|---------------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|
| Zimmerman           | .5    | 82   |       | <b>82</b> |
| Bulgarian All Stars |       | 28   | W/D   | 28        |
| Lavazza             | .5    | 22   | 19    | <b>41</b> |
| The Netherlands     |       | 15   | 19    | 34        |

**The results of yesterday's pair events are on page 4**

### Asuka Cup Entries

Those wishing entries for the Asuka Cup, held on Sunday, February 14, should purchase them today at 21:00 hours (9 pm) in the Secretariat (E206).

## NEC Cup 2010: 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. However, pairs may prepare written defenses against a two-level opening bid in a minor that shows a weak two-bid in either major, with or without the option of strong hand types. These defenses are deemed to be part of the opponents' convention cards.

**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 1<sup>st</sup> in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. The team finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> group. The team finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> in the Swiss chooses their semi-final opponent from any of the other three quarter-final matches.

**Security:** No player may leave the Annex Hall during play without permission, due to security concerns arising from the Bridge Base Online Broadcast.

**Smoking:** Once play in a qualifying-round match or a KO-round session starts, smoking is prohibited at ALL times (including when a player leaves the playing room to go to the bathroom), until the player completes the play of all boards in the match or session. Penalties for violations will be assessed by the Director.

**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 Director). In case of dispute the call from the wrong side will be ignored, but in situations where the wrong side calls or a late call is made and there is no dispute the Director may accept the faulty call.

**Electronic Equipment:** Any and all electronic equipment capable of receiving or transmitting information to/from outside the playing room (e.g., cell phones, personal computers) must be turned off at all times from the beginning of a match/session until the player has completed all boards in the match/session and left the playing area. The Director may authorize exceptions in emergency situations. Violations will be penalized by the Director.

**Photography/BBO Vugraph:** By entering the event, players agree to authorize still and/or video photography by the JCBL and also to appear on BBO VuGraph whenever requested by the Director.

# Convention Regulations for Side (Pair) 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 3<sup>rd</sup>- or 4<sup>th</sup>-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

## Yokohama IMP Pairs

| Rank | Score | Member1           | Member2          |
|------|-------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1    | 2301  | Michal Kopecky    | Milan Macura     |
| 2    | 2074  | Federico Goded    | Gonzalo Goded    |
| 3    | 1622  | Sakiko Naito      | Ayako Miyakuni   |
| 4    | 1540  | Robert Geller     | Setsuko Ogihara  |
| 5    | 1534  | Kyoko Ohno        | Akihiko Yamada   |
| 6    | 1443  | Nobuko Matsubara  | Hideyuki Sango   |
| 7    | 1423  | Phoebe Lin        | Nie Weiping      |
| 8    | 1407  | David Gold        | David Bakhshi    |
| 9    | 1403  | Yuki Fukuyoshi    | Takeshi Hanayama |
| 10   | 1312  | Shunsuke Morimura | Tadashi Imakura  |
| 11   | 1154  | Howard Weinstein  | John Carruthers  |
| 12   | 1140  | Yasuhiro Shimizu  | Hiroyuki Noda    |
| 13   | 1112  | Masayuki Ino      | Makoto Hirata    |
| 14   | 924   | Fiona Brown       | Susan Stockdale  |
| 15   | 879   | Shizuyo Nakagawa  | Yoko Kato        |
| 16   | 849   | Miyako Suzuki     | Toshiko Sasaki   |
| 17   | 784   | Katsumi Takahashi | Yoshiko Endo     |
| 18   | 687   | Yumiko Oda        | Kazuo Takano     |
| 19   | 681   | Kazuo Furuta      | Hiroki Yokoi     |
| 20   | 607   | Kunio Ueda        | Ying Xiaoying    |



Michael Kopecky & Milan Macura



Beginners Cup Participants



Nobue Takagi & Nobumasa Take

## Beginners Cup

| Rank | Member1        | Member2          |
|------|----------------|------------------|
| 1    | Narumi Shiroda | Mariko Koyama    |
| 2    | Teruo Maruyama | Chiyuki Komori   |
| 3    | Mariko Obara   | Etsuko Takahashi |

## Debutante Cup

| Rank | Member1         | Member2         |
|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1    | Nobue Takagi    | Nobumasa Take   |
| 2    | Ayako Tanaka    | Harumi Akashi   |
| 3    | Teruko Kawakida | Hatsue Fukasawa |

## NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 15<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)

## 15<sup>th</sup> NEC CUP Qualifying Datum Rankings (4 matches or more)

| Rank  | IMPs | Member1              | Member2            | Team                | Rds |
|-------|------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----|
| 1     | 1.79 | Cezary Balicki       | Adam Zmudzinski    | Zimmermann          | 9   |
| 2     | 1.34 | Louk Verhees         | Ricco van Prooijen | The Netherlands     | 12  |
| 3     | 1.32 | Norberto Bocchi      | Agustin Madala     | Lavazza             | 10  |
| 4     | 1.09 | Kazuko Takahashi     | Masayuki Hayasaka  | Attack No.1         | 4   |
| 5     | 1.02 | Fulvio Fantoni       | Claudio Nunes      | Zimmermann          | 9   |
| 6-7   | 0.96 | Valio Kovachev       | Vladi Isporski     | Bulgarian All Stars | 12  |
| 6-7   | 0.96 | Hisami Kataoka       | Hikoe Enomoto      | NANIWADA            | 8   |
| 8     | 0.93 | Teruo Miyazaki       | Kunio Kodaira      | KAWABATA            | 4   |
| 9     | 0.90 | Wang Wenfei          | Liu Yiqian         | China Women         | 5   |
| 10    | 0.87 | Federico Goded       | Gonzalo Goded      | The Latin           | 12  |
| 11    | 0.84 | Haruko Koshi         | Misuzu Ichihashi   | ESPERANZA           | 4   |
| 12    | 0.83 | Megumi Takasaki      | Hidenori Narita    | Iza Yokohama        | 8   |
| 13    | 0.75 | Giorgio Duboin       | Antonio Sementa    | Lavazza             | 10  |
| 14-15 | 0.74 | Kazuo Furuta         | Hiroki Yokoi       | JAPAN OPEN w/o T    | 12  |
| 14-15 | 0.74 | Tadashi Teramoto     | Fu Zhong           | SARA                | 6   |
| 16    | 0.68 | Ishmael Del'Monte    | Ashley Bach        | Oz Players          | 12  |
| 17    | 0.66 | Kazuhisa Kojima      | Kazuo Takano       | NXST                | 4   |
| 18    | 0.64 | David Bakhshi        | David Gold         | CANUKUSA            | 12  |
| 19    | 0.63 | Kyoko Shimamura      | Sei Nagasaka       | Beauty              | 4   |
| 20-21 | 0.60 | Sun Ming             | Wang Hongli        | China Women         | 9   |
| 20-21 | 0.60 | Michal Kopecky       | Milan Macura       | WORLD YOUTH         | 12  |
| 22    | 0.56 | Kazuhiko Yamada      | Takahiko Hirata    | YAMADA              | 8   |
| 23    | 0.55 | Tadashi Teramoto     | Shugo Tanaka       | SARA                | 6   |
| 24-25 | 0.52 | Takashi Maeda        | Nobuyuki Hayashi   | GIBS                | 6   |
| 24-25 | 0.52 | Fiona Brown          | Susan Stockdale    | England Ladies      | 12  |
| 26-27 | 0.50 | Hisami Kataoka       | Hideo Togawa       | NANIWADA            | 4   |
| 26-27 | 0.50 | Ron Klinger          | Matt Mullamphy     | Oz Players          | 12  |
| 28    | 0.48 | Taeko Kawamura       | Sachiko Yamamura   | MAKITA              | 8   |
| 29    | 0.46 | Yoshiko Murata       | Junko Den          | Venus               | 4   |
| 30    | 0.45 | Kiyoko Oki           | Kazuko Harumi      | Dolphin             | 6   |
| 31    | 0.44 | Jonathan Cooke       | Martin Garvey      | Kendrick            | 12  |
| 32-33 | 0.43 | Shi Zhengjun         | Hou Xu             | China Evertrust     | 9   |
| 32-33 | 0.43 | Yoko Nenohi          | Hiroko Sekiyama    | Kitty's             | 4   |
| 34    | 0.42 | Peter Gill           | Paul Gosney        | Oz Two              | 12  |
| 35    | 0.41 | CC Wong              | Irene Ho           | Hong Kong           | 4   |
| 36    | 0.40 | Alon Apteker         | Craig Gower        | South Sweden        | 12  |
| 37    | 0.38 | Miyako Miyazaki      | Kazuko Okamoto     | AQUA                | 8   |
| 38    | 0.35 | Pierre Zimmermann    | Franck Multon      | Zimmermann          | 6   |
| 39    | 0.34 | Michiko Shida        | Kotomi Asakoshi    | LAS FLORES          | 8   |
| 40    | 0.32 | Keiko Matsuzaki      | Kimi Makita        | MAKITA              | 8   |
| 41    | 0.31 | Ryo Matsubara        | Mark LaForge       | LAS FLORES          | 8   |
| 42    | 0.29 | Ayako Matsubara      | Masakatsu Sugino   | Guriguri            | 4   |
| 43    | 0.28 | Sei Nagasaka         | Yuichi Masamura    | Beauty              | 8   |
| 44    | 0.25 | Yoko Tokushige       | Kazuko Banno       | BANNO               | 4   |
| 45    | 0.24 | Li Jie               | Liu Jing           | China Evertrust     | 9   |
| 46-47 | 0.23 | Heather Dhondy       | Nevena Senior      | England Ladies      | 12  |
| 46-47 | 0.23 | Kyoko Toyofuku       | Kumiko Matsuo      | Kitty's             | 4   |
| 48    | 0.21 | Frederic Wrang       | Johan Sylvan       | South Sweden        | 12  |
| 49-50 | 0.18 | Maria Teresa Lavazza | Guido Ferraro      | Lavazza             | 4   |
| 49-50 | 0.18 | Takeshi Hanayama     | Katsumi Takahashi  | GIBS                | 6   |
| 51    | 0.17 | Phoebe Lin           | Nie Weiping        | Beauty              | 9   |
| 52-53 | 0.16 | Midori Ito           | Masakatsu Sugino   | Guriguri            | 4   |
| 52-53 | 0.16 | Daisuke Sugimoto     | Masashi Wakai      | JAPAN YOUTH         | 7   |
| 54    | 0.15 | David Kendrick       | Brian Senior       | Kendrick            | 12  |

| Rank    | IMPs  | Member1            | Member2            | Team                | Rds |
|---------|-------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----|
| 55-56   | 0.14  | Michiko Ono        | Shimako Yaji       | CAMPANULA           | 8   |
| 55-56   | 0.14  | Yoko Nenohi        | Kumiko Matsuo      | Kitty's             | 4   |
| 57-58   | 0.13  | Toshiko Kaho       | Makiko Sato        | Kitty's             | 4   |
| 57-58   | 0.13  | Hiroko Kobayashi   | Chizuko Tsukamoto  | JAPAN WOMEN         | 8   |
| 59-60   | 0.10  | Lin Rongqiang      | Jiang Tong         | China Evertrust     | 6   |
| 59-60   | 0.10  | Chieko Ichikawa    | Junko Den          | Venus               | 6   |
| 61      | 0.08  | Yoshitaka Agata    | Masahide Yamashita | MY-Bridge           | 8   |
| 62-63   | 0.07  | Sumiko Sugino      | Yumiko Kawakami    | Attack No.1         | 4   |
| 62-63   | 0.07  | Hwang Iynryung     | Yang Sungae        | Korea CACTI         | 12  |
| 64-66   | 0.04  | Robert Geller      | Setsuko Ogihara    | TSUNAMI             | 12  |
| 64-66   | 0.04  | Sumiko Sugino      | Hideto Yamaguchi   | Attack No.1         | 4   |
| 64-66   | 0.04  | Yoshiyuki Nakamura | Makoto Hirata      | YAMADA              | 8   |
| 67      | 0.02  | Ryoga Tanaka       | Sakiko Naito       | TANAKA              | 9   |
| 68-69   | 0.01  | Hiroya Abe         | Chieko Yamazaki    | TSUNAMI             | 6   |
| 68-69   | 0.01  | Bob Drijver        | Merijn Groenenboom | The Netherlands     | 12  |
| 70-71   | -0.02 | Minoru Mizuta      | Yasushi Kobayashi  | SARA                | 4   |
| 70-71   | -0.02 | Shintaro Sentsui   | Hiroko Sentsui     | WHITE DREAMS        | 12  |
| 72-73   | -0.07 | Yukiko Tokunaga    | Kenji Miyakuni     | TANAKA              | 9   |
| 72-73   | -0.07 | Megumi Takasaka    | Yukiko Hoshi       | YUKINATA            | 12  |
| 74      | -0.09 | Haruko Koshi       | Michiko Iwahashi   | ESPERANZA           | 4   |
| 75      | -0.10 | Kenichi Asaoka     | Motoharu Ushio     | SAKURAI             | 12  |
| 76-78   | -0.11 | Misuzu Ichihashi   | Michiko Iwahashi   | ESPERANZA           | 4   |
| 76-78   | -0.11 | Hideko Takeuchi    | Takako Fujimoto    | BANNO               | 4   |
| 76-78   | -0.11 | Kazuo Saeki        | Yumiko Oda         | NXST                | 8   |
| 79-80   | -0.12 | Tadashi Imakura    | Shunsuke Morimura  | TSUNAMI             | 6   |
| 79-80   | -0.12 | Yoshiko Murata     | Atsuko Kurita      | Venus               | 6   |
| 81-82   | -0.13 | Yukiko Umezu       | Etsuko Naito       | YUKINATA            | 12  |
| 81-82   | -0.13 | Sartaj Hans        | Tony Nunn          | Oz Two              | 12  |
| 83-84   | -0.14 | John Carruthers    | Howard Weinstein   | CANUKUSA            | 12  |
| 83-84   | -0.14 | Masayuki Ino       | Makoto Kono        | JAPAN OPEN w/o T    | 8   |
| 85-86   | -0.17 | Makoto Nomura      | Akiko Miwa         | KAWABATA            | 8   |
| 85-86   | -0.17 | Yasuhiro Shimizu   | Hiroyuki Noda      | GIBS                | 12  |
| 87      | -0.18 | Hiromu Nishida     | Yoshie Nishida     | Rosewood            | 12  |
| 88-89   | -0.20 | Chieko Ichikawa    | Kuniko Saito       | Venus               | 4   |
| 88-89   | -0.20 | Hiroko Ota         | Yayoi Sakamoto     | CAMPANULA           | 8   |
| 90      | -0.21 | Tsuneo Sakurai     | Atsushi Kikuchi    | SAKURAI             | 10  |
| 91      | -0.24 | Yoko Fukuyama      | Takashi Sumita     | Rosewood            | 12  |
| 92-94   | -0.25 | Hideyuki Sango     | Nobuko Matsubara   | ESPERANZA           | 12  |
| 92-94   | -0.25 | Hiroko Sekiyama    | Makiko Sato        | Kitty's             | 4   |
| 92-94   | -0.25 | Daisuke Sugimoto   | Takayuki Kitamura  | JAPAN YOUTH         | 4   |
| 95      | -0.27 | Osami Kimura       | Yasuyoshi Toriumi  | Iza Yokohama        | 8   |
| 96      | -0.30 | Irene Ho           | Fu Cheung          | Hong Kong           | 8   |
| 97      | -0.31 | Manol Iliev        | Stefan Stefanov    | Bulgarian All Stars | 12  |
| 98      | -0.32 | Kinzaburo Nishino  | Koichi Onishi      | Friends             | 8   |
| 99      | -0.33 | Fu Zhong           | Kumiko Sasahira    | SARA                | 6   |
| 100-101 | -0.34 | Kimiko Kamakari    | Misae Kato         | KATSUMATA           | 8   |
| 100-101 | -0.34 | Ayako Matsubara    | Midori Sakaguchi   | Guriguri            | 8   |
| 102-103 | -0.35 | Jun Cheng          | CC Wong            | Hong Kong           | 8   |
| 102-103 | -0.35 | Feng Xuefeng       | Gan Ling           | China Women         | 7   |
| 104     | -0.36 | Ayako Miyakuni     | Yuki Fukuyoshi     | JAPAN WOMEN         | 8   |
| 105-108 | -0.38 | Chisato Kiriyama   | Miho Sekizawa      | Iza Yokohama        | 8   |
| 105-108 | -0.38 | Yumiko Kichise     | Keiko Yoshino      | Friends             | 8   |
| 105-108 | -0.38 | Miyoko Yonezawa    | Mariko Sakamoto    | Dolphin             | 6   |
| 105-108 | -0.38 | Yoko Saito         | Mamiko Odaira      | Friends             | 8   |
| 109     | -0.41 | Kyoko Ohno         | Akihiko Yamada     | YAMADA              | 8   |
| 110     | -0.43 | Atsuko Katsumata   | Yasuyo Iida        | KATSUMATA           | 8   |

| Rank    | IMPs  | Member1            | Member2           | Team         | Rds |
|---------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----|
| 111     | -0.45 | Haruyo Iiyama      | Sumie Nakagawa    | CAMPANULA    | 8   |
| 112     | -0.46 | Teruo Miyazaki     | Makoto Nomura     | KAWABATA     | 4   |
| 113     | -0.48 | Kei Nemoto         | Kazuo Takano      | NXST         | 8   |
| 114     | -0.49 | Sonoko Namba       | Chizuko Sugiura   | KinKi        | 12  |
| 115     | -0.50 | Kazuhisa Kojima    | Yumiko Oda        | NXST         | 4   |
| 116     | -0.52 | Akiko Kawabata     | Misako Fukazawa   | KAWABATA     | 8   |
| 117     | -0.53 | Noriko Takami      | Reiko Hoshika     | KATSUMATA    | 8   |
| 118-120 | -0.56 | Yasuko Kosaka      | Aiko Banno        | AQUA         | 8   |
| 118-120 | -0.56 | Yumi Yanagida      | Kenichi Ito       | WHITE DREAMS | 12  |
| 118-120 | -0.56 | Hideko Kobayashi   | Tomiko Nakai      | BANNO        | 6   |
| 121     | -0.57 | Jun Cheng          | Fu Cheung         | Hong Kong    | 4   |
| 122     | -0.58 | Midori Ito         | Takayo Otsuka     | Guriguri     | 8   |
| 123     | -0.59 | Kazuko Takahashi   | Yumiko Kawakami   | Attack No.1  | 8   |
| 124     | -0.60 | Hisako Kondo       | Masako Katsube    | JAPAN WOMEN  | 8   |
| 125-126 | -0.61 | Hiroaki Miura      | Noriaki Koike     | WORLD YOUTH  | 9   |
| 125-126 | -0.61 | Toru Tamura        | Mimako Ishizuka   | KinKi        | 12  |
| 127     | -0.62 | Sung Kyunghae      | Park Jungyoon     | Korea CACTI  | 12  |
| 128     | -0.64 | Kuniko Saito       | Atsuko Kurita     | Venus        | 4   |
| 129     | -0.66 | Masafumi Yoshizawa | Noriko Yoshizawa  | MY-Bridge    | 8   |
| 130     | -0.70 | Frankie Frontaura  | Carlos Pellegrini | The Latin    | 12  |
| 131-132 | -0.86 | Kentaro Murai      | Tomoyuki Watanuki | JAPAN YOUTH  | 4   |
| 131-132 | -0.86 | Michiko Hatoyama   | Makiyo Takikawa   | Dolphin      | 12  |
| 133     | -0.92 | Masaru Naniwada    | Toshiro Nose      | NANIWADA     | 8   |
| 134     | -0.95 | Kyoko Toyofuku     | Toshiko Kaho      | Kitty's      | 4   |
| 135     | -1.05 | Kentaro Murai      | Takayuki Kitamura | JAPAN YOUTH  | 6   |
| 136     | -1.06 | Michiko Ono        | Toyoko Saito      | MAKITA       | 8   |
| 137     | -1.07 | Hideko Takeuchi    | Kazuko Banno      | BANNO        | 4   |
| 138     | -1.10 | Iwao Oishi         | Aiko Nabeshima    | MY-Bridge    | 8   |
| 139     | -1.13 | Shoko Somemiya     | Akiko Miyata      | AQUA         | 8   |
| 140     | -1.18 | Toshiro Nose       | Hideo Togawa      | NANIWADA     | 4   |
| 141     | -1.29 | Teruko Nishimura   | Junko Nishimura   | LAS FLORES   | 8   |
| 142     | -1.43 | Sumiko Sugino      | Masayuki Hayasaka | Attack No.1  | 4   |

## Narita Bus Schedule

From the Intercontinental  
(120 minutes)  
¥3,500

From the YCAT  
(90 min)  
¥3,500

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

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

## Team Rosters (KO Stage): 15<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup

| # | Team Name                   | Members  |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | <b>Zimmermann:</b>          | Pierre Zimmermann, Fulvio Fantoni, Claudio Nunes, Cezary Balicki, Adam Zmudzinski, Franck Multon                               |
| 2 | <b>Lavazza:</b>             | Maria Teresa Lavazza, Norberto Bocchi, Agustin Madala, Giorgio Duboin, Antonio Sementa, Guido Ferraro; Massimo Ortensi (Coach) |
| 3 | <b>The Netherlands:</b>     | Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen, Bob Drijver, Merijn Groenenboom  |
| 4 | <b>Oz Players:</b>          | Ron Klinger, Ishmael Del'Monte, Ashley Bach, Matt Mullamphy  |
| 5 | <b>Bulgarian All Stars:</b> | Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Stefan Stefanov   |
| 6 | <b>South Sweden:</b>        | Alon Apteker, Craig Gower, Frederic Wrang, Johan Sylvan  |
| 7 | <b>SARA:</b>                | Tadashi Teramoto, Fu Zhong, Kumiko Sasahira, Minoru Mizuta, Yasushi Kobayashi, Shugo Tanaka                                    |
| 8 | <b>Kendrick:</b>            | David Kendrick, Brian Senior, Jonathan Cooke, Martin Garvey  |

### My Roman Holiday

by John Carruthers, Canada

A "Roman holiday" is a metaphor taken from the poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* by George Gordon, Lord Byron, where a gladiator in ancient Rome expects to be "butcher'd to make a Roman holiday" while the audience would take pleasure from watching his suffering. The term suggests debauchery and disorder in addition to sadistic enjoyment. The Germans have a word for it as well, "schadenfreude," to derive joy from the suffering of others. Will you empathize with me or will you feel schadenfreude? Let's see.

My tale of woe begins in the 2000 NEC Cup at the 5<sup>th</sup> NEC Festival. With a match to go, we (Canada's Olympiad Open team: Robert Lebi-Nader Hanna, George Mittelman-John Carruthers, with Eric Kokish performing spot duty and Drew Cannell unable to come to Japan) looked to be qualifying for the quarterfinals. We were in sixth place with 151 VP, 8 VP ahead of the ninth-place team.

We had a tough last match, losing 37-8 to Indonesia and earning only 8 VP. Two teams had moved ahead of us, but Ireland had dropped behind us with an even worse final match than ours, to leave us in eighth place, we thought. However, then the news came in that the Japanese Ladies Olympiad team had won their last match 71-1 for a blitz, moving them all the way from eighteenth place to a tie with us at 159 VP for the eighth and final knockout berth. Of course, based on their final match, they won the tie-breaker, which is IMP quotient: IMPs won divided by IMPs lost: 1.18 for Japan and 1.15 for Canada.

Four years later, Mittelman and I returned for the 9<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup, this time with Allan Graves and Joey Silver as our partners. This time we did qualify after scoring 88 VP out of 100 in our last four matches. We faced England in the quarterfinals, losing 97-93.5 in one of the most exciting matches I've ever been involved with. The match was filled with slams, the most incredible occurring on the following deal, reported by Eric Kokish in the Daily Bulletin:

#### Quarterfinals: Canada vs England

|            |           |          |
|------------|-----------|----------|
| Bd: 3      | ♠ 42      |          |
| Dir: South | ♥ 1097643 |          |
| Vul: E/W   | ♦ K32     |          |
|            | ♣ 98      |          |
| ♠ KQJ765   |           | ♠ A10983 |
| ♥ ---      |           | ♥ ---    |
| ♦ Q106     |           | ♦ J98754 |
| ♣ QJ63     |           | ♣ K5     |
|            | ♠ ---     |          |
|            | ♥ AKQJ852 |          |
|            | ♦ A       |          |
|            | ♣ A10742  |          |

#### Open Room

| West             | North         | East             | South            |
|------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>Callaghan</i> | <i>Graves</i> | <i>Armstrong</i> | <i>Mittelman</i> |

|          |      |       |     |
|----------|------|-------|-----|
| 1♠       | 2♥   | 4♥(1) | 6♥  |
| Pass     | Pass | 6♠    | Dbl |
| All Pass |      |       |     |

(1) Splinter raise

Closed Room

| West                     | North | East          | South           |
|--------------------------|-------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>Carruthers Senior</i> |       | <i>Silver</i> | <i>Lambardi</i> |

|      |      |          |      |
|------|------|----------|------|
| 2♠   | Pass | 3♠       | 4♥   |
| Pass | Pass | 4♠       | 5♥   |
| Pass | 6♥   | 6♠       | Pass |
| Pass | Dbl  | All Pass |      |

If we didn't know better we'd suspect that the firm of Suzuki, Omasa and Nakamura had poured sake into the dealing program, but every once in a while a layout like this is generated, providing the gladiators with untold opportunities to try to fool the lions.

That not every two-loser hand is a strong two-bid was illustrated by Mittelman, a graduate of the School of Hard Knocks who has learned through bitter experience that the opponents' spades always outbid his suits and that a there is nothing more humiliating than opening 2♣ and having to save



against the opponents' vulnerable game or slam.

Hence, a gentle 1♥. Allan Graves, a classmate of Mittelman's in the aforementioned institution, emulated his partner in trying to slow down the dangerous auction. Hence a gentle 2♥. Despite the Canadians' best efforts, Armstrong competed to 6♠. Graves led a trump. Mittelman cashed the ♦A when he won the ♣A, down 500.

If those results, thoroughly infused with tactics, deception and insurance, were interesting, consider the sandbagging efforts of our man Silver, who walked the dog with minimum bids until the music stopped at 6♠x. So what's all the excitement about?

By now I hope you can trust me to report only the truth. Here's what happened. Brian Senior appreciated that a heart lead was not only pointless but also potentially dangerous, but couldn't tell whether the defenders' outside trick source was in clubs or diamonds. Hoping to know more after seeing dummy and thinking it might be important to hold the lead, Brian made the expert lead of...the ♦K.

Unfortunately for him, he was in no position to lead to trick two. Pablo Lambardi, who had been bestowed with that privilege, was not keen to cash the ♣A at the potential cost of a 300-point undertrick, and saw no pressing need to worry about dummy's diamonds. Accordingly, he decided to exit passively with a heart to force dummy. John Carruthers was pleased to accept that force, but was even more pleased to discard one of his four clubs. The other three went on dummy's diamonds after trumps were drawn and JC chalked up +1660. I am incapable of making up a story as good as this one; 19 IMPs to Canada.

A tourniquet! A tourniquet! My kingdom for a tourniquet.

I returned for my third NEC Cup two years later, in 2006, with yet another partner. P.O. Sundelin from Stockholm. We played with Philippe Cronier from Paris and Subhash Gupta from New Delhi. We called ourselves FISK (after France, India, Sweden and Kanada). Kanada is the Swedish spelling of Canada, and fisk is the Swedish word for fish—somehow it all fit together.

When the Swiss Team qualifying portion of the NEC Cup ended, we were in—you guessed it—a joint tie for the eighth qualifying spot, with Team Tajima. This time, though, things were different: our IMP quotient was 1.33, Tajima's 1.32. Additionally, we had played and beaten Tajima in our head-on match and had won six matches to their five. So by any measure we deserved to qualify, right? Wrong. We were penalized 1 VP for slow play, knocking us out of the knockout before we'd taken our cards out of a board!

Are you beginning to get the picture? Last year, Joey Silver and I came to the 14<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup to play with Larry Mori and Venkatrao Koneru (variously known as Colonel K from his days as a career US Air Force officer and Babu). We called ourselves **JUICE** this time after our current and native lands (Japan, USA, India, Canada, England). We did qualify for the knockout phase, but lost to the Chinese Venice-Cup-to-be champions by 7 imps when we underled an ace in the middle of a hand to declarer's singleton king—the ace was meant to be our third trick in 5♦ for a push, but instead resulted in an 11-imp loss to lose the match by 7.

This year I came to the 15<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup with my fourth different partner in five trips to Yokohama, Howard Weinstein from the USA, and teammates David Bakhshi and David Gold from England. Not having been able to come up with a snappy acronymic team name from our countries or our names, we called ourselves simply CANUKUSA (Canda, United Kingdom, United States of America).

We'd been lying sixth with a match to go and a draw would see us through to the knockouts. We were leading our final match 13-7 with one board to go when a poor result at both tables (on different boards) led to a 16-13 loss and only 14 Victory Points. Have you guessed? Sure you have. This left us in a tie for eighth place with Kendrick from England, who, as you may have surmised, won the tie-breaker on IMP quotient 1.26 to 1.25. In other events we'd have gone through, as we had beaten them in our head-on match. But not here.

So, five trips to Yokohama for the NEC Festival have resulted in three tied-for-eighth-place finishes, all of which I've lost, and two quarterfinal losses by a total of 10.5 imps. Is it painful? You bet it is. Do you feel empathy or schadenfreude? Did you have a Roman holiday?

# 2010 NEC Bridge Festival

## Public Show Event: Games for Beginners

### Let's Play MIND SPORTS!

Open to the public, we offer free lessons in all five mind sports played at the World Mind Sports Games in Beijing, China in 2008. Organizers of TEAM JAPAN for the Mind Sports Games maintain a good relationship with the other mind sports organizations. We invite each other's members whenever one of us has a big public event (for example, Mini Bridge for kids, Go junior events, the formation of a Chess-Bridge club in Nagasaki, etc.). The NEC Bridge Festival presents an excellent opportunity for the five mind sports organizations to all get together in one place yearly.

ALL OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN NEC BRIDGE FESTIVAL ARE MOST WELCOME TO JOIN THIS EVENT!  
Please stop by and enjoy the other mind sports whenever you have time.

**Date:** Friday, February 12, Saturday, February 13, from 11:00-16:00

**Place:** Rooms used for the NEC Cup qualifying sessions — F201/202

**Program:** 1) BRIDGE: Free Introductory Mini Bridge lesson  
2) GO  
3) CHESS  
4) DRAUGHTS/CHECKERS  
5) XIANGQI (Chinese Chess)

Everyone who challenges any of the games will receive a gift from each participating organization. Anyone who challenges all five of the games will be entered in a lottery drawing for additional souvenirs.

\*\*\*Special Presentation for those interested in Go\*\*\*

For those attending the Go event on Saturday, February 13, a special portable Go set (including stones and a plastic Go board) will be given away, courtesy of the Japan Go Federation.

### Special Games for Contract Bridge Beginners

Sponsored by the JCBL Public Relation Department, these special games are aimed at helping bridge beginners participate and experience the fun and excitement of the game—and to encourage them to become JCBL members. This program has been embraced by beginners and bridge teachers alike. Bridge teachers enthusiastically recommend mind sport events: they are popular, attract many beginners to the game, and enhance their enjoyment of the game. In addition, almost all participants receive prizes.

**Date:** Friday, February 12 and Saturday, February 13, from 13:00-16:00; 1 session game/day

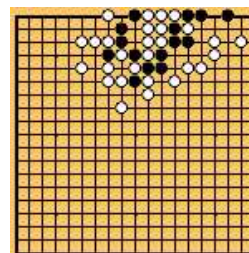
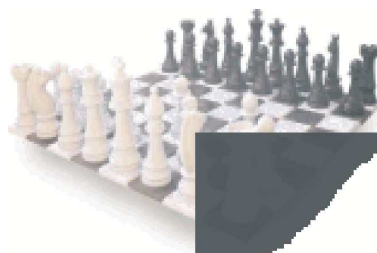
**Place:** Same as above

3 types of games will be offered:

- 1) Debutante Cup: for those with no game experience  
(currently 58 people are registered for this 2-day event)
- 2) Beginners Cup: for those with under 5 masterpoints (MP)  
(currently 71 people are registered for this 2-day event)
- 3) Beginners Cup: for those with under 20 MP  
(currently 20 people are registered for this event to be held on Saturday, February 13 only)

In all, 149 people are currently registered to participate in these three events

OF-COSMETICS, one of Tokyo's most popular cosmetic companies, is sponsoring the prizes at this year's event. Company representatives will be demonstrating their products, so if you are interested in a good shampoo, hair conditioner, or other cosmetic you just might find exactly what you need there.



# NEC Quarter-finals (1<sup>st</sup> Half): The Netherlands vs Oz Players

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 1  
Dlr: North  
Vul: None

|       |          |
|-------|----------|
| North | ♠ AQJ984 |
|       | ♥ 9      |
|       | ♦ AK5    |
|       | ♣ 982    |

|      |         |
|------|---------|
| West | ♠ 103   |
|      | ♥ J105  |
|      | ♦ J109  |
|      | ♣ AJ743 |

|      |         |
|------|---------|
| East | ♠ 652   |
|      | ♥ AKQ72 |
|      | ♦ Q7    |
|      | ♣ KQ5   |

|       |         |
|-------|---------|
| South | ♠ K7    |
|       | ♥ 8643  |
|       | ♦ 86432 |
|       | ♣ 106   |

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                |                | Pass             | Pass               |
| 1♥             | Pass           | 2♠(♥)            | Pass               |
| 4♥             | All Pass       |                  |                    |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
|                |                  | Pass                | Pass        |
| 1♣             | Dbl              | 1♦                  | 2♣          |
| Pass           | Pass             | Dbl                 | Pass        |
| 2♥             | Pass             | 3♥                  | Pass        |
| 4♥             | All Pass         |                     |             |

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                | 1♠             | 2♥               | Pass               |
| 3♥             | 3♠             | 4♥               | 4♠                 |
| Dbl.           | All Pass       |                  |                    |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
|                | 1♠               | 2♥                  | Pass        |
| 3♥             | 3♠               | All Pass            |             |

On the second deal Mullamphy's mixed raise saw Klinger not bothering to explore the chance of a slam. Two-two trumps and a diamond finesse brought home 12 tricks. With trumps 2-2 there was a guaranteed elimination to avoid a second diamond loser. Verhees' strong club (he and van Prooijen play Russ Ekeblad's canape-driven style) allowed E/W to set up a game force cheaply, but the fact that East did not have enough for a positive response to the club meant the deal was only about playing game. Still 6-0 for Oz Players.

The quarter-final started with Klinger finding an accurate double of his opponents' phantom sacrifice. When Mullamphy stretched to bid 4♥, Klinger decided that an ace was enough defense facing a strong hand. Mullamphy found the excellent trump lead, and declarer had no chance of a club ruff any more. Whatever you think of the merits of the 4♥ bid, chalk the swing up to it. And so it proved. In the other room East discreetly passed 3♠, led a top heart and shifted to trumps for down one. 6-0 to Oz Players.

Stefanov-Iliev bid to 6♥ from the East seat after East had enough for a positive response to the strong club. Declarer could eliminate all the side-suits after drawing trumps, then lead a diamond to the eight, and claim.

Elsewhere some sold out to 2♠, some to 3♥. Plus 300 was the best E/W result, +110 the best for N/S.

Bd: 2  
Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

|       |         |
|-------|---------|
| North | ♠ 1087  |
|       | ♥ J5    |
|       | ♦ J95   |
|       | ♣ KQ986 |

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| West | ♠ AQ52   |
|      | ♥ AK1076 |
|      | ♦ AQ8    |
|      | ♣ 7      |

|      |         |
|------|---------|
| East | ♠ K43   |
|      | ♥ 9432  |
|      | ♦ 10742 |
|      | ♣ A5    |

|       |          |
|-------|----------|
| South | ♠ J96    |
|       | ♥ Q8     |
|       | ♦ K63    |
|       | ♣ J10432 |

Bd: 3  
Dlr: South  
Vul: E/W

|       |        |
|-------|--------|
| North | ♠ AJ3  |
|       | ♥ 963  |
|       | ♦ KJ93 |
|       | ♣ 984  |

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| West | ♠ K98642 |
|      | ♥ J105   |
|      | ♦ 1072   |
|      | ♣ 2      |

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| East | ♠ ---    |
|      | ♥ KQ74   |
|      | ♦ AQ86   |
|      | ♣ AQJ105 |

|       |         |
|-------|---------|
| South | ♠ Q1075 |
|       | ♥ A82   |
|       | ♦ 54    |
|       | ♣ K763  |

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                |                |                  | Pass               |
| Pass           | 1♦             | Dbl              | 1♠                 |
| Dbl            | Pass           | 2♣               | Pass               |
| 2♠             | Pass           | 3NT              | All Pass           |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| Pass           | 1♦               | 1NT                 | Pass        |
| 2♠             | Pass             | 2NT                 | All Pass    |

The third deal saw Mullamphy double 1♦ with a void in spades, hoping to be able to cope with any continuations. That seems optimistic, and so it proved. When Klinger doubled 1♠ Mullamphy settled cautiously for 2♣ but over Klinger's 2♠ rebid he tried 3NT, hoping it would stay fine. Groenenboom led a diamond, ducked his ♥A, and then shifted to spades when in with the ♣K. Down 200.

In a similar position van Prooijen overcalled 1NT—just fine if that shows clubs and a major. That got him to 2NT when Bach allowed for his partner having opened light. Here it was logical for South to lead and continue diamonds, but he still had enough entries to find the spade shift (the queen, of course) at his third turn. Three undertrick-imps to The Netherlands, down 6-3.

Cooke-Garvey and Stefanov-Iliev managed to play a club partscore and go plus; Sementa-Duboin played 2♥ for +200. That must have felt like a missed game.

|           |             |           |  |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|--|
| Bd: 4     | North       |           |  |
| Dlr: West | ♠ K4        |           |  |
| Vul: Both | ♥ KJ4       |           |  |
|           | ♦ K10976532 |           |  |
|           | ♣ ---       |           |  |
| West      |             | East      |  |
| ♠ Q85     |             | ♠ A107    |  |
| ♥ 107532  |             | ♥ Q98     |  |
| ♦ QJ      |             | ♦ ---     |  |
| ♣ 1063    |             | ♣ AKJ8542 |  |
|           | South       |           |  |
|           | ♠ J9632     |           |  |
|           | ♥ A6        |           |  |
|           | ♦ A84       |           |  |
|           | ♣ Q97       |           |  |

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| Pass           | 1♦             | 2♣               | 2♠                 |
| Pass           | 3♦             | Pass             | 3NT                |
| All Pass       |                |                  |                    |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| Pass           | 1♦               | 2♣                  | 2♠          |
| Pass           | 3♦               | Dbl                 | 3NT         |
| Pass           | 4♦               | All Pass            |             |

You can sympathize with Del'Monte's decision to remove 3NT to 4♦ on the given auction. If partner might have bid the same way with a doubleton diamond, the 3-0 diamond split would lead to 3NT going down a bunch while a diamond partscore would be safe. As against that, South might have redoubled 3♦ and then bid 3NT if he had doubt about notrump. It's hard to say, but give some credit to van Prooijen for his double, though 4♣x might have cost 500 or 800. 11 imps to The Netherlands, up 14-6. Not surprisingly, the rest of the field played 3NT.

|            |         |        |  |
|------------|---------|--------|--|
| Bd: 5      | North   |        |  |
| Dlr: North | ♠ J1083 |        |  |
| Vul: N/S   | ♥ AK5   |        |  |
|            | ♦ QJ107 |        |  |
|            | ♣ 105   |        |  |
| West       |         | East   |  |
| ♠ A74      |         | ♠ K652 |  |
| ♥ QJ9763   |         | ♥ 108  |  |
| ♦ 8        |         | ♦ K954 |  |
| ♣ QJ7      |         | ♣ 863  |  |
|            | South   |        |  |
|            | ♠ Q9    |        |  |
|            | ♥ 42    |        |  |
|            | ♦ A632  |        |  |
|            | ♣ AK942 |        |  |

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                | Pass           | Pass             | 1♣                 |
| 1♥             | Dbl            | Pass             | 2♣                 |
| Pass           | 2NT            | Pass             | 3NT                |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
|                | 1♣               | Pass                | 2♣(F)       |
| 3♥             | 3NT              | All Pass            |             |

Both tables reached 3NT here on a heart lead. Del'Monte ducked the heart, won the next, advanced a top diamond, ducked, and a second diamond, covered all around as West pitched a spade. Now declarer had a choice: he could play for the spade honors to be split (or both with East) in which case he should go after spades (hearts were known to be 6-2 here) or he could play for clubs to break, West being known to be 6-1 in the red-suits.

It was no contest: the spade play looks vastly superior on the auction, and duly produced nine tricks. Del'Monte might have been a little peeved to find that clubs were breaking all along, but he would have been delighted with the eventual result on the deal. In 3NT Bob Drijver won the heart lead (the 6-2 break was not so clear here, though ducking the heart might still be right) and went after diamonds.

The  $\diamond Q$  was covered all around. Drijver now elected to play for clubs to break, since here the  $\spadesuit AK$  were more likely to be on his right. When he led a low club from dummy Klinger took his  $\clubsuit Q$ , Drijver unblocking the ten, and cleared hearts. Had Drijver cashed a second diamond he might have changed his mind about the likely club break, but he did not. He immediately finessed the  $\clubsuit 9$ , perhaps influenced by a perceived tempo break on the first club trick, and the roof fell in. Down four and 14 imps to Oz Players, up 20-14. Would you believe that -400 was duplicated by Kendrick-Senior against Lavazza? There's a lot of it about.

Bd: 6 North  
 Dlr: East  $\spadesuit A83$   
 Vul: E/W  $\heartsuit 4$   
 $\diamond AK964$   
 $\clubsuit A1098$

West  
 $\spadesuit QJ52$   
 $\heartsuit AKQ8$   
 $\diamond J$   
 $\clubsuit 7653$

East  
 $\spadesuit 1076$   
 $\heartsuit 1032$   
 $\diamond 103$   
 $\clubsuit KQJ42$

South  
 $\spadesuit K94$   
 $\heartsuit J9765$   
 $\diamond Q8752$   
 $\clubsuit ---$

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                |                | Pass             | Pass               |
| 1 $\clubsuit$  | 1 $\diamond$   | 3 $\clubsuit$    | 4 $\diamond$       |
| Pass           | 5 $\diamond$   | All Pass         |                    |

Closed Room

| West             | North            | East                | South          |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| <i>Verhees</i>   | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i>    |
|                  |                  | Pass                | Pass           |
| 1 $\diamond$ (1) | 1NT              | Pass                | 2 $\diamond$   |
| Pass             | 2 $\heartsuit$   | Pass                | 3 $\diamond$   |
| Pass             | 3 $\spadesuit$   | Pass                | 3NT            |
| Pass             | 4 $\diamond$     | Pass                | 4 $\heartsuit$ |
| Pass             | 5 $\diamond$     | All Pass            |                |

(1) One-plus diamonds

Verhees picked a fine moment to open the suit in which his opponents could make slam. In third seat 1 $\heartsuit$  must have had its attractions too. Those of us who hate off-center notrump overcalls (particularly where passing and doubling hearts would work so well) would have been looking for a final contract of 2 $\heartsuit$  for N/S, but Bach found a second bid—perhaps assuming that either North or West had long clubs, it probably being a toss-up as to which it was—and now Del'Monte had the world's fair. No doubt both North and South were a little worried about whether

their partner really had diamonds, though. My guess is that Oz Players should have been happy to move on with a flat board, and not really to regard this as a missed opportunity. But somehow my computer won't permit me to use the words "Del'Monte" and "happy" in the same sentence.

In the other room Klinger also resisted the temptation to bid hearts, and N/S found diamonds the old-fashioned way. Slam was never really in the picture.

Isporski-Kovachev and Senior-Kendrick had the less-than-enjoyable experience of playing the 5-1 heart fit, going down, and then discovering that their teammates had defended a diamond partscore. Nobody bid slam here.

Bd: 7 North  
 Dlr: South  $\spadesuit A107$   
 Vul: Both  $\heartsuit Q964$   
 $\diamond Q7$   
 $\clubsuit AK98$

West  
 $\spadesuit KJ62$   
 $\heartsuit 873$   
 $\diamond K6542$   
 $\clubsuit 5$

East  
 $\spadesuit Q95$   
 $\heartsuit J105$   
 $\diamond AJ$   
 $\clubsuit QJ432$

South  
 $\spadesuit 843$   
 $\heartsuit AK2$   
 $\diamond 10983$   
 $\clubsuit 1076$

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                |                | Pass             | Pass               |
| Pass           | 1NT            | All Pass         |                    |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
|                |                  | Pass                | Pass        |
| Pass           | 1NT              | Pass                | Pass        |
| Dbl(1)         | Pass             | 2 $\clubsuit$       | Pass        |
| 2 $\diamond$   | All Pass         |                     |             |

(1) Minor plus major

1NT handled for eight tricks on East's normal but unfortunate low club lead. Verhees found an aggressive Woolsey double of 1NT and got to 2 $\diamond$ . The spades split and the  $\diamond Q$  was onside, but there were still six losers. Unlucky; or something. It was, after all, an imp to The Netherlands.

**If drumsticks are for playing drums,  
 then breadsticks are for playing...?**

Bd: 8  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ KQ92  
 ♥ Q8  
 ♦ A84  
 ♣ J1064

West  
 ♠ 87  
 ♥ AKJ97  
 ♦ K652  
 ♣ Q9

East  
 ♠ AJ43  
 ♥ 106532  
 ♦ 93  
 ♣ 32

South  
 ♠ 1065  
 ♥ 4  
 ♦ QJ107  
 ♣ AK875

Bd: 9  
 Dir: North  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ QJ7  
 ♥ Q963  
 ♦ 73  
 ♣ KQ93

West  
 ♠ 653  
 ♥ J52  
 ♦ AKQJ109  
 ♣ 7

South  
 ♠ K84  
 ♥ A10874  
 ♦ 82  
 ♣ J42

East  
 ♠ A1092  
 ♥ K  
 ♦ 654  
 ♣ A10865

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1♥             | Dbl            | 2NT(1)           | 3♥                 |
| Dbl            | 3♠             | 4♥               | Dbl                |

All Pass  
 (1) 6-13 4+♥

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| 2♦(1)          | Pass             | 3♥                  | All Pass    |

(1) Opening bid 5♥, 4+♦

Mullamphy's 2NT gave Groenenboom an evaluation problem. He chose to cue-bid 3♥ when a simple 3♣ bid looks like enough to at least one of the Editors. Klinger doubled, from Mullamphy's perspective announcing ownership, and that persuaded East to bid 4♥ at his next turn, doubled by South to conclude an auction where no one but North would look back on their performance with pride. Had Mullamphy passed 3♠ would N/S have been able to stop in 4♣? As usual, only the shadow knows. The defenders led a top spade, ducked, then accurately found the club shift for +300.

In the other room another patented weapon from the Ekeblad armory was the 2♥ opening, silencing N/S. 3♥ should have drifted down one, but N/S had a carding accident (South cashed two top clubs, saw his partner's echo, and played a third, letting dummy pitch the spade loser). Plus 140 and +300 was 10imps making the score 25-20 for The Netherlands.

The other six results were all part-scores and games going down.

**If a person is outspoken, does that mean he lost a debate?**

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                | Pass           | 1♣               | 1♥                 |
| 2♦             | 2NT(♥)         | Pass             | 3♥                 |

All Pass

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
|                | Pass             | Pass                | 1♥          |
| 2♦             | 2NT(♥)           | 3♥                  | Pass        |
| 4♦             | All Pass         |                     |             |

In the Open Room it would take an accurate defense to set 3NT by East, and I'm not sure it would have been found. But neither East nor West could find a way back into this auction, and they sold out to 3♥, taking their ruffs to set the contract 100. In 4♦ in the other room declarer, West, could not be prevented from obtaining two heart ruffs for ten tricks and an imp. 26-20 now for The Netherlands.

If you do play 3NT, you want to play it from the East seat I suppose. Garvey-Cooke discovered this the hard way against Bocchi-Madala, while in the other room 5♦ was allowed to make when the defenders failed to remove East's spade entry after a heart lead. That let declarer ruff out the clubs and ruff two hearts in dummy, then draw trumps and cross to the ♠A to take the long club for a spade discard.



"Look, it's a bird. No, it's a plane. No, it's..."

Bd: 10  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: Both

West  
 ♠ AJ984  
 ♥ 1073  
 ♦ K32  
 ♣ A9

North  
 ♠ 32  
 ♥ 94  
 ♦ Q97654  
 ♣ K32

East  
 ♠ KQ6  
 ♥ QJ86  
 ♦ A  
 ♣ QJ754

South  
 ♠ 1075  
 ♥ AK52  
 ♦ J108  
 ♣ 1086

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1♥(♠)          | Pass           | 1♣               | Pass               |
| 2♣             | Pass           | 1♠               | Pass               |
| 4♠             | All Pass       | 2♦               | Pass               |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| 2♣(1)          | Pass             | 1♥                  | Pass        |
| 2♥(1)          | Pass             | 2♦(2)               | Pass        |
| 2NT(1)         | Pass             | 2♠                  | Pass        |
| 3♦(1)          | Pass             | 3♣                  | Pass        |
| 4♠             | All Pass         | 3♥                  | Pass        |

(1) Relay

There was no defense to 4♠. The defense could take its heart ruff but build a discard for the club loser, or go passive and let declarer simply give up his three top round-suit losers. Still, maybe 3NT is best. That was reached by Iliev-Stefanov.

Bd: 11  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: None

West  
 ♠ 1083  
 ♥ KJ  
 ♦ KJ5  
 ♣ QJ1095

North  
 ♠ K54  
 ♥ Q9  
 ♦ Q9876  
 ♣ A42

East  
 ♠ AJ976  
 ♥ A854  
 ♦ 103  
 ♣ K6

South  
 ♠ Q2  
 ♥ 107632  
 ♦ A42  
 ♣ 873

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1♣             | 1♦             | 1♥(♠)            | 2♦                 |
| Dbl(1)         | Pass           | 4♠               | All Pass           |

(1) 3-card spade support

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| Pass           | 1♦               | 1♠                  | Pass        |
| 2♦             | Pass             | 2♥                  | Dbl         |
| 2NT            | Pass             | 3♠                  | Pass        |

The two tables are as aggressive a bunch of eight players as you would hope (not) to meet but the strong club methods in play in the Closed Room often prevented the E/W players from opening some minimum unbalanced hands with clubs. Mullamphy was always going to game facing a Klinger opening. Van Prooijen could not envisage game being great once partner denied primary spade support.

Of course 4♠ might have been defeated on a low diamond lead from South (who am I kidding?) but North might have put in the six anyway. Bach and Groenenboom both led the ♦A and that was that. A few finesses later declarer had his 420 and 6imps for Oz Players, to flatten the match.

Both declarers went down in game in Bulgaria-South Sweden. Iliev-Stefanov tried 3NT again (not this time, gentlemen) and Sylvan as West misguessed the play in 4♠ after North had not overcalled. North led a diamond and South continued the suit. South won the first spade (Sylvan led the eight to South's queen) to lead a heart to the jack and queen. The defenders ducked the first club and won the second to play a second heart. This was the position:

|        |        |
|--------|--------|
| ♠ K5   |        |
| ♥ ---  |        |
| ♦ Q98  |        |
| ♣ 4    |        |
| West   | East   |
| ♠ 103  | ♠ AJ97 |
| ♥ ---  | ♥ 85   |
| ♦ J    | ♦ ---  |
| ♣ QJ10 | ♣ ---  |
| South  |        |
| ♠ 2    |        |
| ♥ 1076 |        |
| ♦ 2    |        |
| ♣ 7    |        |

Declarer could no longer draw trumps ending in hand. Had he retained the trump eight by leading low to

dummy initially all would have been well. But when declarer finessed in trumps and tried to ruff a heart to hand, North could over-ruff. For the want of a nail...

Bd: 12 North  
 Dlr: West ♠ A1054  
 Vul: N/S ♥ A732  
 ♦ 97  
 ♣ QJ9

West  
 ♠ 963  
 ♥ KQ5  
 ♦ AQ102  
 ♣ 853

East  
 ♠ J2  
 ♥ 98  
 ♦ K643  
 ♣ AK764

South  
 ♠ KQ87  
 ♥ J1064  
 ♦ J85  
 ♣ 102

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| Pass           | Pass           | 1♣               | Pass               |
| 1♠ (♦)         | Pass           | 2♦               | Pass               |
| Pass           | Dbl            | Pass             | 2♥                 |
| 3♦             | All Pass       |                  |                    |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                     | South |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen Bach</i> |       |
| Pass           | 1♣               | Pass                     | 1♦(♥) |
| Pass           | 1♥               | Pass                     | 1♠    |
| Pass           | 2♥               | All Pass                 |       |

Again, both Oz Players found opening bids that might have had Culbertson rolling in his grave—or killed him off if he were in a fragile state of health. Both located their eight-card fits and played them at a sensible level. 3♦ was easy enough to play with both minors behaving; 2♥ was the heart nine away from being laydown. Del'Monte needed to guess hearts to hold his losers to one: a doubleton honor in either hand would suffice—far more likely than a vulnerable ♥98 in the slot. But those little extra chances... When West turned up with the ♦AQ10 early on Del'Monte decided to play him for heart shortage. He led the ♥J from dummy and now could not go wrong. I'm not sure how this whole deal squares with the LOTT but Del'Monte would take his 6 imps and move on, up 32-26.



"Editor, did someone call for an Editor?"

Bd: 13  
 Dlr: North  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ J64  
 ♥ K5  
 ♦ J6  
 ♣ A97642

West  
 ♠ K8  
 ♥ A743  
 ♦ 542  
 ♣ Q1085

East  
 ♠ A9  
 ♥ QJ10862  
 ♦ A1073  
 ♣ K

South  
 ♠ Q107532  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ KQ98  
 ♣ J3

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| Pass           | Pass           | 1♥               | 2♠                 |
| 3♥             | Pass           | 4♥               | Pass               |
| Pass           | 4♠             | Dbl.             | All Pass           |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                     | South    |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen Bach</i> |          |
| Pass           | Pass             | 2♦(1)                    | Pass     |
| 3♥             | Pass             | 4♥                       | All Pass |
| (1) 5♥+4♦      |                  |                          |          |

One can hardly blame Klinger for leading the ♥A here. That turned 500 into 200 but it does look the least offensive lead. And even after a diamond lead would the defenders have found the club shift?

4♥ by East on a spade lead offers some small extra chances over the straight heart finesse. Declarer has some endplay chances, some swindle chances, and some hopes if the ♣J drops doubleton or tripleton. Declarer opted for simplicity, winning the spade in hand and running the ♥Q. He ducked Del'Monte's shift to a low diamond, and South went back to spades. Declarer won on the board and led a low club towards his king. Del'Monte took the ace and exited with a diamond, but the fall of the ♣J saw the game home. 9 imps for The Netherlands, up 35-32.

One table in each match took the save; all four Souths escaped for -200.



"If I told you once, I told you a million times, it's clubs, diamonds, hearts, then spades."



Bd: 14  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ AQJ65  
 ♥ 7  
 ♦ Q974  
 ♣ 942

West  
 ♠ 9  
 ♥ QJ654  
 ♦ KJ86  
 ♣ 1065

East  
 ♠ 84  
 ♥ K3  
 ♦ A1032  
 ♣ QJ873

South  
 ♠ K10732  
 ♥ A10982  
 ♦ 5  
 ♣ AK

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| Pass           | 3♦(♠)          | Pass             | 1♠                 |
| All Pass       |                | Pass             | 4♠                 |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| Pass           | 4♥(SPL)          | Pass                | 1♠          |
| Pass           | 5♣(1/4)          | Pass                | 4NT         |
| Pass           | 6♠               | All Pass            | 5♦(♠Q?)     |

4♠ wrapped up 480, but against 6♠ Verhees did really well to lead his singleton trump. Declarer now won in dummy—the fatal error—and played ♥A, heart ruff low, ♣K, heart ruff high, ♣A. At this point he needed to ruff a heart low and was over-ruffed. Had he won the first trick in his hand he would have been able to survive the 5-2 break. I'm not sure whether there are other more mundane lies of the cards where declarer needed to win the first trump in dummy; maybe against 3-0 trumps. No doubt Del'Monte would console his partner that he had made the right play but the bottom line was a huge 11-imp swing to The Netherlands instead of 11 the other way.

Fantoni-Nunes made slam here (on a diamond lead). Apteker made slam by guessing correctly at trick one on a trump lead, which was worth 14 imps when Isporski-Kovachev went down, again on the trump lead.



Bd: 15  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ 76  
 ♥ J2  
 ♦ K865  
 ♣ A10763

West  
 ♠ J2  
 ♥ AKQ105  
 ♦ A93  
 ♣ Q52

East  
 ♠ A9543  
 ♥ 98764  
 ♦ J2  
 ♣ 8

South  
 ♠ KQ108  
 ♥ 3  
 ♦ Q1074  
 ♣ KJ94

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1NT            | Pass           | 2♥               | Pass               |
| 2♠             | All Pass       |                  |                    |

Closed Room

| West                   | North            | East                | South       |
|------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i>         | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| 1♥                     | 1♠(1)            | 4♥                  | 1♣          |
| (1)Denying four spades |                  |                     | All Pass    |

Another non-opening bid backfired on Oz Players at both tables. E/W found their hearts easily enough in the Closed Room, but the weak notrump kept them out of hearts when Mullamphy could not show a weak hand with both majors (and even if he had, he might have opted for a partscore). Seven well-deserved imps for The Netherlands, romping away with 28 imps over three deals to lead 53-32.

All the other tables played 4♥, not surprisingly.

Bd: 16  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ AJ  
 ♥ 98  
 ♦ KJ72  
 ♣ K7632

West  
 ♠ K964  
 ♥ AQ10532  
 ♦ A  
 ♣ Q5

East  
 ♠ 732  
 ♥ K76  
 ♦ 854  
 ♣ A984

South  
 ♠ Q1085  
 ♥ J4  
 ♦ Q10963  
 ♣ J10

Open Room

| West           | North          | East             | South              |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Klinger</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Mullamphy</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1♥             | Pass           | 1NT              | Pass               |
| 3♥             | All Pass       |                  |                    |

Closed Room

| West           | North            | East                | South       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Del'Monte</i> | <i>van Prooijen</i> | <i>Bach</i> |
| 1♠             | All Pass         |                     |             |

That ♣98 really came into its own here. In 1♠ on a club lead to the queen (and yes, a diamond lead works rather better) Verhees had protection against the force. And though he lost four trump tricks, that

was it. A triumph for canape, though the mundane 3♥ contract in the other room did net +170 to Oz Players for an imp.

4♥ offered a lot of play at several tables. Kobayashi went down, Stefanov and Zmudzinski both made it. Imagine a trump lead. You win in hand, play a trump to dummy, and lead a spade to the nine. You take the diamond switch and lead a club to the ace and a spade back to the king and ace. Result, misery? Not so fast. North wins and exits with a diamond. You ruff and play the ♣Q, needing only the ♣J10 to fall doubleton and the spades to be blocked. Easy game bridge. You can cross with the ♥6 to dummy's master clubs and shake your two spade losers.

## NEC Quarter-finals (2<sup>nd</sup> Half): Bulgarian All Stars vs South Sweden

by Barry Rigal

The second set started with South Sweden leading 46-44, but only by virtue of a 4-imp late-play penalty assessed on Bulgarian Allstars for late arrival. Fans of "I'm sorry I haven't a clue" will be trying to complete: Mr. and Mrs. Iliev and their son...

Bd: 17  
 Dlr: North  
 Vul: None

|          |
|----------|
| North    |
| ♠ A632   |
| ♥ J4     |
| ♦ J96532 |
| ♣ K      |

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| West    | East   |
| ♠ Q95   | ♠ 874  |
| ♥ A107  | ♥ Q983 |
| ♦ K8    | ♦ AQ4  |
| ♣ J7632 | ♣ Q94  |

|         |
|---------|
| South   |
| ♠ KJ10  |
| ♥ K652  |
| ♦ 107   |
| ♣ A1085 |

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| Pass          | Pass            | Pass         | 1♣              |
| Pass          | 1♥(♠)           | Pass         | 1NT             |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| Pass         | Pass         | Pass            | 1♣             |
| Pass         | 1♠           | Pass            | 1NT            |
| Pass         | 2♦           | Pass            | 2♠             |
| All Pass     |              |                 |                |

In 1NT Kovachev won the club lead and led a spade

to the jack and queen. The defenders returned a club to the queen and ace, and declarer had three spade and three club winners, but no more. Had South played a diamond at trick two the defenders would have set up clubs, and declarer would have been short of entries to set up and enjoy the diamonds.

By contrast 2♠ was a far more complex, if ultimately successful, affair. The defenders led the ♣9 to the ten, jack and ace. Declarer went after diamonds and East won the queen and played a second club. Declarer took the ace, pitching a heart, and played a second diamond. East won and played a third club, Gower pitching his second heart as East won the queen. If East now plays the ♥Q declarer will be forced, and in a poor position. But in fact East played the ♦A, ruffed and over-ruffed, and although a club back now promoted a trump for East, that was only the defenders' fifth trick. Declarer was now firmly in control and could simply draw trumps and run diamonds. 50-44 now.

Of course diamonds was the easiest spot for N/S. SARA-Zimmermann was an honorable push in +110. Others did less well.



"If you want to keep kibitzing, keep your paws of the board."

Bd: 18  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ KQJ105  
 ♥ Q75  
 ♦ K102  
 ♣ A7

West  
 ♠ 962  
 ♥ AJ432  
 ♦ A53  
 ♣ 62

East  
 ♠ 74  
 ♥ K109  
 ♦ 9864  
 ♣ KQJ4

South  
 ♠ A83  
 ♥ 86  
 ♦ QJ7  
 ♣ 109853

Open Room

|                              |                                 |                             |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>West</b><br><i>Sylvan</i> | <b>North</b><br><i>Isporski</i> | <b>East</b><br><i>Wrang</i> | <b>South</b><br><i>Kovachev</i> |
| 1♥                           | 1♠                              | 2♥                          | 2♠                              |
| Pass                         | Pass                            | 3♥                          | All Pass                        |

Closed Room

|                             |                              |                                |                                |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>West</b><br><i>Iliev</i> | <b>North</b><br><i>Gower</i> | <b>East</b><br><i>Stefanov</i> | <b>South</b><br><i>Apteker</i> |
| 1♥                          | 1♠                           | 2♥                             | 2♠                             |
| All Pass                    |                              | Pass                           | Pass                           |

Wrang's trusting 3♥ bid facing a third hand opening at favorable vulnerability got his partner to a very delicate spot. The defenders set up their diamonds and cashed their spades, but did not tap the dummy. That allowed Sylvan to guess the hearts and escape for -50, good for 3 imps against the 140 from the other room when declarer was allowed to take a heart ruff in dummy for his ninth trick. 53-44 now.

Ashley Bach climbed to 3NT here when he treated the North cards as worth a 1NT overcall of 1♥. His opponents expressed an opinion about 1NT, then later—after West had escaped to 2♦—expressed an even more confident opinion about 3NT with a red card. But the defenders led and continued diamonds and not hearts, and thus did not take the maximum (800). They allowed declarer to escape for 200. Curiously, no one else attempted game here.



"Rodin, he's not!"

Bd: 19  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ 3  
 ♥ Q1096  
 ♦ J9765  
 ♣ K106

West  
 ♠ A85  
 ♥ A4  
 ♦ A84  
 ♣ 98754

East  
 ♠ KQJ1076  
 ♥ J7532  
 ♦ Q3  
 ♣ ---

South  
 ♠ 942  
 ♥ K8  
 ♦ K102  
 ♣ AQJ32

Open Room

|                              |                                 |                             |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>West</b><br><i>Sylvan</i> | <b>North</b><br><i>Isporski</i> | <b>East</b><br><i>Wrang</i> | <b>South</b><br><i>Kovachev</i> |
| Pass                         | Pass                            | 2♣(MAJs)                    | 1NT                             |
| Rdbl                         | 3♣                              | All Pass                    | Dbl                             |

Closed Room

|                             |                              |                                |                                |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>West</b><br><i>Iliev</i> | <b>North</b><br><i>Gower</i> | <b>East</b><br><i>Stefanov</i> | <b>South</b><br><i>Apteker</i> |
| Pass                        | 1♥                           | 2♠                             | 1♣                             |
| 4♠                          | All Pass                     |                                | Pass                           |

Stefanov's direct route to spades got him to 4♠ in double-quick time. The defenders led trumps but declarer had ten tricks easily enough: six spades, the ♥A, a heart ruff and a long heart to go with the ♦A.

3♣ was a decent spot for N/S in the other room, but it was certainly surprising that neither West nor East could find a way back into this auction. Maybe the redouble confused matters. Isporski emerged with seven tricks, and the 11 imps meant we had a new leader, All Stars 55-53.

Elsewhere, in Zimmermann-SARA E/W for SARA tried 6♠ (quite a difference of valuation here). Cooke-Garvey found the 5♦ save that was worth 8 imps against 620 from the other room.

Bd: 20  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ K9  
 ♥ Q5  
 ♦ A87532  
 ♣ K53

West  
 ♠ AQ1084  
 ♥ AJ64  
 ♦ 6  
 ♣ 942

East  
 ♠ 75  
 ♥ 872  
 ♦ KQJ1094  
 ♣ 107

South  
 ♠ J632  
 ♥ K1093  
 ♦ ---  
 ♣ AQJ86

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| 1♠            | 2♦              | Pass         | 3♣              |
| Pass          | 3NT             | All Pass     |                 |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| 2♦(1)        | Pass         | Pass            | Dbl            |
| All Pass     |              |                 |                |

(1) Three-suiter short diamonds (based on a mis-sorted hand)

After the trump lead against 2♦x West won in dummy, blinking a little, misguessed spades, and now had only two aces and five trump tricks. Down one, but no tragedy since the 3NT contract reached in the other room had plenty of play. After a spade lead to the ten and king Isporski passed the ♥Q, which held, and finessed in hearts, losing. Now a diamond back would squeeze dummy, a nice-double dummy variant. Sylvan could have afforded to cash one high spade first if he wanted to. But a club was fatal. Declarer won in dummy and played a heart, with enough club communication to unscramble his tricks. That meant 9imps to Bulgaria instead of 6 the other way, and a 64-53 lead.

In other matches Fu brought home 3NT by guessing hearts after an informative auction, as did Bocchi.

If that was bad for South Sweden, this was worse...

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| Bd: 21     | North   |
| Dlr: North | ♠ K10   |
| Vul: N/S   | ♥ 976   |
|            | ♦ K9532 |
|            | ♣ 1074  |

|          |
|----------|
| West     |
| ♠ J94    |
| ♥ Q103   |
| ♦ QJ1084 |
| ♣ J3     |

|         |
|---------|
| East    |
| ♠ Q875  |
| ♥ KJ842 |
| ♦ A     |
| ♣ Q92   |

|         |
|---------|
| South   |
| ♠ A632  |
| ♥ A5    |
| ♦ 76    |
| ♣ AK865 |

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| 2♥            | Pass            | 1♥           | Dbl             |
| Pass          | 3♦              | Pass         | Dbl             |
|               |                 | All Pass     |                 |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| 3♥           | Pass         | 1♥              | Dbl            |
| Pass         | 5♦           | Pass            | Dbl            |
| Dbl.         |              | Pass            | Pass           |

You can say what you like about Apteker's second double (but not in mixed company). I like Gower's action, if he trusts his partner. Mind you, next time... Stefanov cashed his ♦A and shifted to the ♥K. Declarer carefully ducked, then played to take his two spades and a ruff, two club and two heart tricks, then the fourth spade promoted the ♦9 into declarer's ninth trick. 500 was not great, but at least it was not the disaster one might have assumed from looking at all four hands.

And indeed, diamonds *were* reached in the other room, although only 3♦. Is that second double really compulsory? Wrang led a low heart against 3♦ and on the small trump shift declarer guessed to duck in hand. Now the play transposed into exactly the same line as the other room, except for the fact that this was to produce +110 for a 12-imp pick-up. 76-53 now.

Three other tables found this precise maneuver to make 3♦.

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| Bd: 22    | North    |
| Dlr: East | ♠ J10985 |
| Vul: E/W  | ♥ A9     |
|           | ♦ AKQ3   |
|           | ♣ J8     |

|           |
|-----------|
| West      |
| ♠ 7       |
| ♥ K10642  |
| ♦ J108642 |
| ♣ 10      |

|         |
|---------|
| East    |
| ♠ 643   |
| ♥ 753   |
| ♦ 97    |
| ♣ KQ942 |

|         |
|---------|
| South   |
| ♠ AKQ2  |
| ♥ QJ8   |
| ♦ 5     |
| ♣ A7653 |

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| Pass          | 1♥(♠)           | Pass         | 1♣              |
| Pass          | 3♥              | Pass         | 3♦(SPL)         |
| Pass          | 4♦              | Pass         | 3♠              |
| Pass          | 4NT             | Pass         | 4♠              |
| Pass          | 6♠              | All Pass     | 5♦              |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| Pass         | 1♠           | Pass            | 1♣             |
| Pass         | 3♥           | Pass            | 3♦(SPL)        |
| Pass         | 4♦           | Pass            | 4♣             |
| Pass         | 5♥           | Pass            | 4NT            |
| Pass         | 6♦           | Pass            | 5NT            |
| All Pass     |              | Pass            | 6♠             |

Only a club lead gives declarer any pause (otherwise he ruffs a diamond, draws trumps and pitches the club on the heart). Gower received a sneaky low club lead and won to draw one round of trumps then lead out the top diamonds. East did not ruff in (why?) so Gower got two hearts away and had a simple cross-ruff. Sylvan led a diamond as West and declarer followed the suggested route to goal. No swing; still 77-53.

Mizuta-Kobayashi defeated the spade slam here (or maybe declarer defeated himself) while Sementa-Duboin set an ambitious 7♠.

|            |          |
|------------|----------|
| Bd: 23     | North    |
| Dir: South | ♠ AQ9863 |
| Vul: Both  | ♥ J42    |
|            | ♦ 2      |
|            | ♣ Q83    |

|         |
|---------|
| West    |
| ♠ 42    |
| ♥ Q1085 |
| ♦ QJ874 |
| ♣ J9    |

|           |
|-----------|
| East      |
| ♠ ---     |
| ♥ A76     |
| ♦ AK10653 |
| ♣ 10754   |

|          |
|----------|
| South    |
| ♠ KJ1075 |
| ♥ K93    |
| ♦ 9      |
| ♣ AK62   |

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| Pass          | 3♥              | 4♦           | 1♠              |
| 5♦            | 5♠              | All Pass     | Pass            |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| Pass         | 4♦(SPL)      | Dbl             | 1♠             |
| 5♦           | 5♠           | All Pass        | 4♠             |

Both E/W pairs did their duty, getting to 5♦ as fast as propriety would allow, and giving their opponents the last guess. Both Norths got it wrong; though both 5♦ and 5♠ come close, neither can quite do it. Both

East overtook the first diamond to shift to a heart; both declarers guessed right and went up with the king but had to lose two hearts later on when clubs did not behave.

Van Prooijen-Verhees and Cooke-Garvey brought home 620 as N/S when their opponents did not save. Fu-Teramoto bid on to 5♠ but heard their opponents sacrifice in 6♦, and doubled to collect 500.

|            |          |
|------------|----------|
| Bd: 25     | North    |
| Dir: North | ♠ 75     |
| Vul: E/W   | ♥ 76     |
|            | ♦ AK6542 |
|            | ♣ 843    |

|            |
|------------|
| West       |
| ♠ 2        |
| ♥ AK108532 |
| ♦ J7       |
| ♣ J102     |

|         |
|---------|
| East    |
| ♠ Q106  |
| ♥ J4    |
| ♦ 1098  |
| ♣ AQ976 |

|           |
|-----------|
| South     |
| ♠ AKJ9843 |
| ♥ Q9      |
| ♦ Q3      |
| ♣ K5      |

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| 2♥            | 3♦              | 3♥           | 1♠              |
| All Pass      |                 |              | 4♠              |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| 3♥           | 2♦           | Pass            | 2♠             |
| All Pass     | 3♠           | 4♥              | 4♠             |

Both Souths received the lead of a top heart and a signal that indicated hearts were 7-2. Both Wests shifted to the ♣J to the ace and a second club on which West did not play the ten (careless?). Both declarers cashed one top spade, crossed to dummy in diamonds, then finessed in spades. Very nicely done gentlemen.

Quite a few pairs tried the two-step of passing a 3♦ opening as South and then saving in 4♠ over 4♥. Both tables guessed spades in Lavazza-Kendrick (mind you Garvey had been doubled there) and Zimmermann collected 420 as well for a game swing.

**Cowhand: An occupational disability common among dairy farmers.**

Bd: 26  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ 82  
 ♥ 7  
 ♦ AK8  
 ♣ A1087632

West  
 ♠ AKQ3  
 ♥ Q109  
 ♦ Q1092  
 ♣ 95

East  
 ♠ J97  
 ♥ A85432  
 ♦ 63  
 ♣ Q4

South  
 ♠ 10654  
 ♥ KJ6  
 ♦ J754  
 ♣ KJ

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| 1♣            | Pass            | 2♥           | All Pass        |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| 1♦(PRE)      | 3♣           | Pass            | Pass           |
| Dbl.         | Pass         | 4♥              | Pass           |
| Pass         | Dbl          | All Pass        |                |

I'm not sure whether to be more shocked by Isporski's silence at both his turns to speak or Iliev's decision to reopen facing a passed (light-opening) partner. Neither action deserved to succeed but at least Isporski's silence generated a plus score—if in somewhat unlikely fashion. Both declarers misguessed trumps and made only seven tricks. But the undertrick cost Stefanov rather more. Plus 800 and -100 produced 12 imps for South Sweden, down 65-77.

Two tables played 3NT; Cooke-Garvey brought home 600 by guessing clubs, Nunes-Fantoni collected 300 on defense when Teramoto did not.

Bd: 28  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ AK976  
 ♥ Q643  
 ♦ J10  
 ♣ 97

West  
 ♠ QJ854  
 ♥ K2  
 ♦ 94  
 ♣ AQ63

East  
 ♠ 102  
 ♥ AJ8  
 ♦ AKQ75  
 ♣ 842

South  
 ♠ 3  
 ♥ 10975  
 ♦ 8632  
 ♣ KJ105

Open/Closed Rooms

| West          | North           | East            | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i>    | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| <i>Iliev</i>  | <i>Gower</i>    | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i>  |
| 1♠            | Pass            | 2♦              | Pass            |
| 2NT           | Pass            | 3NT             | All Pass        |

Sylvan received a heart lead and won in hand to lead a spade to the ten and a spade back. South pitched a heart, and on North's heart return Sylvan finessed. When it held, he ducked a diamond to ensure nine tricks.

Gower led a low spade and Iliev scooped up the eight to return the suit, South pitching the ♥10. Gower shifted to diamonds and declarer cleared the suit, winning the club shift with the ace to ensure a ninth trick by establishing a second spade trick. Nicely played but no swing.

Only one pair managed to set 3NT. Again, one can't help feeling that Zimmermann-Multon must have had a little help from declarer somewhere along the line.

Bd: 29  
 Dir: North  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ QJ96  
 ♥ Q82  
 ♦ J1065  
 ♣ J5

West  
 ♠ K7  
 ♥ J954  
 ♦ A742  
 ♣ Q76

East  
 ♠ A82  
 ♥ AK1063  
 ♦ 9  
 ♣ 9832

South  
 ♠ 10543  
 ♥ 7  
 ♦ KQ83  
 ♣ AK104

Open Room

| West          | North           | East         | South           |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |
| 2NT           | Pass            | 1♥           | Dbl             |
| 3♥            | Pass            | 3♣           | Pass            |
|               |                 | 4♥           | All Pass        |

Closed Room

| West         | North        | East            | South          |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |
| 2NT          | Pass         | 1♥              | Dbl            |
| 4♥           | All Pass     | 3♣              | Pass           |

Both E/W pairs had come half-way around the world in order to play game and not a partscore. Apteker led a top diamond, forcing declarer to guess hearts, which he did. In the other room three rounds of clubs made declarer's task very straightforward. Two pairs

missed game here; Multon-Zimmerman stole the hand in 3♠ as N/S, Mullamphy-Klinger stopped in 3♥.

Bd: 30 North  
 Dlr: East ♠ Q109832  
 Vul: None ♥ 63

♦ J4  
 ♣ K74

West  
 ♠ AKJ7  
 ♥ Q2  
 ♦ Q105  
 ♣ J962

East  
 ♠ 5  
 ♥ K10875  
 ♦ 972  
 ♣ Q1053

South  
 ♠ 64  
 ♥ AJ94  
 ♦ AK863  
 ♣ A8

Open Room

|               |                 |              |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>West</b>   | <b>North</b>    | <b>East</b>  | <b>South</b>    |
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |

|      |    |      |    |
|------|----|------|----|
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ |
|------|----|------|----|

All Pass

Closed Room

|              |              |                 |                |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>West</b>  | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b>     | <b>South</b>   |
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |

|    |      |      |     |
|----|------|------|-----|
| 1♠ | Pass | Pass | Dbl |
|----|------|------|-----|

All Pass

In the spade partscore and also in the doubled spade partscore N/S can maneuver to ruff a diamond in North and a club in South, then cash the ♥A and subsequently score an over-ruff on the fourth round of diamonds. That is the first eight tricks for N/S, with North left with ♠Q1093. However, West can arrange a trump endplay on North to ensure he takes four tricks in all. That was what happened in 2♠ and also in 1♠x. Again, the extra tricks were worth more to South Sweden than the All Stars. 8 imps to South Sweden, down by only 4 imps. Two deals to go.

Verhees was also doubled in spades but as South, not West (after a 15-17 1NT opening and a balancing double of 2♠ by East he found himself at the helm in 3♠x). He played the same way as our other declarers, coming to +530.



Bd: 31 North  
 Dlr: South ♠ 1042  
 Vul: N/S ♥ K106

♦ KJ1063  
 ♣ 102

West  
 ♠ A8  
 ♥ Q987  
 ♦ 842  
 ♣ Q853

East  
 ♠ KQ763  
 ♥ 2  
 ♦ Q7  
 ♣ AKJ96

South  
 ♠ J95  
 ♥ AJ543  
 ♦ A95  
 ♣ 74

Open Room

|               |                 |              |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>West</b>   | <b>North</b>    | <b>East</b>  | <b>South</b>    |
| <i>Sylvan</i> | <i>Isporski</i> | <i>Wrang</i> | <i>Kovachev</i> |

|      |          |         |      |
|------|----------|---------|------|
| Pass | Pass     | 1♠      | Pass |
| 1NT  | Pass     | 3♣(INV) | Pass |
| 5♣   | All Pass |         |      |

Closed Room

|              |              |                 |                |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>West</b>  | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b>     | <b>South</b>   |
| <i>Iliev</i> | <i>Gower</i> | <i>Stefanov</i> | <i>Apteker</i> |

|      |      |    |          |
|------|------|----|----------|
| Pass | Pass | 1♠ | All Pass |
|------|------|----|----------|

1♠ handled for +170. If the Swedes could find their way to 4♠ they would take the lead. No. Sylvan hoped for a little more shape when he bid 5♣. He knew he was facing a 5-5 maximum invitation with good suits. The more I think about it the better 4♠ looks. South cashed the ♥A and shifted intelligently to diamonds, and the defenders cashed the first three tricks. It was 83-73.

An overtrick imp on the last deal made it 84-74. Well done by the Bulgarians but had Sylvan bid 4♠ on Board 31 that late-arrival penalty would have taught the All Stars that "Early to bed, early to rise" works equally well in Bulgarian.

None of the other three matches were close. Kendrick won the second half but lost by 26 overall, the other two matches were blowouts for The Netherlands and Zimmermann.



"Your bridge is simply un-bear-able!"

# NEC Semi-finals (1<sup>st</sup> Half): Lavazza vs The Netherlands

by Rich Colker

Bd: 1  
 Dir: North  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ 10653  
 ♥ Q32  
 ♦ 8764  
 ♣ J5

|            |          |
|------------|----------|
| West       | East     |
| ♠ AJ2      | ♠ K87    |
| ♥ 94       | ♥ AKJ107 |
| ♦ K        | ♦ Q105   |
| ♣ KQ108743 | ♣ A9     |

South  
 ♠ Q94  
 ♥ 865  
 ♦ AJ932  
 ♣ 62

## Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
|                | Pass          | 1♣              | 1♦            |
| 2♣             | 3♦            | 3♥              | Pass          |
| 4♣             | Pass          | 5♣              | Pass          |
| 6♣             | All Pass      |                 |               |

## Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|               | Pass           | 1♥             | Pass               |
| 2♣            | Pass           | 2NT            | Pass               |
| 3♣            | Pass           | 3♥             | Pass               |
| 3♠            | Pass           | 4♣             | Pass               |
| 4♦            | Pass           | 4♥             | Pass               |
| 4♠            | Pass           | 4NT            | Pass               |
| 6♣            | All Pass       |                |                    |

Both rooms get kudos for reaching the excellent 6♣, but Duboin-Sementa get extra style points for the sheer bulk of their auction. The ♦A was taken at trick one at both tables and both declarers showed welcome consideration for the Vugraph audience by claiming as soon as both their opponents followed to the first round of trumps. A push at +920 (similarly in the other match).

Bd: 2  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ AQJ653  
 ♥ 106  
 ♦ J7  
 ♣ K63

|          |         |
|----------|---------|
| West     | East    |
| ♠ 104    | ♠ 82    |
| ♥ 75     | ♥ KQ932 |
| ♦ A86532 | ♦ 1094  |
| ♣ 972    | ♣ A105  |

South  
 ♠ K97  
 ♥ AJ84  
 ♦ KQ  
 ♣ QJ84

## Open/Closed Rooms

| West           | North          | East            | South              |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i>  | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i>      |
| <i>Duboin</i>  | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i>  | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|                |                | Pass            | 1NT                |
| Pass           | 2♥             | Dbl             | 2♠                 |
| Pass           | 4♠             | All Pass        |                    |

Another flat board when East's double allowed West to find the heart lead to hold declarer to ten tricks. A pair of 620s and still 0-0.

Normal enough, you'd think, but something weird happened to the All Stars when N/S had a mix-up over their four-level actions over the strong notrump. This led to a final contract of 4♠ and unluckily the defender with six diamonds was on lead. 4NT went down 300 and Zimmermann led 14-1.

Bd: 3  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ 3  
 ♥ AQ10742  
 ♦ 1063  
 ♣ A102

|        |         |
|--------|---------|
| West   | East    |
| ♠ A72  | ♠ K1054 |
| ♥ K6   | ♥ J85   |
| ♦ Q752 | ♦ AJ    |
| ♣ KQ87 | ♣ J954  |

South  
 ♠ QJ986  
 ♥ 93  
 ♦ K984  
 ♣ 63

## Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
|                |               | Pass            | Pass          |
| 1♦             | 1♥            | Dbl             | Pass          |
| 1♠             | 2♥            | All Pass        |               |

## Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|               |                |                | 2♠(1)              |
| Pass          | 2NT            | Pass           | 3♦                 |
| All Pass      |                |                |                    |

(1) Muiderberg two (5M+4<sup>+</sup>m): so 5♠+4m

2♥ depends on the opening lead: a club allows declarer to duck and later ruff one of his club losers in dummy for his contract-fulfilling trick. Van Prooijen led the ♠5 to the queen and ace, and Verhees accurately switched to a low heart to Bocchi's queen. Bocchi drew a second trump, played a diamond to



the jack and king, and fooled around for a few tricks, eventually finishing one down; -50 for N/S.

Groenenboom's 2♠ showed five spades and an undisclosed four-card or longer minor. 2NT appears to have asked for the minor and the buggy came to rest in a less than great spot. Live by the Muiderberg, die by the Muiderberg. Duboin got off to the good trump lead to the ace and Sementa accurately continued the suit, his jack losing to the king. Groenenboom tabled the ♥9 and passed it to Sementa's jack. A club came back to the queen, ducked, and Duboin cashed the ♦Q before returning to clubs. Groenenboom won the ace, played a spade to the queen and ace, ruffed the club return, and played a heart to the king and ace. He pitched a losing spade on the ♥Q as Duboin ruffed, then settled for down four when the defense cashed a club and a spade; -200, and 4 imps to Lavazza, 4-0.

If you thought that was exciting, boy, you ain't seen nothing yet, b-b-baby. Isporski heard Kovachev open 2♠ and let it go; down 50 on competent defense. In the other room Zimmermann tried 2♠ with the two-suited hand. West doubled, Multon bid 3♣, pass-or-correct, and Iliev bid 3NT. When this was doubled by Multon in the pass-out seat Stefanov redoubled, arguing strongly that he had retained the ♦A and a few other cards (perhaps from the previous deal). Zimmerman found the heart lead, and declarer had seven tricks, the defense 1000 smackers. A second consecutive 14 imps, and 28-1 to Zimmermann.

Board 4 was a push, both E/W pairs scoring +90 in 1NT. Still 4-0, Lavazza.

Bd: 5            North  
 Dir: North    ♠ 863  
 Vul: N/S      ♥ AJ84  
                   ♦ A105  
                   ♣ A65

West  
 ♠ A75  
 ♥ 532  
 ♦ KJ762  
 ♣ QJ

East  
 ♠ KQJ942  
 ♥ KQ6  
 ♦ ---  
 ♣ 10984

South  
 ♠ 10  
 ♥ 1097  
 ♦ Q9843  
 ♣ K732

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
|                | 1♣            | 1♠              | Pass          |
| 2♦             | Pass          | 4♠              | All Pass      |

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|               | 1♠             | 1♠             | Pass               |
| 2♣            | Pass           | 4♦             | Pass               |
| 4♠            | All Pass       |                |                    |

With entries to dummy in short supply, 4♠ looks a bit precarious. True, declarer can lead hearts toward his hand twice by using the ♠A as one entry and a club ruff as a second to come home with ten tricks, but no heroics were necessary as both defenses led hearts for declarer, Madala on opening lead and Drijver after winning the opening club lead with his ace. No swing with matching 420s. Still 4-0 Lavazza.

Bd: 6            North  
 Dir: East      ♠ 632  
 Vul: E/W      ♥ 10853  
                   ♦ AQ7  
                   ♣ A103

West  
 ♠ KJ105  
 ♥ QJ9742  
 ♦ 952  
 ♣ ---

East  
 ♠ A8  
 ♥ 6  
 ♦ J643  
 ♣ KJ9876

South  
 ♠ Q974  
 ♥ AK  
 ♦ K108  
 ♣ Q542

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
|                |               | Pass            | 1NT           |
| Pass           | 2♣            | Dbl             | 2♠            |
| Pass           | 3NT           | All Pass        |               |

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|               |                | Pass           | 1♣                 |
| 1♥            | 1♠(1)          | Pass           | 1NT                |
| Pass          | Pass           | 2♣             | Pass               |
| 2♥            | Dbl            | All Pass       |                    |

(1) Denies more than three spades

Madala's "strong" notrump opening propelled his side into game, and van Prooijen must have felt some disappointment when his partner ignored his lead-directing double and tabled a diamond. Madala won the queen to start spades from the table: ♠2, 8, 9, J. The next two tricks were won by the ♦A and ♠A, followed by a third round of diamonds to declarer's king. But when the ♠Q failed to bring down the two outstanding cards in that suit, Madala floated two away; -100 for N/S.

In the Closed Room Sementa balanced in his fine six-card suit—well, at least *he* thought it was fine. Not so his partner, who retreated to 2♥. Drijver had heard enough and flashed his red card to make sure the vehicle came to a complete stop. Screeeeech! The defense got off to an unfortunate start when Drijver led a *low* spade. Duboin captured the queen with his king, led a second spade to dummy's ace, and played a heart off. Groenenboom won the king and switched back to spades, allowing Duboin to score his jack. Aaargh! Now the ♥J was led to the ace and Groenenboom played a fourth spade. Drijver ruffed with his natural trump trick, cashed the ♣A as declarer ruffed, saw his ♥10 fall under declarer's queen, and sat back to wait for the defense's three diamond tricks. That was down one, +200 for N/S, when 500 might have been possible, and The Netherlands took over the lead at 7-4.

Both tables played 2♥ undoubled by West in Zimmermann-All Stars. Multon-Zimmermann set up spades for declarer but did not get the ruff, while Kovachev-Isporski at least ruffed away the fourth round of spades and set the contract by a trick. 28-6 for Zimmermann.

Bd: 7 North  
 Dir: South ♠ J6  
 Vul: Both ♥ AKJ5  
 ♦ KJ954  
 ♣ 32

|          |         |
|----------|---------|
| West     | East    |
| ♠ K95    | ♠ A1032 |
| ♥ Q10876 | ♥ 942   |
| ♦ 2      | ♦ 863   |
| ♣ A1087  | ♣ QJ4   |

South  
 ♠ Q874  
 ♥ 3  
 ♦ AQ107  
 ♣ K965

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
| 1♥             | 2♣(1)         | 2♥              | 1♣            |
| Pass           | 3NT           | All Pass        | 3♦            |

(1) ART, GF

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| Pass          | 1♦             | Pass           | 1♠                 |
| Pass          | 1NT            | Pass           | 2♣                 |
| Pass          | 2♦             | Pass           | 3♦                 |
| Pass          | 3♥             | Pass           | 3NT                |
| All Pass      |                |                | Pass               |

Both N/S pairs' auctions propelled them into 3NT on their combined 24 HCP. We've all been there, done that. But this time Briggida, the goddess of the pasteboards, had devilry rather than beguilement in mind. In the Open Room van Prooijen led the ♥4 to the queen and ace. With eight tricks on top Bocchi crossed to the ♦Q and led a spade in search of his ninth. The jack lost to the ace and Van Prooijen switched accurately to the ♣J, which held, then the ♣Q, which also held (with no entries to lead a third round Bocchi would have done better to cover East's second club), and finally a third club. Verhees was about to cash out the suit, but Bocchi, not one to enjoy watching the opponents cash tricks, quickly conceded two down; -200 for N/S.

Against Drijver's 3NT Sementa got off to the good ♣Q lead to the king and ace. Duboin switched to a heart as Drijver inserted the jack. With danger lurking around the corner of every play, Drijver exercised fine judgment by cashing out for down one, -100 for N/S. That was 3 more imps to the Dutch, who increased their lead to 10-4. "Over and out" (with deference to Broderick Crawford).

In our other match Zimmermann played 3NT as South on a heart lead. He finessed at once and that got him to eight tricks, but no further. The defenders had two spades and three clubs as soon as they got in. One down seemed cheap at the price. However, Kovachev-Isporski opened a nebulous club and used transfer responses—essentially bidding 1♣-1♥-1♠-3NT. The defenders played three rounds of spades, not seeing the danger (would you?). Declarer took a heart finesse and tabled his hand, claiming one spade, three hearts and five diamonds. 12 imps to All Stars, down 28-18.

Bd: 8 North  
 Dir: West ♠ KJ3  
 Vul: None ♥ 2  
 ♦ KQ95432  
 ♣ 103

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| West       | East    |
| ♠ A        | ♠ Q9642 |
| ♥ KQJ10953 | ♥ 74    |
| ♦ J        | ♦ A1087 |
| ♣ A542     | ♣ Q9    |

South  
 ♠ 10875  
 ♥ A86  
 ♦ 6  
 ♣ KJ876

Open Room

| West            | North         | East            | South         |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i>  | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
| 1♣(1)           | 3♦            | 3♥(♠)           | Pass          |
| 4♥              | All Pass      |                 |               |
| (1) Strong, ART |               |                 |               |

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1♥            | 3♦             | Pass           | Pass               |
| 4♥            | All Pass       |                |                    |

We're sure van Prooijen wasn't planning to play in hearts, but hey, sometimes "stuff" happens. He won the diamond lead, ruffed a diamond to dummy as South pitched a spade, and tried a club to the queen and king. Now the ♥A and a heart cooked his goose, and he quickly conceded down one; +50 for N/S. At the other table 4♥ suffered the same fate, so no swing, still The Netherlands ahead 10-4.

In our other match Balicki declared 4♥ and knew that the club finesse would fail. He ran a few trumps and side-suit winners early on but eventually lost three clubs and a trump. In the other room Zimmermann as South won an early club and played a *low* trump, letting Stefanov ruff a club with that precious ♥7. 10 imps to All Stars and the match was level at 28. Would anyone argue with our prediction that this one was going to be close?

Bd: 9 North  
 Dir: North ♠ K10865  
 Vul: E/W ♥ 10984  
 ♦ 9  
 ♣ KQ5

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| West    | East    |
| ♠ AJ9   | ♠ Q743  |
| ♥ 63    | ♥ AKQ52 |
| ♦ J83   | ♦ 1065  |
| ♣ A9842 | ♣ 3     |

South  
 ♠ 2  
 ♥ J7  
 ♦ AKQ742  
 ♣ J1076

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
|                | Pass          | 1♠              | 2♦            |
| Dbf            | Pass          | 2♥              | All Pass      |

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|               | Pass           | 1♥             | 3♦                 |
| Dbf           | Pass           | 3♠             | All Pass           |

Van Prooijen's auction was canape (the weak kind, we suspect) and even then he was too high. Madala led the ♦A and switched to a spade. Van Prooijen rose with the ace, drew three rounds of trumps, then played a spade to the jack and king. Bocchi cashed the ♥10 and van Prooijen conceded down one; +100

for N/S.

In the Closed Room Groenenboom led the ♦K against Sementa's 3♠, then cashed two more (Drijver pitching hearts) before shifting to a club. Sementa rose with the ace, ruffed a club, cashed two top hearts, and played a third heart discarding a club from dummy as Groenenboom pitched a diamond and Drijver ruffed. Sementa ruffed the club return, led a spade to the ace, and called for a club from dummy to score his last trick with the ♠Q. Down two, +200 for N/S, and 3 more imps to The Netherlands whose lead grew to 13-4.

Truly weird things were happening in the other match (and remember, we've seen it all). Kovachev, South, overcalled 3NT over Balicki's 1♥ opening. When this was doubled and his partner retreated to 4♣, he passed. Would he have sat for it if doubled? 4♣ undoubled went down three. Minus 150 was not a tragedy but hardly a triumph, particularly in the context of the fact that Multon opened the North hand 2♥ (both majors Weak, with a capital W) and Zimmermann ran to 3♦ when doubled. Stefanov upped the ante with a red card and led a heart. The defenders now had club ruffs and trump promotions coming out the wazoo, but they actually cashed their four plain winners (heart, heart, club, spade) then played another spade. Hm. Declarer drew trumps and claimed 470 while learning some new Bulgarian vocabulary. 40-28 for Zimmermann.

On Board 10 both South's played 2♥ in their 4-3 fit and came home with an overtrick (through no particular fault of their own) for no swing. We shall dispense with our usual chronicle of the details of the play since our supply of sarcasm is temporarily running low. But fear not. We're expecting a refueling tanker any minute and Barry will have a full supply in time for the second half.

By contrast, both N/S pairs in our other match played 3NT, a hopeless contract that duly went down two when defended by the Poles, and was allowed to make in the other room after a series of unfortunate events that even Lemony Snicket would have a hard time believing. After ten deals each side had scored imps on four boards, but Zimmermann led 53-28.



"...and then he just PASSED!"

Bd: 11 North  
 Dir: South ♠ Q8542  
 Vul: None ♥ 542  
 ♦ A  
 ♣ KJ75

West  
 ♠ AK  
 ♥ AQJ103  
 ♦ Q10843  
 ♣ 6

East  
 ♠ J1093  
 ♥ 96  
 ♦ KJ976  
 ♣ 93

South  
 ♠ 76  
 ♥ K87  
 ♦ 52  
 ♣ AQ10842

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
| 1♣(1)          | Pass          | 1♦              | Pass          |
| 2♥             | 3♥            | Dbl             | 2♣            |
| Pass           | 4♣            | Pass            | Pass          |
| 4♦             | All Pass      |                 |               |

(1) Strong, ART

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1♥            | 1♠             | Pass           | 2♣                 |
| Dbl           | 3♣             | 3♦             | Pass               |
| 3♠            | Pass           | 4♣             | Dbl                |
| 5♦            | All Pass       |                |                    |

Well, what can one say about the E/W auction in the Open Room when one's supply of sarcasm is running low? Oh, wait, there's the truck now. Oy, vey! (It seems Migry and the Israelis are still here in spirit.) Someone needed to bid one more diamond, and we're betting his initials are RvP. When our partner bids a new suit for the first time at the four level in which we hold king-jack-nine-fifth, we feel we owe him at least a "token" raise. 4♦ made with two overtricks: Declarer won the spade lead, played a trump, won the spade return, drew the last trump, and took the heart finesse before the defense got around to cashing a club; +170 for E/W.

The Italians in the Closed Room bid their cards to the hilt, and were rewarded with +400 despite their failure to take in an overtrick. That was 6 imps to Lavazza, who closed to within 3 at 13-10. Both tables played 5♦ for +400 in the other semi-final.

**If you've never owned a telescope, it's worth looking into.**

Bd: 12 North  
 Dir: West ♠ KJ102  
 Vul: N/S ♥ J982  
 ♦ A84  
 ♣ 72

West  
 ♠ 965  
 ♥ K43  
 ♦ KQ6  
 ♣ AK84

East  
 ♠ A7  
 ♥ AQ10765  
 ♦ J7  
 ♣ QJ9

South  
 ♠ Q843  
 ♥ ---  
 ♦ 109532  
 ♣ 10653

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
| 1NT            | Pass          | 2♦(♥)           | Pass          |
| 2♥             | Pass          | 4♥              | All Pass      |

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East            | South              |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i>  | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1NT           | Pass           | 2♦(♥)           | Pass               |
| 2♥            | Pass           | 2♠ <sup>®</sup> | Pass               |
| 2NT           | Pass           | 3♠              | Pass               |
| 4♣            | Pass           | 4♥              | All Pass           |

Verhees-van Prooijen failed even to sniff at the possibility of slam, which is perhaps symptomatic of the modern tendency to open light (even in notrump) so that responder is afraid to investigate slam with forward-going values for fear of revealing too much to the opponents when it is likely that the hand will ultimately be played only in game. Of course that does not seem to apply as much to the top Italian players whose openings are not as unreliable as those of many other top players. And so it was here. Duboin-Sementa took their time, East found out enough about West's hand to make a slam noise, but when he finally felt he had done enough West dropped him in 4♥ with prime, albeit minimum, values. Perhaps the information conveyed was truly inadequate to reveal the near-perfect fit. Or perhaps, as one editor (*BR*) put it, Duboin was justified in his pass of 4♥ since if Sementa really had a slam try he would have bid the slam himself. Still, with all of that action it's disappointing that E/W could not get past game. A pair of 480s and still 13-10.

Both pairs in the other semi-final duplicated the Open Room auction shown above; let's face it, it is a tough hand.

**The future isn't what it used to be.**

Bd: 13 North  
 Dir: North ♠ 10  
 Vul: Both ♥ Q10873  
 ♦ K86  
 ♣ K765

West  
 ♠ 9853  
 ♥ J954  
 ♦ A102  
 ♣ Q10

East  
 ♠ Q7  
 ♥ AK62  
 ♦ J4  
 ♣ AJ932

South  
 ♠ AKJ642  
 ♥ ---  
 ♦ Q9753  
 ♣ 84

Open Room

| West     | North  | East     | South  |
|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Verhees  | Bocchi | Prooijen | Madala |
|          | Pass   | 1NT      | 2♠(1)  |
| Pass     | 3♣     | Pass     | 3♦     |
| All Pass |        |          |        |

(1) Spades and a minor

Closed Room

| West     | North   | East    | South       |
|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin   | Drijver | Sementa | Groenenboom |
|          | Pass    | 1♣      | 3♠          |
| All Pass |         |         |             |

Bocchi-Madala reached a good spot when they landed in 3♦. Verhees blew the defense's second trump trick when he lead a small trump: 6, J, Q. Madala must have played the notrump opener on his right to have all the high diamonds and the ♣A and played to set up spades in a rather unorthodox way —by leading low to the ten. Van Prooijen won the queen and played a diamond to Verhees, who accurately worked out to switch to the ♣Q. He followed this with the ten and when both cards held Madala claimed the rest for +110.

In the Closed Room Groenenboom decided to treat his hand as a spade one-suiter and was allowed to lay in the grave he had dug himself. Duboin got off to the ♣Q lead, which held, and when he continued with the ♣10 Sementa overtook with the jack to play hearts. Declarer ruffed the first heart, played a diamond to the king, a spade to the queen and king, then exited with a low diamond. In with the ♦J Sementa played the ♣A, ruffed with the 6 and over-ruffed with the 8, and Duboin now cashed his ♦A for down one; -100 for N/S. That was 5 more imps to Lavazza, who finally regained the lead at 15-13.

Zimmermann went +200 in both rooms. In one room they defended 4♦ when Isporski came in over a strong notrump to show spades and a minor and jumped to 4♦ over the 2NT relay (perhaps 3♣ in

response was pass-or-correct and 2NT showed values). In the other room E/W bought the hand in hearts when Zimmermann went low as South, and declarer followed an eclectic line that involved rejecting the club finesse. 62-28 now. That prediction about a close match might have to be slightly recast.

Bd: 14 North  
 Dir: East ♠ AQ  
 Vul: None ♥ QJ862  
 ♦ J875  
 ♣ 94

West  
 ♠ K75432  
 ♥ A975  
 ♦ ---  
 ♣ 1052

East  
 ♠ J109  
 ♥ 4  
 ♦ K10932  
 ♣ KQJ6

South  
 ♠ 86  
 ♥ K103  
 ♦ AQ64  
 ♣ A873

Open Room

| West    | North  | East     | South  |
|---------|--------|----------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi | Prooijen | Madala |
|         |        | Pass     | 1♣     |
| 2♠      | Dbl    | 4♠       | Pass   |
| Pass    | Dbl    | All Pass |        |

Closed Room

| West   | North   | East     | South       |
|--------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver | Sementa  | Groenenboom |
|        |         | Pass     | 1♣          |
| 2♣     | 2NT     | All Pass |             |

Against 4♠x in the Open Room Bocchi led the ♦7 to the 2, 4, and ♠2. Verhees led a club to the king and ace and Madala led a spade through as Bocchi cashed the ace-queen. In time the defense had to come to a heart trick and Verhees finished one down; +100 for N/S.

In the Closed Room Duboin showed both majors and Drijver bid a natural 2NT, just as we all would under the circumstances. With a near minimum Groenenboom went quietly when nine tricks were there for the taking (hearts being an unexpected source of tricks); +150 for N/S, and 2 imps back to The Netherlands, who tied the score at 15-15.

Balicki-Zmudzinski bought the hand at 3♠, when Zmudzinski made a simple overcall rather than a jump in spades as West. Meanwhile, their teammates defended 4♠x; another 7 imps for Zx2. The lead was 69-28.

**A laugh is a smile with a hole in it.**

Bd: 15 North  
 Dir: South ♠ Q10832  
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q1093  
 ♦ 10753  
 ♣ ---

West  
 ♠ A94  
 ♥ 865  
 ♦ Q2  
 ♣ KQ854

East  
 ♠ K7  
 ♥ K742  
 ♦ AK84  
 ♣ J97

South  
 ♠ J65  
 ♥ AJ  
 ♦ J96  
 ♣ A10632

Bd: 16 North  
 Dir: West ♠ Q104  
 Vul: E/W ♥ K10  
 ♦ AKQ106  
 ♣ 976

West  
 ♠ AJ532  
 ♥ 954  
 ♦ J53  
 ♣ AK

East  
 ♠ K97  
 ♥ J82  
 ♦ 984  
 ♣ 8432

South  
 ♠ 86  
 ♥ AQ763  
 ♦ 72  
 ♣ QJ105

Open Room

|                |               |                 |               |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>West</b>    | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>     | <b>South</b>  |
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |

|      |       |      |    |
|------|-------|------|----|
| Pass | 2♦(1) | Pass | 2♠ |
|------|-------|------|----|

(1) 5 spades, four-plus hearts, weak

All Pass  
 Closed Room

|               |                |                |                    |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>West</b>   | <b>North</b>   | <b>East</b>    | <b>South</b>       |
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |

|     |      |     |          |
|-----|------|-----|----------|
| 1♣  | Pass | 1♦  | Pass     |
| 1NT | Pass | 3NT | All Pass |

Bocchi described a weak hand with longer spades than hearts and Madala got out in the pair's known eight-card fit. This figured to be a good result since E/W possessed a combined 25 HCP and were cold for 3NT. Hah! Against 2♠ Verhees led queen and a diamond and van Prooijen cashed the ace and continued the suit, looking to promote something for his partner in trumps. Madala ruffed with the ♠J as Verhees pitched a heart. Madala led a spade to the ten and king and van Prooijen returned a heart to declarer's jack. A second spade drew the ace and when Verhees returned his last spade Madala still had to lose a heart. Down one, -100 for N/S.

In the other room Duboin-Sementa had no problem bidding and making 3NT. That was +400 for E/W and a 7-imp gain for Lavazza, who took the lead again at 22-15.



"Oooo, that's it, just a bit higher."

Open Room

|                |               |                 |               |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>West</b>    | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>     | <b>South</b>  |
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |

|      |     |      |       |
|------|-----|------|-------|
| 1♠   | 1NT | Pass | 3♦(♥) |
| Pass | 3♥  | Pass | 3NT   |

All Pass  
 Closed Room

|               |                |                |                    |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>West</b>   | <b>North</b>   | <b>East</b>    | <b>South</b>       |
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |

|          |     |      |       |
|----------|-----|------|-------|
| 1♠       | 1NT | Pass | 2♦(♥) |
| Pass     | 3♥  | Pass | 3NT   |
| All Pass |     |      |       |

N/S bid to 3NT at both tables and had ten tricks available—if only they could get in to take them. Of course they can take them if they guess spades correctly. Would they? In the Open Room Van Prooijen led a low spade to the ace and Verhees returned the deuce putting Bocchi to the test. As a retired teacher I can say with some assurance that he would not receive a passing grade for his play of the queen at trick two. Down three. But the same fate befell Drijver in the other room and the board ended up a push at -150 for N/S. Lavazza had survived the first half and would take a commanding 7-imp lead into half two.

Both tables played 3NT in our other match. Yet another big swing went to the Z-squad when Stefanov won his partner's spade lead (the systemic ♠9) against 3NT and shifted dramatically to a heart. Unimpressed, Multon claimed his game a few moments later and the All Stars had had enough; down 82-28, they retired for an early dinner.



"Now write 100 times: 'I will not issue time penalties.'"

# NEC Semi-finals (2<sup>nd</sup> Half): Lavazza vs The Netherlands

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 17  
Dlr: North  
Vul: None

North  
♠ Q95  
♥ A732  
♦ Q932  
♣ 94

West  
♠ A1083  
♥ 106  
♦ A84  
♣ A1063

East  
♠ J76  
♥ KJ4  
♦ K10765  
♣ K2

South  
♠ K42  
♥ Q985  
♦ J  
♣ QJ875

Open Room

| West    | North  | East     | South    |
|---------|--------|----------|----------|
| Verhees | Bocchi | Prooijen | Madala   |
| Pass    | Pass   | Pass     | 1♣       |
| Pass    | 1♥     | Pass     | 2♥       |
| Dbl     | Pass   | 2NT      | Pass     |
| 3♣      | Pass   | 3♦       | All Pass |

Closed Room

| West   | North    | East    | South       |
|--------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver  | Sementa | Groenenboom |
| Pass   | Pass     | 1♦      | Pass        |
| 1♠     | Pass     | 1NT     | Pass        |
| 3NT    | All Pass |         |             |

3NT handled like a dream. Sementa won the low club lead in hand and negotiated the diamonds for no losers, then set up a heart for his ninth trick. Problem? What problem?

3♣ was far tougher. Madala hit on the *faux-naif* lead of the ♦J; surely a player with such an innocent, albeit bearded, face would have the ♦QJ doubleton. So thought van Prooijen and, after misguessing hearts, he played trumps from the top. He might have done better to try to scramble in his trumps separately; that leads to nine tricks without a guess. When he lost two spades as well, he had to go down one. 10 imps and 32-15 now for Lavazza.



"Nice bid!"

Bd: 18  
Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ A8762  
♥ QJ4  
♦ J74  
♣ K7

West  
♠ J54  
♥ AK3  
♦ KQ8  
♣ AQJ9

East  
♠ 9  
♥ 875  
♦ A32  
♣ 865432

South  
♠ KQ103  
♥ 10962  
♦ 10965  
♣ 10

Open Room

| West    | North    | East     | South  |
|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi   | Prooijen | Madala |
| Pass    | Pass     | Pass     | Pass   |
| 1♣(STR) | Pass     | 1♦(WK)   | Pass   |
| 1NT     | Pass     | 2♠(♣)    | Pass   |
| 2NT     | Pass     | 3NT      | Pass   |
| 5♣      | All Pass |          |        |

Closed Room

| West   | North   | East    | South       |
|--------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver | Sementa | Groenenboom |
| Pass   | Pass    | Pass    | Pass        |
| 2NT    | Pass    | 3♠(1)   | Dbl         |
| Pass   | Pass    | 4♣      | Pass        |
| 4♥     | Pass    | 5♣      | All Pass    |

(1) Transfer

Both tables did well to avoid 3NT; each played 5♣. The losing club finesse doomed their game but it would still have picked up imps against the 3NT contract that would have been popular even in a decent field. No swing.

Bd: 19  
Dlr: South  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ AJ95  
♥ K  
♦ KQJ  
♣ K10875

West  
♠ KQ86  
♥ J2  
♦ 97654  
♣ 32

East  
♠ 107  
♥ 10984  
♦ A832  
♣ Q94

South  
♠ 432  
♥ AQ7653  
♦ 10  
♣ AJ6

Open Room

| West    | North  | East     | South  |
|---------|--------|----------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi | Prooijen | Madala |
| Pass    | 2♣     | Pass     | 3♣     |
| Pass    | 3♦     | Pass     | 3♠     |
| Pass    | 3NT    | Pass     | 4♣     |
| Pass    | 4♥     | All Pass |        |

Closed Room

| West     | North   | East    | South       |
|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin   | Drijver | Sementa | Groenenboom |
| Pass     | 2♣      | Pass    | 2♥          |
| Pass     | 2♠      | Pass    | 3♣          |
| Pass     | 3♦      | Pass    | 3♥          |
| Pass     | 3♠      | Pass    | 4♦          |
| Pass     | 4♥      | Pass    | 5♣          |
| All Pass |         |         |             |

4♥ had 10 top winners on any lead but a small spade from West (yeah right). Madala took them.

You wouldn't want to play 6♣ here but you might make it if you were in it. Even on a spade lead you would win and unblock hearts, find the ♣Q perforce and ruff out the hearts, then draw trumps and pitch your spades on the good hearts, to give up a diamond at the death. Curiously, 5♣ is a lot harder to play since there are more options as to what can and can't be done. The defenders led and continued diamonds. Declarer won the second, pitched a spade, then unblocked hearts and played ♣K and a club to dummy's ace. He could cash two top hearts, pitching spades, and ruff the other spade in dummy. Sensible enough but an imp lost; 33-15 now. An overtrick imp to Italy; they led 33-15.

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| Bd: 20    | North   |
| Dlr: West | ♠ ---   |
| Vul: Both | ♥ AQ432 |
|           | ♦ KJ854 |
|           | ♣ 643   |

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| West    | East    |
| ♠ A8    | ♠ K9653 |
| ♥ K86   | ♥ 1097  |
| ♦ AQ109 | ♦ 73    |
| ♣ KJ97  | ♣ A85   |

|           |
|-----------|
| South     |
| ♠ QJ10742 |
| ♥ J5      |
| ♦ 62      |
| ♣ Q102    |

Open Room

| West    | North   | East     | South       |
|---------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Verhees | Bocchi  | Prooijen | Madala      |
| Duboin  | Drijver | Sementa  | Groenenboom |
| 1NT     | 2♥(♥+m) | 2♠       | All Pass    |

Madala and Groenenboom each had a special green card marked "contented Pass," and they were only too happy to use it here. Against van Prooijen the defenders took three hearts, then shifted to a diamond. Declarer finessed and North won and played a fourth heart. Declarer pitched a club from hand to ruff in dummy, and scored three spade and two club tricks in all; down three. With the small trump having gone from dummy, there was nothing declarer could do. In case you think South was too timid, bear in mind that E/W can make 2NT easily enough.

The defenders did the same thing for the first four tricks in the other room. But Drijver erred by shifting to a club at trick five. Now declarer could find the bad news, cash the top minor winners, then use dummy's ♠8 after stripping off all the side suits to endplay South for an extra trump trick. A triumph at -200, and 3imps. 36-15 now for Lavazza.

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| Bd: 21     | North   |
| Dlr: North | ♠ A532  |
| Vul: N/S   | ♥ 43    |
|            | ♦ AJ742 |
|            | ♣ 63    |

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| West      | East    |
| ♠ K10     | ♠ Q9874 |
| ♥ AKJ985  | ♥ Q107  |
| ♦ 6       | ♦ 3     |
| ♣ Q875    | ♣ K1092 |
| South     |         |
| ♠ J6      |         |
| ♥ 62      |         |
| ♦ KQ10985 |         |
| ♣ AJ4     |         |

Open Room

| West    | North    | East     | South  |
|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi   | Prooijen | Madala |
| 1♥      | Pass     | Pass     | 1♦     |
| 4♥      | Dbl.     | 2♦       | Pass   |
|         | All Pass |          |        |

Closed Room

| West   | North   | East    | South       |
|--------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver | Sementa | Groenenboom |

Both Easts were happy to perpetrate a 2♦ bid (a sound raise to 2♥) with the piece of Cheddar they held. Both Wests were only too happy to drive immediately to game. Facing a third-hand opening, albeit at unfavorable vulnerability, would North contemplate a red save? Yes, it goes for 500, but they have not doubled yet and they might misjudge and bid on. For all of you who think it clear to act, remember that the average number of HCP in our matches today for a third-hand opening seems to have been about 9. This is one of the downsides of



the "Anything Goes" philosophy. Drijver had the courage of his partner's convictions and did bid. Duboin doubled him on the way out. All those defensive winners after all; -500 meant 2imps for Lavazza to make it 38-15, but a good investment, I say. Had Drijver bid 5♦ a trifle faster he might have got away with it.

Bd: 22 North  
 Dlr: East ♠ 854  
 Vul: E/W ♥ K53  
 ♦ J863  
 ♣ 973

West  
 ♠ AKQ3  
 ♥ Q1064  
 ♦ 942  
 ♣ KQ

East  
 ♠ 72  
 ♥ 92  
 ♦ 1075  
 ♣ J108642

South  
 ♠ J1096  
 ♥ AJ87  
 ♦ AKQ  
 ♣ A5

Open Room

|                |               |                 |               |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>West</b>    | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>     | <b>South</b>  |
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
| Pass           | 2♠(Xfr)       | Pass            | 2♣(1)         |
| All Pass       |               | Pass            | 2NT           |

(1) 18-19

Closed Room

|               |                |                |                    |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>West</b>   | <b>North</b>   | <b>East</b>    | <b>South</b>       |
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
|               |                | Pass           | 2NT                |

All Pass

Madala-Bocchi use 2♣ for the strong balanced hands and 2♦ for 2♣ openers. This is good on hand frequency: the transfer responses keep you low facing nothing and free up opener's jumps for other hand types. You may lose out on the 2♣ openings but how often do you get one of them compared to the balanced strong hands? Both sets of defenders led out the top spades, setting up declarer's eighth trick, and declarer had the heart finesse at the end for the overtrick. No luck there, but no swing at 120.



Bd: 23 North  
 Dlr: South ♠ K109  
 Vul: Both ♥ AK94  
 ♦ J84  
 ♣ A53

West  
 ♠ AQ65  
 ♥ Q  
 ♦ KQ10762  
 ♣ Q6

East  
 ♠ J742  
 ♥ 6532  
 ♦ 95  
 ♣ J104

South  
 ♠ 83  
 ♥ J1087  
 ♦ A3  
 ♣ K9872

Open Room

|                |               |                 |               |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>West</b>    | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>     | <b>South</b>  |
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |
| 1♠             | 1NT           | Pass            | 2♠            |
| Pass           | 3♥            | Pass            | 4♥            |

All Pass

Closed Room

|               |                |                |                    |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>West</b>   | <b>North</b>   | <b>East</b>    | <b>South</b>       |
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| 1♦            | Dbl            | Pass           | 2♦(♥)              |
| Dbl           | 3♥             | Pass           | 4♥                 |

All Pass

Both sides did well to reach a game that looks a decent spot after West's opening bid, on what looks a rather awkward mesh of high-cards. (You can imagine quite a few Souths not getting past 1♥, can't you?) Neither N/S pair is exactly backward about coming forward, but I still think they did well. Both declarers wrapped up ten tricks without needing a club break.

Bd: 24 North  
 Dlr: West ♠ A10542  
 Vul: None ♥ K1092  
 ♦ 98  
 ♣ 107

West  
 ♠ KJ93  
 ♥ J  
 ♦ A3  
 ♣ K98654

East  
 ♠ Q86  
 ♥ A43  
 ♦ QJ10  
 ♣ AQ32

South  
 ♠ 7  
 ♥ Q8765  
 ♦ K76542  
 ♣ J

Open Room

| West    | North    | East     | South  |
|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi   | Prooijen | Madala |
| 1♠      | Pass     | 2♣       | 2♦     |
| 3♣      | Pass     | 3♦       | Pass   |
| 3NT     | All Pass |          |        |

Closed Room

| West   | North    | East    | South       |
|--------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver  | Sementa | Groenenboom |
| 1♣     | 1♠       | 2♠      | Pass        |
| 3♣     | Pass     | 3♥      | Pass        |
| 3♠     | Pass     | 3NT     | Pass        |
| 5♣     | All Pass |         |             |

We've all seen worse slams than 6♣ here. The diamond finesse might rate to fail but it takes the spade and a ruff to set slam today. Duboin went low with 3♣, then found his partner with extras. However, one of the problems with playing with Sementa, as we've seen, is that Antonio's slam-tries normally deny the values to make a try (if he actually had a try, he would drive to slam). So once Sementa stopped in 3NT, albeit on a sequence that suggested doubt about strain or level, Duboin simply bid 5♣ to settle for the best game. Right he was. On a heart lead 3NT is very ugly. The canape auction in the other room never got close to dealing with the problems of the deal. It was not much consolation that Duboin's carefulness had led to the first imp dropped by Lavazza of the set. Still, if you've reached the half way point of any set greater than a two-board affair before you can say that, things can't be going that badly. 38-16; eight boards to go.

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| Bd: 25     | North   |
| Dlr: North | ♠ 104   |
| Vul: E/W   | ♥ K1096 |
|            | ♦ 109   |
|            | ♣ KQ972 |

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| West      | East    |
| ♠ QJ6     | ♠ K52   |
| ♥ 53      | ♥ AQ82  |
| ♦ AQJ7542 | ♦ 83    |
| ♣ J       | ♣ 10653 |

|         |
|---------|
| South   |
| ♠ A9873 |
| ♥ J74   |
| ♦ K6    |
| ♣ A84   |

Open Room

| West     | North  | East     | South  |
|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Verhees  | Bocchi | Prooijen | Madala |
|          | Pass   | Pass     | 1♠     |
| 3♦       | Dbl    | Pass     | 3♥     |
| All Pass |        |          |        |

Closed Room

| West   | North    | East    | South       |
|--------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver  | Sementa | Groenenboom |
|        | Pass     | Pass    | 1♠          |
| 2♦     | Dbl.     | 2NT     | Pass        |
| 3♦     | All Pass |         |             |

Another quiet deal, though the players did their best to make it exciting. I really like Verhees' jump overcall here—make the opponents work harder. As it was, Madala got manhandled into 3♥ but nobody could double him. Madala won the club lead in hand to take the losing heart finesse, and the defenders cashed out their diamonds to play a spade. Declarer had only six tricks when clubs did not behave.

Since 3♦ made 130 (yes it could have been 150) The Netherlands were closing the gap, one imp at a time. Not fast enough though. 38-17; seven deals to go.

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| Bd: 26    | North   |
| Dlr: East | ♠ J5432 |
| Vul: Both | ♥ 763   |

|       |
|-------|
| ♦ 82  |
| ♣ Q92 |

|         |           |
|---------|-----------|
| West    | East      |
| ♠ K     | ♠ A109876 |
| ♥ AQJ95 | ♥ K10     |
| ♦ AQJ10 | ♦ 964     |
| ♣ J108  | ♣ 64      |

|         |
|---------|
| South   |
| ♠ Q     |
| ♥ 842   |
| ♦ K753  |
| ♣ AK753 |

Open Room

| West    | North    | East     | South  |
|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi   | Prooijen | Madala |
|         |          | 2♠       | Pass   |
| 4♠      | All Pass |          |        |

Closed Room

| West   | North    | East    | South       |
|--------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver  | Sementa | Groenenboom |
|        |          | Pass    | 1♣          |
| Dbl    | Pass     | 2♣      | Pass        |
| 3♥     | Pass     | 3♠      | Pass        |
| 3NT    | All Pass |         |             |

4♠ handled just fine despite 5-1 trumps. North had no more clubs to tap out declarer so he could draw trumps at his leisure. In the other room the auction was very different. You can see how preemptive that 1♣ opening was, though maybe Sementa's cue-bid (see "Overbid" in the dictionary) started the rot. Sementa got his spades in, then had to deal with his partner's 3NT bid. If he were facing the same hand with a different spade singleton, 4♠ might be no fun

(would 4♣ offer a choice of games?). Let's blame that 2♣ bid, the take-out double... (So much blame to apportion to just two players.) The defenders cashed the clubs, and we suddenly had a tight match again; 9 imps the margin, six deals to go.

Bd: 27  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ KQ63  
 ♥ Q2  
 ♦ K32  
 ♣ KJ76

West  
 ♠ J9542  
 ♥ 97  
 ♦ Q96  
 ♣ Q42

East  
 ♠ 108  
 ♥ AJ3  
 ♦ A874  
 ♣ A1098

South  
 ♠ A7  
 ♥ K108654  
 ♦ J105  
 ♣ 53

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |

|          |    |      |    |
|----------|----|------|----|
| Pass     | 1♣ | Pass | 2♥ |
| All Pass |    |      |    |

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |

|      |    |          |  |
|------|----|----------|--|
| Pass | 2♥ | All Pass |  |
|------|----|----------|--|

Both tables led spades against 2♥. Declarer played three rounds of spades, over-ruffed the ♥J with the king, and led a trump to the queen and ace. Van Prooijen exited with a heart and held declarer to 140. In the other room, when Sementa instead got out with ace and another club after winning the ♥A, declarer guessed diamonds for the second overtrick, and an imp. 30-38; five to go.

Bd: 28  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ Q53  
 ♥ 92  
 ♦ AKJ1043  
 ♣ KQ

West  
 ♠ K962  
 ♥ 87  
 ♦ 76  
 ♣ AJ432

East  
 ♠ J1084  
 ♥ K643  
 ♦ Q52  
 ♣ 98

South  
 ♠ A7  
 ♥ AQJ105  
 ♦ 98  
 ♣ 10765

Open Room

| West           | North          | East            | South              |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i>  | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i>      |
| <i>Duboin</i>  | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i>  | <i>Groenenboom</i> |
| Pass           | 1♦             | Pass            | 1♥                 |
| Pass           | 3♦             | Pass            | 3NT                |
| All Pass       |                |                 |                    |

Madala won the club lead on the board and ran the ♥9. When it held, he gave up a diamond and claimed 630. Groenenboom played two rounds of hearts ending in hand. Then he passed the ♦9. Had it held perhaps he would have reverted to hearts, in case diamonds were 4-1. But as it was Sementa won his ♦Q and cashed out. No swing. 38-30 to Lavazza, four deals to go.

Bd: 29  
 Dir: North  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ QJ854  
 ♥ K  
 ♦ K642  
 ♣ A108

West  
 ♠ 972  
 ♥ AQJ3  
 ♦ AJ103  
 ♣ 92

East  
 ♠ 103  
 ♥ 9764  
 ♦ 97  
 ♣ QJ653

South  
 ♠ AK6  
 ♥ 10852  
 ♦ Q85  
 ♣ K74

Open Room

| West           | North         | East            | South         |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Verhees</i> | <i>Bocchi</i> | <i>Prooijen</i> | <i>Madala</i> |

|      |    |      |    |
|------|----|------|----|
| Pass | 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3♣ | Pass | 4♠ |

All Pass

Closed Room

| West          | North          | East           | South              |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>Duboin</i> | <i>Drijver</i> | <i>Sementa</i> | <i>Groenenboom</i> |

|          |    |      |    |
|----------|----|------|----|
| Pass     | 1♠ | Pass | 2♣ |
| Pass     | 2♦ | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass |    |      |    |

Identifying those singleton honors is always tricky; the only game with play might be 3NT by South. But both tables played 4♠.

Bocchi showed his 5-4-3-1 pattern. On van Prooijen's ♣Q lead one loser had gotten away. Declarer needed only a diamond break. No luck. After the lead of the ♦9 Duboin was faced with a problem: should he play this to be a singleton and go for the instant gratification line? Wisely, he ducked and now declarer needed to play to ruff the fourth diamond in

dummy to get out for down one. When he played trumps prematurely he was doomed to -200. The lead was up to 11imps, with three deals to go.

Bd: 30 North  
 Dir: East ♠ K103  
 Vul: None ♥ AK10  
 ♦ Q6  
 ♣ KJ1074

West  
 ♠ Q7  
 ♥ J982  
 ♦ AK10432  
 ♣ 8

East  
 ♠ J9652  
 ♥ 75  
 ♦ 9  
 ♣ AQ532

South  
 ♠ A84  
 ♥ Q643  
 ♦ J875  
 ♣ 96

Open Room

| West     | North  | East     | South  |
|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Verhees  | Bocchi | Prooijen | Madala |
| 3♦       | Dbl    | Pass     | 3♥     |
| All Pass |        | Pass     |        |

Closed Room

| West   | North   | East     | South       |
|--------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver | Sementa  | Groenenboom |
| 1♦     | 2♣      | Pass     | Pass        |
|        |         | All Pass |             |

The Editors much prefer the pressure applied by Verhees to the wimpy 1♦ opening from Duboin. Drijver guessed to bid 2♣ over 1♦, and nobody had anything to say. Sementa's diamond lead might have got him a fifth trick but an initial spade lead would surely have worked better. In fact, though, Duboin won the diamond and shifted to a heart, declarer inserted the ten and could now play on clubs for a painless +130. The second diamond trick withered on the vine.

By contrast, against 3♥ the defenders took their minor-suit winners and trump tricks but nothing else...and yes. they could have done at least a trick better. Still, 4imps to The Netherlands; down by 7imps with two to go.



"Guess what's the only country I've been exiled from."

Bd: 31 North  
 Dir: South ♠ A1076  
 Vul: N/S ♥ J8763  
 ♦ 76  
 ♣ A9

West  
 ♠ 3  
 ♥ Q95  
 ♦ A10943  
 ♣ KJ107

East  
 ♠ KJ84  
 ♥ 102  
 ♦ K85  
 ♣ 8632

South  
 ♠ Q952  
 ♥ AK4  
 ♦ QJ2  
 ♣ Q54

Open Room

| West    | North  | East     | South  |
|---------|--------|----------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi | Prooijen | Madala |
| 1♦      | Dbl(♥) | 2♦       | 1♣     |
| 3♦      | 3♥     | All Pass | 2♥     |

Closed Room

| West   | North   | East     | South       |
|--------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver | Sementa  | Groenenboom |
| 1♦     | Dbl(♥)  | 2♦       | 1♣          |
| Pass   | 3♥      | All Pass | 2♥          |

3♥ was easy to defeat when Verhees led a spade. Declarer played low, and East had only to win his king and use his two entries for the ruffs. Alas, he shifted to diamonds and that blew up both the ruffs and the club trick. Plus 140 was a great result for Lavazza.

In 3♥ by North the opening diamond lead was equally fatal. Declarer established a discard for his club loser and guessed spades. No swing; 34-41 and one deal to go.

Bd: 32 North  
 Dir: West ♠ AKQJ62  
 Vul: E/W ♥ AQ3  
 ♦ A65  
 ♣ Q

West  
 ♠ 43  
 ♥ J105  
 ♦ J92  
 ♣ AJ1086

East  
 ♠ 9875  
 ♥ 9876  
 ♦ Q1083  
 ♣ 3

South  
 ♠ 10  
 ♥ K42  
 ♦ K74  
 ♣ K97542

### Open Room

| West    | North  | East         | South  |
|---------|--------|--------------|--------|
| Verhees | Bocchi | Van Prooijen | Madala |
| Pass    | 2♦     | Pass         | 2♥     |
| Pass    | 3♠     | Pass         | 4♣     |
| Dbl     | 4♦     | Pass         | 4♥     |
| Pass    | 4NT    | Pass         | 5♦     |
| Pass    | 6♠     | All Pass     |        |

### Closed Room

| West   | North   | East     | South       |
|--------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Duboin | Drijver | Sementa  | Groenenboom |
| Pass   | 2♣      | Pass     | 2♦          |
| Pass   | 2♠      | Pass     | 2NT         |
| Pass   | 3♠      | Pass     | 4♣          |
| Pass   | 4♦      | Pass     | 4♥          |
| Pass   | 4NT     | Pass     | 5♦          |
| Pass   | 6♠      | All Pass |             |

Well bid at both tables. We knew it would not matter to the Italians that they had to open 2♣ and not 2♦ with the really strong hand. Both Norths ruffed the second club high and could draw trumps, thanks to that valuable ♠10 in dummy. No swing and a win by 41-34; the lowest scoring 32-board match we remember seeing.

An outstandingly well-played match by both teams on a set of deals that perhaps offered less opportunity for swing than most. And yet, we have only to look at the suite of light openings by both sides to see that everyone was put under pressure and had performed very well. It was a pleasure to write about such good bridge.

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## Come On Aussie Come on

The apologies we owe the Oz teams are almost legion. There was no malice but we missed quite a few points, and duty compels us to put them right.

First of all, Sartaj Hans' brilliancy in 4♠ (yesterday's bulletin, page 17) was attributed to Tony Nunn. Sartaj tells me it was his only well-played hand of the event so he really resents this (just kidding).

Next we wanted to clarify some of the "finer" points of Australian trump raises. Mullamphy-Klinger do indeed play 1♥-(1♠)-2♠ as 6-9 with 4 trumps and 2NT to show 10+ and trump support. We don't have to like it (just as well) but we should confirm that that is what they play. They also do the same after Pass-1♥-2♠, and maybe after 1♥-(Dbl)-2♠ as well.

And finally, we saw an Australian grand slam come home off two aces (only one of which was cashing, to be fair). We speculated on the use of Exclusion Blackwood and are informed that it was, indeed, Exclusion Blackwood from both sides of the table (it was just that the two players were using different responses). Apparently responder was playing: 0/1/1+Q/2 while the inquirer was playing 0/1/2, etc., etc. But what's an ace between friends?

For what it's worth, we can't see why an EB'er would be interested in finding the trump queen since he normally has trumps to spare, whereas that third step might get us too high. Fortunately, no one asked us and since Ishmael tells us "That's the system" we guess it's the system.

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## Bridge is FUN!



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

| Day/Date           | Time        | Event                  | Venue               |
|--------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Saturday (Feb. 13) | 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. 14)   | 10:00-17:00 | Asuka Cup (Open Pairs) | F203-206            |
|                    | 18:30-20:30 | Closing Ceremony       | F201-202            |

### Free Go Lessons from a Professional

Today, at the Go corner Mr. Ko Reibun, the son of Mr. Nie Weiping of BEAUTY, will be the special guest coach for Go. Mr. Nie Weiping has been a well-known Go player among Japanese people since he appeared at NEC Japan-China Go tournament in the early 80s. He is remembered as “the first foreigner to beat Japanese Go professionals.” His son, Mr. Ko Reibun, is a 6<sup>th</sup> dan professional Go player living here in Japan and has graciously volunteered to teach here tomorrow at 13:00 (1:00 pm).

### NEC Bridge Festival Smoking Policy

#### NEC Cup:

Once play in a qualifying-round match or a KO-round session starts, smoking is prohibited at all times (including when a player leaves the playing room to go to the bathroom), until the player completes the play of all boards in the round or session..

#### Other events:

Once a session has started, and until the player has finished all boards in the session, smoking is prohibited at ALL times other than a single designated smoking break, which may be announced at the option of the Director.

#### Smoking area:

Smoking is only permitted outside the building.

#### Penalties:

Penalties for violations will be assessed by the Director.

## NEC Bridge Festival Closing Ceremony and Party

On Sunday, February 14, the Festival will hold its closing ceremony at 18:30 (that's 6:30 pm) in F201-202. As usual, everyone is invited to attend. Festivities will include food and prize giving. As a special treat, this year JCBL is bringing back their tradition of holding a lottery at the end of the evening. Prizes, such as chocolates and candies, gift mugs, coasters, stuffed animals, postcards, gift toiletries and collectible souvenirs of Japan will be given to lucky ticket holders. In addition, prepaid gift cards to local bookstores and free entries to JCBL bridge games will be among the prizes for local players. So come to the closing ceremony and be sure to stay for the lottery. You may win an exciting gift.