



# NEC Bridge Festival

Sunday, February 14, 2010  
Bulletin Number 6

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

## Lavazza is the 2010 NEC Cup Champion

It was 1 vs 2, Zimmermann (Pierre Zimmermann, Fulvio Fantoni, Claudio Nunes, Cezary Balicki, Adam Zmudzinski, Franck Multon) vs Lavazza (Maria Teresa Lavazza, Norberto Bocchi, Agustin Madala, Giorgio Duboin, Antonio Sementa, Guido Ferraro; Massimo Ortensi, Coach), France/Italy/Poland vs native Italy. Who could have asked for any more? Well, how about an early blowout that turns into an unrelenting climb back into the match, capped off by a last-second finish that had Vugraph fans all over the world sitting on the edge of their seats and biting their nails. Congratulations to both teams for one of the most exciting and captivating finishes in NEC Cup history. It's unfortunate that only one of them could be the winner.



NEC Cup Winners



NEC Cup Runners-up



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

Team	C/O	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Final
Zimmermann	.5	47	40	14	26	127
Lavazza		4	40	47	38	129



**Results: Yokohama Swiss (see page 4); Saturday Pair Games (see page 5)**

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

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

# 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

## 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 Mullanphy
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

## 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.

## Leave your bid cards on the table, *Please*.

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

—Robert Geller, Chairman, JCBL Laws Commission

## Asuka Cup Entries

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

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

## NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 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)

## Yokohama Swiss Teams: Final Standings

Rank	VP Total	Team Members
1	189	David Kendrick, Brian Senior, Jonathan Cooke, Martin Garvey
2	178	Lin Rongqiang, Jiang Tong, Shi Zhengjun, Li Jie, Hou Xu, Liu Jing
3	175	Ron Klinger, Ishmael Del'Monte, Ashley Bach, Matt Mullanphy
4	169	Alon Apteker, Craig Gower, Frederic Wrang, Johan Sylvan
5	168	John Carruthers, David Bakhshi, David Gold, Howard Weinstein
6	165	Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Peter Gill, Paul Gosney
7-8	161	Haruko Koshi, Misuzu Ichihashi, Sachiko Yamada, Terumi Kubo
7-8	161	Heather Dhondy, Nevena Senior, Fiona Brown, Susan Stockdale
9	160	Masaaki Takayama, Toshihiro Ogata, Motomi Shirogane, Yumiko Mizuta
10	154	Robert Geller, Setsuko Ogihara, Tadashi Jomura, Hiroaki Iwata
11-12	150	Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen, Bob Drijver, Merijn Groenenboom
11-12	150	Kazunori Sasaki, Ryo Okuno, Akira Ohara, Takeshi Higashiguchi
13	147	Yoko Nenohi, Hiroko Sekiyama, Kumiko Matsuo, Mieko Nakanishi
14-15	145	Keiko Matsuzaki, Kimi Makita, Yukiko Umezu, Etsuko Naito
14-15	145	Chieko Yamazaki, Takeshi Hanayama, Zhao Jinlong, Xu Tong
16-18	144	Kunihiro Takahashi, Hiroko Onishi, Chiaki Sakamoto, Ying Xiaoying
16-18	144	Fumiko Sakabe, Sachiko Kato, Kazuko Nakagawa, Kyozo Kuroiwa
16-18	144	Kazuo Furuta, Masayuki Ino, Mitsue Tajima, Hiroshi Kaku, Makoto Kono, Hiroki Yokoi
19	143	Tsuneo Sakurai, Atsushi Kikuchi, Kenichi Asaoka, Shuji Hashimoto
20-22	142	Tadashi Teramoto, Fu Zhong, Kumiko Sasahira, Minoru Mizuta, Yasushi Kobayashi
20-22	142	Yoshiko Fukuda, Aiko Mizuuchi, Kazuko Kawashima, Yoko Tokushige
20-22	142	Sei Nagasaka, Yuichi Masamura, Phoebe Lin, Nie Weiping
23	141	Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Stefan Stefanov
24	140	Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Makoto Hirata, Kazuhiko Yamada, Takahiko Hirata
25-26	139	Ken Sakiyama, Hiroyuki Sato, Jun Yokoyama, Tadashi Ishihara
25-26	139	Teruo Miyazaki, Kunio Kodaira, Akiko Miwa, Makoto Nomura
27	137	Makiko Hayashi, Atsuyo Miyake, Hiroshi Morimoto, Mark LaForge, Masayuki Ohashi
28-30	134	Junko Tsubaki, Kazuko Tsumori, Keiko Enomoto, Takako Nakatani
28-30	134	Atsuko Katsumata, Yasuyo Iida, Kimiko Kamakari, Misae Kato
28-30	134	Hiroaki Miura, Noriaki Koike, Michal Kopecky, Milan Macura



Yokohama Swiss Winners

## Saturday Pair Games



Beginners-5 Winners



Beginners-20 Winners



Debutante Winners

### **Beginners Cup (-20)**

Rank	Names		(11 Pairs)
1	Etsuko Takahashi	Shunji Kobayashi	
2	Ayako Harada	Michio Masui	
3	Misako Kida	Noriko Shimizu	

### **Beginners Cup (-5)**

Rank	Names		(12 Pairs)
1	Akira Koyama	Motoko Takeuchi	
2	Yutaka Habu	Yasuhiro Kojima	
3	Tatsuji Harada	Waro Ujihara	

### **Debutante Cup**

Rank	Names		(15 Pairs)
1	Masao Ito	Yoko Nagashima	
2	Hiroyoshi Fujisawa	Yauko Mashima	
3	Ichiro Teraoka	Michiko Teraoka	

### **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

## A Wild and Crazy Guy

Frankie Frontaura came to us with a hand he played in yesterday's Yokohama Swiss teams. But before we tell you about it, we feel obliged to first offer you a few words of warning:

**WARNING: Do not try this yourself at home. These are trained professionals.**

Ok, now for the hand. Frankie, sitting West, was playing with Federico Goded. Their hands were:

West	East
Frankie	Federico
♠ xx	♠ KJxx
♥ J9xx	♥ 10x
♦ x	♦ AQJxx
♣ AQJ98x	♣ xx

North passed in first seat and the bidding, with N/S silent, proceeded:

West	East
Frankie	Federico
	(Pass)
1♥(2)	1♦(1)
2♣(4)	1♠(3)
2NT(5)	2♦(3)
Pass	3NT(3)

Now if all this looks strange, a bit of explanation may help—or it may not.

- (1) 1♦: perhaps a bit light, but natural
- (2) 1♥: also natural, but Frankie had a plan
- (3) Natural
- (4) 2♣: 4<sup>th</sup>-suit forcing—to game (the plan unfolds)
- (5) Forcing

Well, that probably doesn't help much, does it? So, here's how the plan got started. With such a fine club suit Frankie thought he'd like to play in 3NT and take a lot of club tricks. But the question was how to do that. He responded to Federico's natural 1♦ opening with a natural 1♥ (he was not strong enough for a two-over-one) and Federico rebid a natural 1♠.

Now the plan began to take form. Here was Frankie's thinking: "If I create a game force but never bid clubs (except as an artificial fourth-suit forcing noise) and if I make it sound like my club stopper is tenuous, then maybe—just maybe—they'll attack clubs. After all, Federico and I have bid the other three suits naturally." So, putting the plan into action, he rebid 2♣, fourth-suit forcing (to game!). So what if he was a little light?

Federico rebid 2♦, since he had no club stopper, and now Frankie rebid a modest 2NT, which was forcing (since 2♣ had created a game force). Why 2NT and not 3NT? Because if he jumped to 3NT it would sound like he had **CLUBS**—well controlled. But 2NT sounded tentative, maybe looking for his partner to provide a little help there.

Now, Federico was being forced to bid again but he had already described his whole hand: diamonds and spades. But if Frankie was suggesting notrump, his hand was about as balanced as it could be (given his previous bids) so he simply raised to 3NT. And now all Frankie had to do was make it.

The suspense must have been crushing as Frankie waited for LOH (North) to select her opening lead. After considerable thought she finally tabled...a club! Frankie played low from dummy and sure enough RHO produced the ♣K—ace! So, that was six tricks. What next? Frankie tried leading a diamond to the queen and it held! That was eight tricks (maybe more if the ♦K was really onside, but his opponents were experienced internationalists—whose identities are being withheld out of respect...and fear of a possible lawsuit—and RHO was well up to holding off on the ♦K to try to cut declarer off from dummy).

So what next? How to get off dummy and go after trick number nine. Frankie had an idea. He called for the ♥10 and when RHO ducked he passed it around to LHO's queen.

After a few moments thought she tabled...the ♠7. Time to fish or cut bait. Frankie eyed the spade, then his LHO, and finally called for the king—and it held! Now he could count nine. He cashed his tricks, not risking repeating the diamond finesse, and scored up a notrump game on 19 combined HCP—8 opposite 11.

So, the next time you come up against Frankie at your table, think to yourself: "Do I feel lucky? Do I really?"



A Wild and Crazy Guy

# NEC Final (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter): Zimmermann vs Lavazza

by Barry Rigal

Set one, the Clash of the Titans. One prediction-mad Editor had offered 3-1 on the field to reach the final, taking only Zimmermann and Lavazza. However, the smart money was divided on which way the final would go. Any true bridge lover would be licking his lips at the chance to see Fantunes vs the Italians. And those Polish guys aren't so bad either.

Two souped-up natural systems for Lavazza, Polish Club for the Poles, Weak Notrump and forcing one-level actions, mid-range weak-twos for Fantunes.

Bd: 1 North  
 Dir: North ♠ 987  
 Vul: None ♥ KJ10642  
 ♦ 5  
 ♣ Q84

West  
 ♠ 63  
 ♥ Q9875  
 ♦ K862  
 ♣ 32

East  
 ♠ AKJ5  
 ♥ A  
 ♦ Q943  
 ♣ AK107

South  
 ♠ Q1042  
 ♥ 3  
 ♦ AJ107  
 ♣ J965

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♦(1)	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

(1) Many strong hand-types

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
	2♥	Dbl	Pass
2NT(1)	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

(1) Lebensohl, weak hand

Fantoni does not have a weak-two in hearts available to him—lucky Fulvio—and that kept his side out of trouble and left declarer with no idea of the relative patterns of his opponents. Madala finessed the ♠J on the opening lead of the ♠9 and Nunes scored his ♠Q and got out with a heart. Declarer led a diamond to the king and found the bad news—that he had seven winners and no more—at the next trick.

Zmudzinski had a chance to be a hero by a judicious use of the green card at his first turn. Not surprisingly he elected to run to diamonds (our single-dummy

Editor, when confronted with his decision, opted to pass when told it was Sementa who had opened 2♥, adding “If it was *me* who opened 2♥ I'd never sit for it, but that would be too tough a game”).

3NT on a spade lead saw Zmudzinski win and advance the ♦Q. Duboin won and had a heart exit (it might have helped declarer to cash the ♥A at trick two but not against best defense). Zmudzinski sneaked a diamond through to the eight and now had seven top winners and could eventually endplay South to lead spades to get an eighth trick. But he would have needed that ♣9 to achieve a second successful endplay for the contract. Eventually South scored two diamonds, a spade and two clubs. 2-0 for Zimmermann but it could easily have been much more.

Bd: 2 North  
 Dir: East ♠ 65  
 Vul: N/S ♥ 742  
 ♦ Q1093  
 ♣ QJ43

West  
 ♠ AJ104  
 ♥ AKQ5  
 ♦ Six  
 ♣ K1062

East  
 ♠ 72  
 ♥ J10963  
 ♦ J85  
 ♣ 985

South

♠ KQ983  
 ♥ 8  
 ♦ AK742  
 ♣ A7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
		Pass	1♠(F)
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Dbl	3♦	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	3♥	4♣

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
		Pass	1♠

All Pass

Duboin produced a simple auction. Zmudzinski at the vulnerability was surely right to pass, hoping that the auction would not die. Alas for him it did, and after two rounds of hearts declarer set up dummy's ♣QJ and had an entry to them via the ♦Q. He emerged with three minor-suit winners and four trump tricks.

Nunes had a very cultured auction to 4♦. Our regular readers will observe the TTASL (Teach Them A Sharp Lesson) try of 4♣. If they re-open me in partscore I try for game. Fantoni was the ♠10 away from an acceptance.

Against 4♦ the defense began with two rounds of hearts, then ducked the ♠K to cut declarer's communications. Nunes drew three rounds of trumps, squeezing West down to three spades and four clubs. Nunes ducked a spade to West, won the forced club return, unblocked the ♣A and led the third spade, discarding dummy's losing heart and endplaying West to give him a spade or a club trick. A very nice +130; 2 imps to Zimmermann, up 4-0.

Bd: 3                      North  
 Dir: South             ♠ AK4  
 Vul: E/W                ♥ 654  
                               ♦ 94  
                               ♣ AQ964

West ♠ 83 ♥ KJ83 ♦ A762 ♣ 853	East ♠ 10962 ♥ A109 ♦ KQ103 ♣ KJ
-------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------

South  
 ♠ QJ75  
 ♥ Q72  
 ♦ J85  
 ♣ 1072

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	1♣	Dbl	Pass

1♥  
 All Pass

Zmudzinski did not come all the way from Poland to play the opening bidder for a missing queen. He won the diamond lead and passed the ♥10, then drew trumps, cashed the diamonds, and played a club up for +140.

Against 1NT Bocchi led a top diamond, received encouragement, and cashed out the diamonds, Madala signaling for the higher suit en route (presumably the choice was between clubs and hearts with spades impossible, given dummy's holding). Bocchi shifted to the ♥10 at trick five and the defenders cashed out. Had Bocchi played a spade declarer might have made a trick less, but that is nit-picking. 1 imp to Zimmermann, leading 5-0.

Bd: 4                      North  
 Dir: West                ♠ AK7  
 Vul: Both                ♥ 5  
                               ♦ AQ1098  
                               ♣ KQ65

West ♠ 842 ♥ J103 ♦ K732 ♣ 732	East ♠ Q5 ♥ AK642 ♦ J64 ♣ 984
--------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------

South  
 ♠ J10963  
 ♥ Q987  
 ♦ 5  
 ♣ AJ10

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	1♦	1♥	Dbl (4/5♠)
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	1♦	1♥	Dbl (4/5♠)
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

When two experts are confronted with an identical sequence and one makes a winning decision and the other a losing one, does that mean one was right and the other wrong? I think so. Sementa opted for 3NT surely "knowing" that neither minor had to be running and that his partner rated to have five spades and a single heart stop. One could argue that South might have rebid 2♠ with this hand then bid notrump the next time, but without an intricate knowledge of the methods there may be nuances that escape our eagle eyes.

In 3NT Zmudzinski led the ♥J, ducked all around, followed by the ♥10, ducked to Duboin's queen. Declarer cashed one top spade and then played the percentages, coming to hand to pass the ♠J. Curtains.

Against 4♠ Madala led a trump, giving declarer a choice of lines. Nunes elected to play low from dummy, won the trump return, and played ♦A, ♦10, running this to Madala, who cashed his side's heart before the rats got at it. Regardless of whether this line was best, it was simple and would fail only if West had both diamond honors in a five-card suit—and maybe not even then. 12 well-earned imps and 17-0 for Zimmermann.



Bd: 5 North  
 Dir: North ♠ J96  
 Vul: N/S ♥ 9843  
 ♦ AJ42  
 ♣ AK

West  
 ♠ KQ4  
 ♥ Q52  
 ♦ K98753  
 ♣ 4

East  
 ♠ 10732  
 ♥ 76  
 ♦ 106  
 ♣ J10763

South  
 ♠ A85  
 ♥ AKJ10  
 ♦ Q  
 ♣ Q9852

Bd: 6 North  
 Dir: East ♠ KQ102  
 Vul: E/W ♥ A652  
 ♦ 62  
 ♣ J104

West  
 ♠ 43  
 ♥ QJ1093  
 ♦ KJ75  
 ♣ 95

East  
 ♠ AJ98  
 ♥ K84  
 ♦ A10983  
 ♣ 8

South  
 ♠ 765  
 ♥ 7  
 ♦ Q4  
 ♣ AKQ7632

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Madala	Fantoni	Bocchi	Nunes
	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zmudzinski	Sementa	Balicki	Duboin
	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Madala	Fantoni	Bocchi	Nunes
		1♦	2♣
Dbl	2♦	2♠	3♦
Pass	4♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Zmudzinski	Sementa	Balicki	Duboin
		1♦	2♣
2♥(NF)	Dbl	3♣	3♥
4♦	4♥	Dbl	5♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

Nunes found the club fit and showed his diamond control, denying a club control. One of the weaknesses of their continuations here is that they cannot specifically agree hearts and show shortage as opposed to a control. With excellent controls Fantoni showed a slam-try with two key-cards but no spade control. Nunes had nothing more to say but 5♣ indicated that they were still in position to play slam, and transferred responsibility to Fantoni, who could not bid on with such bad trumps.

By contrast, Sementa showed a balanced minimum and 4♣ was intended as agreeing hearts (and not pessimistic either—but what is the Italian for “*cela va sans dire*”?). When Duboin raised to 5♣ Sementa went back to hearts and there the matter rested.

Both declarers won the opening lead and took one top trump, then both clubs. West ruffed, and declarer now needed to guess trumps to make his contract. Both did, of course. Still 16-0 for Zimmermann.

**If the bouncer gets drunk,  
 who throws him out?**

Madala-Bocchi play 1♦ guarantees an unbalanced hand. Madala could double 2♣ planning to convert spades to diamonds, but now the hearts got lost in the shuffle. Nunes showed a good hand with his 3♦ bid and no doubt Madala could not double this because it would have shown a better hand—not just diamonds. 4♣ drifted down one when the defenders led hearts and defended accurately thereafter.

The Poles were on their way to 4♥ when their opponents got there first. Affronted, Balicki doubled and then doubled 5♣. The defenders took their two tricks in each of the pointed suits for +300. Credit that result to Zmudzinski’s non-forcing 2♥ bid. As a dedicated hater of that method we must point out its occasional good result so we can whale on it when necessary. The swing was 6 imps, and the score was 23-0 to Zimmermann.



“I’m too sexy for my shirt.”

Bd: 7 North  
 Dir: South ♠ K93  
 Vul: Both ♥ 6  
 ♦ K  
 ♣ AQ1096432

West	East
♠ A864	♠ Q1072
♥ AK104	♥ 98
♦ AQJ2	♦ 98763
♣ J	♣ K8

South  
 ♠ J5  
 ♥ QJ7532  
 ♦ 1054  
 ♣ 75

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
1♦	4♣	4♦	Pass
5♦	All Pass		Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
1♣(POL)	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	2♣	Dbl	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Had Sementa come in with 4♣ at his first turn E/W might not have found spades so easily; but they might equally have collected 500. So Sementa's remarkable restraint paid dividends. In 4♠ Declarer won the second club and misguessed spades, then misguessed diamonds; down one. Zmudzinski is used to seeing the smiling face from the other side of the table reassure him "No worries; I would have done the same." At least I think that's what he said; my Polish is getting rusty. In 5♦ (notice Bocchi's extremely aggressive raise) Madala misguessed diamonds but got the spades right in an odd way: by running the ♠Q and thus picking up the jack on the next round. No swing.

Bd: 8 North  
 Dir: West ♠ 98654  
 Vul: None ♥ 62  
 ♦ 3  
 ♣ A8653

West	East
♠ Q72	♠ 103
♥ 983	♥ AQJ1074
♦ J975	♦ 86
♣ 742	♣ K109

South  
 ♠ AKJ  
 ♥ K5  
 ♦ AKQ1042  
 ♣ QJ

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	Pass	3♥	3NT

All Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	Pass	3♥	Dbl
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

Sementa's decision to raise 5♠ to six looks bizarre; it was not as if he had a lot to spare for his earlier bidding. But according to him, 4NT was encouraging and asked for features. Sementa asked rhetorically "How could I have more? If I had five trumps to the queen and five clubs to the ace wouldn't I cue-bid 4♥ as a passed hand?" Whatever you say, Antonio, whatever you say. Declarer won the second heart and could take one top trump, then ruff a diamond to hand for the losing spade finesse. With four discards for his club losers he escaped for down one.

That was worth 2 imps for Lavazza when Nunes took what seems the entirely normal action of bidding 3NT over the 3♥ preempt. When partner had the wrong high-cards and the defenders could set up hearts, declarer would still make if diamonds split, the ♠Q dropped, or the ♣K was onside. And he could take all three chances in order. An unlucky way to lose 2 imps (but if East held a 3-6-2-2 with the ♠Q and ♣K it would have cost 14). 23-2 now for Zimmermann.

Bd: 9 North  
 Dir: North ♠ 97542  
 Vul: E/W ♥ J2  
 ♦ K54  
 ♣ A54

West	East
♠ AQ	♠ J63
♥ 76	♥ KQ10953
♦ 982	♦ QJ10
♣ J108763	♣ 2

South  
 ♠ K108  
 ♥ A84  
 ♦ A763  
 ♣ KQ9

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	Pass	2♥	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	Pass	2♦(Multi)	2NT
Pass	3♥	Dbl	3♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Both defenses scored two trumps and one trick in each side-suit. However, Madala led a club and continued the suit (here Bocchi had not doubled 3♥ so there were some inferences about his suit quality) while in the other room Zmudzinski did lead a heart and Balicki shifted to a diamond. But West switched to a club to give the ruff when in with the first trump. No swing.

Bd: 10	North
Dir: East	♠ A1094
Vul: Both	♥ KJ73
	♦ 76
	♣ K82

West  
 ♠ J75  
 ♥ 64  
 ♦ Q105  
 ♣ J9653

East  
 ♠ K8  
 ♥ Q85  
 ♦ K93  
 ♣ AQ1074

South  
 ♠ Q632  
 ♥ A1092  
 ♦ AJ842  
 ♣ ---

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	2♦	Pass	Dbl(MAJs)
Pass	4♠	All Pass	2♠

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass

A good chance to compare methods—or lack of them. Duboin had no convenient way into the auction (pause for a plug for Woolsey). He led a diamond against 1NT and declarer won cheaply in dummy and played on clubs. The defenders failed to get their hearts going in time. A spectacular +120—or was the result from the other room the spectacular one? Facing a minor and a major North relayed for the major. Nunes felt he needed more to cue-bid 3♦, which would have shown this pattern but an extra card. So he bid spades, hoping to get another bid and bid 3♥ to describe this precise pattern. Never fear: Fantoni drove his partner to game with the knowledge that South would know which way to

finesse if necessary (looking at the North hand there might be a finesse for either major-suit queen). The defenders led hearts, probably as good as anything. Declarer set up diamonds and conceded a trick to the heart ruff but had 10 painless tricks and 12 equally painless imps. 35-2 now for Zimmermann.

Bd: 11	North
Dir: South	♠ 2
Vul: None	♥ A10752
	♦ Q9854
	♣ AJ

West  
 ♠ K7653  
 ♥ K93  
 ♦ 72  
 ♣ 876

East  
 ♠ A108  
 ♥ QJ4  
 ♦ KJ10  
 ♣ Q1032

South  
 ♠ QJ94  
 ♥ 86  
 ♦ A63  
 ♣ K954

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	2♥(1)	All Pass	Pass

(1) 9-13; 1 or 2 suited

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	1♥	Dbl	Pass

2♠ 3♦ All Pass Rdbl

2♥ handled very nicely on Bocchi's trump lead. The defenders took their hearts early and could not set up a force by leading the king and another spade (declarer would discard diamonds and come to eight tricks via two tricks in each black suit and his four red winners). So Madala played a diamond and declarer set up that suit for his +110.

Sementa got to 3♦ in entirely reasonable fashion and played to ruff a heart in dummy. Again the friendly red-suit splits helped him out (declarer ran the ♦Q after ruffing a heart in an attempt to generate an overtrick; no dice). Still 35-2 for Zimmermann.



"Don't laugh. It's English folk dancing."

Bd: 12 North  
 Dir: West ♠ 1096  
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q  
 ♦ J832  
 ♣ QJ954

West  
 ♠ 54  
 ♥ A765  
 ♦ A6  
 ♣ A10632

East  
 ♠ A7  
 ♥ KJ982  
 ♦ 10974  
 ♣ K7

South  
 ♠ KQJ832  
 ♥ 1043  
 ♦ KQ5  
 ♣ 8

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
2♥	2♠	4♥	4♠

Dbl All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
2♥	2♠	4♥	All Pass

Do you like Nunes' 4♠ sacrifice at unfavorable vulnerability? True, it cost only 2 imps against the 420 from the other room, but was that singleton heart guaranteed? Even if it was delivered, North's failure to do more when holding a singleton heart suggests 4♠x would not be cheap. There again, simply keeping the auction open gives the opponents a chance to misjudge. So let's be fair to Nunes. His partner delivered a working one count with three trumps and he still only went down 500 with 4♥ making an easy 420. Case dismissed, but 2 imps for Lavazza. 35-4 now.

Bd: 13 North  
 Dir: North ♠ A106  
 Vul: Both ♥ 974  
 ♦ 1042  
 ♣ KQ94

West  
 ♠ Q75  
 ♥ Q62  
 ♦ 653  
 ♣ 6532

East  
 ♠ J9842  
 ♥ J85  
 ♦ KQJ  
 ♣ J7

South  
 ♠ K3  
 ♥ AK103  
 ♦ A987  
 ♣ A108

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♠(1)	Pass	2NT

All Pass  
 (1) 0-9 No Major  
 Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♦(18-19)
Pass	2♠(Xfer)	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Although there only eight top tricks, all normal lines lead to ten winners, and the defenders led clubs at one table, hearts at the other, to ensure declarer would only be playing for overtricks. 630s were duly achieved for a push. Still 35-4.

Bd: 14 North  
 Dir: East ♠ Q72  
 Vul: None ♥ AQ1042  
 ♦ 953  
 ♣ 104

West  
 ♠ 53  
 ♥ 987  
 ♦ J72  
 ♣ AK963

East  
 ♠ J1084  
 ♥ J653  
 ♦ AKQ104  
 ♣ ---

South  
 ♠ AK96  
 ♥ K  
 ♦ 86  
 ♣ QJ8752

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	2♠
Dbl	All Pass	Pass	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	All Pass	2♠

Madala was prepared for blood, Zmudzinski was not; perhaps a commentary on their age, experience, and temperament. And who was prepared to believe who at the table?

The defense of 3♣ appears to have five top winners. Not so fast, although the incredibly easy way to beat the contract is to cash two clubs and play on

diamonds. (I know it is not entirely obvious since neither defender found it, but shouldn't one consider it given that dummy is almost guaranteed to hold a doubleton club honor?)

Instead, Madala led a diamond and Bocchi took his tricks. At this point the play record ends. We believe declarer ruffed the third round, sneaked the ♣7 past Madala (taking the ace and king still beats the contract) and now could cash his spade and heart winners to reduce to the ♣QJ85 facing the ♣10. When he played the ♣10 the defenders had turned their three trump winners into two.

Curiously, the heart lead in the other room managed to set the partscore. Declarer has nine tricks easily enough but he cashed the hearts to pitch diamonds, then led a low trump from the board. Oops. Zmudzinski won, cashed his second club winner, and forced declarer with a diamond. With West left with ♣9xx and declarer ♣Q87 the defenders were now due two more trump tricks and a spade. 11 imps to Zimmerman now up 46-4.

Bd: 15            North  
 Dir: South      ♠ 106542  
 Vul: N/S        ♥ AKJ  
                    ♦ QJ6  
                    ♣ J5

West  
 ♠ AJ7  
 ♥ 8763  
 ♦ K103  
 ♣ 643

East  
 ♠ Q83  
 ♥ Q5  
 ♦ 98742  
 ♣ K97

South  
 ♠ K9  
 ♥ 10942  
 ♦ A5  
 ♣ AQ1082

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣(Xfr)	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Both Norths offered a choice of games to their partner, who of course settled for notrump. Both Wests led a revealing heart spot. Declarer finessed

in clubs, then played hearts for the drop. Easy game bridge; no swing at 630 and still 46-4.

Bd: 16            North  
 Dir: West        ♠ AQ10653  
 Vul: E/W        ♥ 4  
                    ♦ 72  
                    ♣ AQ92

West  
 ♠ K92  
 ♥ J9  
 ♦ AKJ8  
 ♣ J1064

East  
 ♠ J84  
 ♥ A1062  
 ♦ Q9653  
 ♣ 3

South  
 ♠ 7  
 ♥ KQ8753  
 ♦ 104  
 ♣ K875

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
1♣	1♠	Dbl	Pass
1NT	2♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
1♣	1♠	Dbl	Pass
1NT	2♣	All Pass	

Sementa was prepared to cater to clubs since West might have had two in a balanced hand; Fantoni was not. The defenders to 2♠ led the singleton club. Declarer won in dummy, unlocking the nine and drew trumps. The defenders set up the heart winner in dummy, cashed one diamond, and carelessly played the low club. (If North was 6-1-3-3 with East having the ♣32 the ♣J would work just as well.) Fantoni had the complete count. He ran the club to dummy's eight and discarded his second diamond for a scintillating +170. That was worth an imp when Sementa also brought home +130 on a cross-ruff that ended up smothering West's trumps. It was 47-4 at the break.



"Thank you Antonio. Just what I was expecting."

## NEC Final (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter): Zimmermann vs Lavazza

by Barry Rigal (with a little help from Rich)

Zimmermann began the second quarter with a 43-imp lead, 47-4. Team Lavazza took their seats for the second 16-board set looking serious, but not panicky. Zimmermann would be playing a jazzed-up 5-card major system; mini notrumps at favorable, two suiter weak-twos and a Multi.

Bd: 17            North  
 Dir: North      ♠ 76532  
 Vul: None        ♥ 874  
                     ♦ A74  
                     ♣ AQ

West                                  East  
 ♠ AQ10                              ♠ 84  
 ♥ A109                                ♥ J6532  
 ♦ J10953                              ♦ Q2  
 ♣ K5                                    ♣ J742

South  
 ♠ KJ9  
 ♥ KQ  
 ♦ K86  
 ♣ 109863

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Dbf	2♥(♠)	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♦	1♥(♠)	Pass	1♠
Dbf	Rdbl	2♥	2♠
All Pass			

In the Open Room Duboin doubled Nunes' weak notrump for penalties and Fantoni transferred Nunes to spades, where he played. Duboin led the ♦J and Nunes won the king in hand to take the club finesse. Next a heart went to the king and ace and a second diamond went to dummy's ace. Nunes now exited with a diamond and Sementa ruffed in front of Duboin to play a second heart through (a trump might have worked better). Nunes won the queen, played a club over, ruffed a heart, ruffed a club (Duboin pitching a diamond), and in time Duboin scored his three trump tricks for +110 to N/S.

In the Closed Room Bocchi-Madala reached the same contract and Z'mann led the ♦J. Madala won the ace in dummy and led a heart to the king and ace. A second diamond went to the king and Madala cashed the ♥Q, finessed the club, cashed the ♣A,

ruffed a heart, and led a third club planning to ruff in dummy. But Z'mann erred, ruffing in front of dummy with the ♠10, which allowed Madala to pitch dummy's third diamond. Now, when Z'mann exited with a diamond, dummy could ruff. The defense came to one heart and three trumps, for +140 to N/S. 1 imp back to Lavazza, trailing now by 42 at 47-5.

Bd: 18            North  
 Dir: East        ♠ J862  
 Vul: N/S        ♥ K8  
                     ♦ J83  
                     ♣ Q1043

West                                  East  
 ♠ K94                                 ♠ 73  
 ♥ J1052                                ♥ AQ973  
 ♦ 962                                  ♦ AQ107  
 ♣ A96                                 ♣ J2

South  
 ♠ AQ105  
 ♥ 64  
 ♦ K54  
 ♣ K875

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
		1♥	Dbf
3♦(1)	3♠	All Pass	
(1) Constructive 4-card heart raise			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
		1♥	Dbf
3♥	3♠	4♦	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Duboin had a perfect systemic bid to describe his hand and Sementa suspected that his side's prospects for game were not great (though that's never stopped him before) and passed Fantoni's 3♠. As for 3♠, with the ♥K being of dubious value we have a serious bone to pick with his action. If South cannot reopen with a double it's probably right to go quietly—especially at this vulnerability. But no double, no trouble. Sementa led a trump to Duboin's king and he dutifully switched to the ♥J, king, ace. Sementa underled his ♥Q to Duboin for a diamond through: ♦2, 3, 10, K. Fantoni drew trumps ending in dummy and exited with a diamond. Sementa then cashed a third round of the suit. By this time he had a complete count on the hand and had worked out that he could afford to give declarer a ruff-and-discard. So he exited with a heart and left declarer to work out how to bring in the clubs on his own. Fantoni ruffed the heart in dummy and got clubs right

by leading low to the queen. When the jack showed up on the second round he could claim down two (a Pyrrhic victory at best), -200 for N/S.

In the Closed Room the auction (effectively) began the same way and once again North came in directly with 3♠. We are *not* impressed, guys. If someone in the E/W seats had found a red card in their bid box there would have been a large pool of blood on the table when the hand was done. But Multon removed the hook that North had so cavalierly implanted in his own mouth by competing to 4♥. Madala led a trump to the jack, king and ace and Multon led a spade up as Madala rose with the ace and led back the queen. A club was played to the jack and king and Madala got out with a second heart. Now a club to the ace produced the moment of truth as Multon called for a low diamond from dummy and when Bocchi followed low he inserted the...ten. Bingo! Plus 420 for E/W; 6 imps to Z'mann, ahead now 53-5.

So far the match had been fairly accurate, especially by the Zimmermann team. We were just about to take leave of double-dummy perfection and head for the uncharted waters of the Twilight Zone. That's the signpost up ahead. Next stop, trouble town!

Bd: 19	North		
Dir: South	♠ Q		
Vul: E/W	♥ K1096		
	♦ A854		
	♣ QJ93		
West		East	
♠ 8532		♠ 1097	
♥ A2		♥ J8754	
♦ 1092		♦ 63	
♣ 10654		♣ A72	
	South		
	♠ AKJ64		
	♥ Q3		
	♦ KQJ7		
	♣ K8		

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	2♣(R)	Pass	1♠(F)
Pass	3NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	6♦	All Pass	4NT
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	2♣(R)	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠(R)	Pass	2♥(♦)
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♥(5422 Max)
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♣
Pass	6♦	All Pass	4NT

Aces are not to be sneezed at. Plenty of experts turn up their nose at Blackwood but an efficient user of that and of Burn's Law—which deals with counting the missing number of aces, subtracting that number from seven, and playing at that level and no higher—would keep us all happier.

Neither table subscribed to this approach. Both were too sophisticated to use keycard, preferring to set diamonds as trump, use a non-forcing 4NT bid, and leap majestically to slam over it. Aces, we don't need no stinkin' aces. Multon led a heart to Zimmerman's ace and he continued the suit (playing for the ♣A and ♥K to be switched). This seems illogical. Surely North had implied a heart control by bidding on over 4NT. When diamonds and spades behaved declarer had 12 tricks. In the other room Sementa led the ♣A and the sight of dummy made the rest of the defense easy enough. He shifted to hearts and that was 14 imps for Lavazza, trailing 53-20

What's that phrase about swings and roundabouts?

Bd: 20	North		
Dir: West	♠ 10		
Vul: Both	♥ Q10963		
	♦ K9		
	♣ AK1075		
	West		East
	♠ AK53		♠ QJ9862
	♥ 72		♥ AK4
	♦ AQ8632		♦ 54
	♣ 9		♣ 86
		South	
		♠ 74	
		♥ J85	
		♦ J107	
		♣ QJ432	

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
1♦	2NT(♥+♣)	3♥(♠)	5♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl.	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♠	All Pass
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♦	2NT(♥+♣)	3♥(♠)	5♣
5♠	All Pass		

When you are down a bunch of imps you need your slams on a finesse to come home. Sementa read his partner as having precisely the values he did, with a doubleton heart and a singleton club. Accordingly, slam rated to be laydown or on the diamond finesse at worst. So it proved, and the -100 when the

diamond finesse lost was highly aggravating to all concerned. Except perhaps the Zimmermann team. We could say "Lucky Pierre" but then we'd get you all humming "I got it from Agnes" for the rest of the afternoon. The margin was back to 46 imps.

Bd: 21  
 Dir: North  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ J10984  
 ♥ Q96  
 ♦ A943  
 ♣ Q

West  
 ♠ KQ6  
 ♥ 104  
 ♦ K76  
 ♣ A8743

East  
 ♠ A53  
 ♥ A532  
 ♦ J102  
 ♣ J102

South  
 ♠ 72  
 ♥ KJ87  
 ♦ Q85  
 ♣ K965

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
1♣	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT	1♠	Dbl	Pass
	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	1NT	All Pass

I'm not going to say that opening leads are easy; heaven forbid. But the Editors' flabber has never been so ghastrated as by Madala's choice of a club rather than a heart against 1NT. It's one thing to be playing for swings. But the opponents are potentially in an unusual contract, and surely a heart lead is normal from those cards. The defenders shifted to hearts, declarer built himself a diamond trick to go with his five black-suit winners and the ♥A, for a peaceful +90.

In the other room Fantoni's spades were both good enough to bid and to lead. Duboin won in hand and led a low club, transposing to the winning position. He must have had a blind spot, though, because he eventually won the ♥A and played on clubs, not diamonds, despite the 4-1 split coming to light. He lost three hearts, two clubs and two diamonds when he misguessed the suit. 4 rather random imps to Zimmermann, up 70-19.

If you put money in a change machine, will anything really change?

Bd: 22  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ A52  
 ♥ ---  
 ♦ KJ1076543  
 ♣ J9

West  
 ♠ 10763  
 ♥ AK754  
 ♦ Q  
 ♣ 1083

East  
 ♠ KQJ  
 ♥ QJ932  
 ♦ 82  
 ♣ A64

South  
 ♠ 984  
 ♥ 1086  
 ♦ A9  
 ♣ KQ752

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
3♦(♥)	5♦	1♥	Pass
		Dbl	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
4♥	5♦	1♥	Pass
		Dbl	All Pass

Both Easts led a top spade and cashed out for down one; no swing. Zimmermann's decision to bounce to 4♥ looks slightly surprising; if partner wants to play slam don't you have a decent hand for him?

Bd: 23  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ AQJ3  
 ♥ KQ82  
 ♦ 64  
 ♣ K32

West  
 ♠ 2  
 ♥ A76543  
 ♦ AQJ85  
 ♣ 7

East  
 ♠ 10765  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ 103  
 ♣ AJ10854

South  
 ♠ K984  
 ♥ J10  
 ♦ K972  
 ♣ Q96

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
1♥	1NT	Pass	2♣
2♦	2♠	Pass	3♠
All Pass			



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Z'mann	Bocchi	Multon	Madala
1♥	1NT	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			

At the top-level of the game there would be few who would pass the North hand over a 1♥ opening, but maybe this vulnerability might be the time to do it. You might go for a number if you bid, or collect one if you pass.

2♦x might not have seemed like a great spot to Multon as he put down his dummy on a trump lead, but Zimmermann had something in reserve. He won the trump cheaply in hand, played two rounds of clubs ruffing in hand, then played ♥A and ruffed a heart. With the ♦K onside he could not be prevented from scoring three more trumps in hand; a painless +180, but not enough. Against 3♠ the defenders astutely led diamonds and scored their four plain-suit winners and two ruffs for 200. A mere flesh-wound, but an imp for Lavazza.

An overtrick imp for Zimmermann when an ace got away against an unexciting suit game made the margin 51 again.

Bd: 25	North
Dir: North	♠ 98764
Vul: E/W	♥ Q92
	♦ Q43
	♣ J10
West	East
♠ AQ10	♠ KJ3
♥ 653	♥ J1087
♦ A1052	♦ K7
♣ 974	♣ AK52
	South
	♠ 52
	♥ AK4
	♦ J986
	♣ Q863

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Fantoni	Sementa	Nunes
3NT	Pass	1NT	Pass
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Z'mann	Bocchi	Multon	Madala
2♣	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
All Pass			

Nunes led three rounds of hearts against 3NT. Now it seems South might come under pressure on three rounds of spades, but then South can surrender the diamonds, leaving them to North, as now there are no entries to set up the suit. Declarer simply played for clubs to be 3-3 and went down in due course.

Madala led a top heart and shifted to clubs himself. That might appear to give declarer some additional chances, but in fact he too really had no choice but to play on clubs and in due course went down one. Again, no swing.

Bd: 26	North
Dir: East	♠ 6
Vul: Both	♥ KQ3
	♦ AJ42
	♣ AK953
West	East
♠ 95	♠ K8743
♥ J8764	♥ A109
♦ 96	♦ 1087
♣ QJ64	♣ 107
	South
	♠ AQJ102
	♥ 52
	♦ KQ53
	♣ 82

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Fantoni	Sementa	Nunes
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	3♦
Pass	4NT(1)	Pass	4♠
Pass	6♦	All Pass	5♣

(1) 2 keycards

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Z'mann	Bocchi	Multon	Madala
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

Unpleasant as we might all find it to open the South hand 1NT, the rest of the auction was simple enough. South showed spades and diamonds and then cue-bid in spades, and over the Turbo 4NT showing two keycards he cooperated with 5♣, letting Fantoni jump to 6♦. On a heart lead and trump shift Nunes followed a simple line. He tried to ruff out

clubs, then took a ruffing finesse against the ♠K. His rationale for his misguess was that East's failure to shift to a spade at trick two argued for the ♠K to be with West. The line was simple, the operation unsuccessful, the patient died.

Bocchi played 6♦ on a trump lead. He won in hand (with the ♦A, not the ♦J, which subsequently turned out to be critical, can you see why?) and took an immediate spade finesse (Bravo!). Then he played ♠A and ruffed a spade, to get the bad news, followed by three rounds of clubs, ruffing in dummy as East pitched a heart. On the fourth spade West made the fatal error of discarding a heart (see below) so declarer was allowed to ruff low and had reached this ending (with North on lead). Declarer can afford one loser:

<p>♠ --- ♥ J87 ♦ 9 ♣ Q</p>	<p>♠ --- ♥ KQ3 ♦ J ♣ 9</p>	<p>♠ K ♥ A10 ♦ 108 ♣ ---</p>
	<p>♠ Q ♥ 52 ♦ KQ ♣ ---</p>	

Declarer led a top heart, giving East a choice of poisons. If he went up with the ace and played back a trump to stop the cross-ruff, declarer would draw the last trump and squeeze West in hearts and clubs, hence the necessity to unblock the ♦A at trick one to leave the lead in South. If East ducked the ♥A declarer would be left with a high cross-ruff.

Had West ruffed in on the fourth spade, East would have had two defenses in the pictured ending. The first is to win the ♥A and return a heart, letting East pitch his ♠K when declarer tries to ruff a major-suit in dummy. The second is to duck the ♥Q and again to pitch a spade when declarer ruffs his club in dummy.

At double-dummy, there is no defense after the winning spade finesse if at trick three declarer plays on clubs. He can establish the long club using a trump and heart entries to do so. It is certainly not clear to do that but it is also not clear that Bocchi's committal decision to play on spades at once was better than Nunes' line—except inasmuch as it was clearly 17 imps better on the scoresheet. 71-37 now.

**If you nail a tool shed closed, how do you put the hammer away?**

Bd: 27  
Dir: South  
Vul: None

North  
♠ K4  
♥ K54  
♦ J9865  
♣ Q97

West  
♠ J9752  
♥ J3  
♦ Q2  
♣ KJ83

East  
♠ AQ1083  
♥ 92  
♦ K74  
♣ A106

South  
♠ 6  
♥ AQ10876  
♦ A103  
♣ 542

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	2♠	Dbl	2♥
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♠	2♥	3♥	1♥
3♠	All Pass		Pass

Game was distinctly poor in the Closed Room but excellent in the Open Room, a function of South's opening bid. Multon's decision to stay out of game after issuing a strong invitation in spades might look swingy, but he could point to the percentages while his opponents were happily inscribing 6 imps in the In-column. Both tables guessed the location of the black honors, neither being exactly a sure thing, and the match score went to 71-43.

Bd: 28  
Dir: West  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ KJ54  
♥ 1087  
♦ KJ82  
♣ 109

West  
♠ 7  
♥ KQ65432  
♦ Q95  
♣ 86

East  
♠ Q986  
♥ AJ  
♦ A106  
♣ K532

South  
♠ A1032  
♥ 9  
♦ 743  
♣ AQJ74

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
3♥	Pass	4♥	DbI
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

It was hard to see how Lavazza could lose out here. With the ♣A offside 4♥ went down a trick, but now 4♠ seems to be excellent. The defenders might get a trump, a diamond and a club but what else could they take? It was not so simple. After Multon led the ♥A, having missed the double-dummy lead of a small diamond at trick one (we can all sympathize), he shifted to a low club—as good as anything. Had he played a second heart declarer's route home involves ruffing, leading a diamond to the jack, taking two club finesses, then playing a spade to the ten and finally cross-ruffing clubs and hearts.

In fact, at trick two Bocchi won the club shift in hand and untypically erred by cashing the ♠K (he needed to repeat the club finesse or lead a spade to the ten to preserve the small trumps for the cross-ruff). Now he set about the clubs and spades but when both suits failed to behave he could not get enough diamonds and hearts away on the clubs. He finished up winning three clubs and one diamond, but only five trumps; East could over-ruff declarer on the fifth club. 4 imps to Zimmerman, leading 75-43 instead of 11 the other way.

Bd: 29	North
Dir: North	♠ AK5
Vul: Both	♥ Q632
	♦ 65
	♣ AKQ3

West	East
♠ 4	♠ QJ862
♥ AKJ108	♥ 5
♦ KJ7	♦ AQ943
♣ 10752	♣ J6

South
♠ 10973
♥ 974
♦ 1082
♣ 984

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
2♥	1♣(1)	1♠	Pass
	Pass	3♦	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠ (xfer)
	2NT	All Pass	

Fantoni's forcing club was about to get him somewhere inconvenient, had it not been that East and West wanted to join in the fun. Although Duboin could pull the plug on what sounded like a forcing auction, 3♦ was a little high. However, with the red suits behaving in predictable fashion and the defenders leading clubs at every turn, declarer could emerge with +110 via two spade ruffs in West. Not enough. The 18-19 2♣ opening saw Madala transfer to 2NT and Bocchi had to sweat to emerge with -200 (Zimmerman shifted to a heart when in with the fourth club and declarer scored his ♥Q). Still, 3 imps to Zimmermann, up 78-43.

After a quiet partscore on which both Wests saved against their opponents' 3NT in 1NT (down only 100) we came to:

Bd: 31	North	
Dir: South	♠ 87542	
Vul: N/S	♥ A765	
	♦ ---	
	♣ 10532	
	West	East
	♠ J10	♠ AQ3
	♥ Q	♥ J10
	♦ KJ76432	♦ AQ85
	♣ A84	♣ Q976
	South	
	♠ K96	
	♥ K98432	
	♦ 109	
	♣ KJ	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
3♦	4♥	4NT	2♥
5♦	All Pass		Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Z'mann</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Multon</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♦	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Two very different auctions to the same spot. Fantoni unerringly put his fingers on a spade lead. Nunes won the ♠K and shifted to hearts, and the deal was over. Down one.

In the other room Bocchi led the ♥A knowing West had no major-suit stops. Madala encouraged, but was that the right thing to do? Maybe he should have seen that a spade shift might be necessary. Bocchi continued hearts and Zimmermann ruffed and knew that if the spade finesse worked he was cold. The extra chance that he could play for was to duck a club after drawing trumps, hoping that West had a doubleton ♣K. Accordingly, he ducked a spade to

Madala. Then he could win the return (Madala played back a spade, correctly) before crossing to the ♣A at trick nine. Had the ♣K not fallen declarer would play off his trumps and take the spade finesse. When it fell, declarer could claim without needing the spade finesse. Very nicely done. 10 imps to Zimmermann meant that after a flat game on board 32 the set had closed at 40-40. Not perfect bridge, but very exciting. Now Zimmermann led 87-44 at the half.

## NEC Final (3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter): Zimmermann vs Lavazza

by Barry Rigal (with a little help from Rich)

The two teams had fought to a 40-40 tie in the second quarter, so Zimmermann would enter quarter number three with the same 43-imp lead he had after the first quarter. With the score 87-44, the Italians were used to fighting back. Could Zimmermann hold on? Only time and deals would tell.

But the Curse of Colker might be in play: When the Senior Editor watches, the imps dry up. With that to think about, off we go.

Bd: 33      North  
 Dir: North    ♠ 64  
 Vul: None     ♥ 63  
                   ♦ AJ1082  
                   ♣ J762

West  
 ♠ KQJ975  
 ♥ A9  
 ♦ 54  
 ♣ 543

East  
 ♠ 8  
 ♥ QJ87542  
 ♦ KQ96  
 ♣ A

South  
 ♠ A1032  
 ♥ K10  
 ♦ 73  
 ♣ KQ1098

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	Pass	1♥	1NT
Dbl	2NT	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	1♥	Dbl
Rdbl	2♦	4♥	All Pass

At both tables South led a top club against 4♥ and declarer won and tracked his spade. South rose with the ace and tried to cash his other top club. Declarer ruffed, played a top diamond to North's ace, and a

Bd: 34      North  
 Dir: East     ♠ J1092  
 Vul: N/S     ♥ ---  
                   ♦ AK87643  
                   ♣ 109

West  
 ♠ 876  
 ♥ KQJ97  
 ♦ J5  
 ♣ AQ8

East  
 ♠ KQ  
 ♥ A653  
 ♦ Q109  
 ♣ J632

South  
 ♠ A543  
 ♥ 10842  
 ♦ 2  
 ♣ K754

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♥	2♦	2♥	Pass
4♥	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♦	3♦	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Would someone please check the JCBL lost-and-found for Balicki's mind? We suspect he lost it on

this deal. South has the ♠A (a suit that his partner may or may not have four of), the ♣K behind the 1♣ opener, and four trumps. He also has a singleton in the suit of a partner who has announced a very good hand (at this vulnerability it sounds like the Italians are trying to steal from us). Balicki cashed the ♦AK and led a third round to kill dummy's queen. Duboin over-ruffed the ♥2, cashed the ♥KQ, and led a spade to the king and ace. Zmudzinski exited with the ♥10 to the ace, covered the ♣J with the king, and when the ♣9 showed up from Balicki Duboin saw light at the end of the tunnel. He knew Balicki had started with seven diamonds and by inference four spades (with five spades he would have bid 4♠ over 4♥, not double, and if Zmudzinski had five spades he most likely would have bid 4♠ over the double, so they rated to be 4-4). So North was 4=0=7=2 and—unless he was being Grosvenored—Balicki started with the doubleton ♣109. He confidently cashed the ♣Q and when the ten appeared he was in with +590.

In the Closed Room E/W were allowed to play 4♥ unmolested and on virtually the same sequence of plays once again declarer picked up the ♣109 to make his contract. That was 5 imps to Lavazza, who closed the lead to 38 at 87-49.

Bd: 35            North  
 Dir: South     ♠ Q1063  
 Vul: E/W       ♥ Q10873  
                    ♦ 8  
                    ♣ K84

West  
 ♠ A4  
 ♥ A4  
 ♦ AJ965  
 ♣ 10932

East  
 ♠ 52  
 ♥ K96  
 ♦ Q1043  
 ♣ QJ65

South  
 ♠ KJ987  
 ♥ J52  
 ♦ K72  
 ♣ A7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	2NT(♠)	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♦(1)	Pass	3♣(R)

All Pass

(1) Short diamonds

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	2NT(♠)	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♣(R)

All Pass

Both N/S pairs were able to invite game in spades while describing their hands. Balicki showed a singleton diamond, Bocchi showed his hearts. In neither case was South interested in advancing beyond the three-level. If E/W had been able to find a way into the auction they might have considered playing a minor-suit partscore. Ten tricks in clubs look likely to be made since the defenders will find it hard, though not impossible, to get both a diamond ruff and establish their spade winner. Still 87-49.

Bd: 36            North  
 Dir: West       ♠ AK54  
 Vul: Both       ♥ 73  
                    ♦ 10964  
                    ♣ A75

West  
 ♠ QJ2  
 ♥ 6  
 ♦ A53  
 ♣ QJ10643

East  
 ♠ 76  
 ♥ AQJ10852  
 ♦ KJ82  
 ♣ ---

South  
 ♠ 10983  
 ♥ K94  
 ♦ Q7  
 ♣ K982

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	1♣	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
2♣	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Both tables reached 4♥ here with a minimum of fuss. Both Souths led a top spade, covered in dummy, and North was in. Balicki guessed to return a passive trump and declarer finessed. That let Zmudzinski return a second top spade and then play a third. Declarer rumbled a few trumps, but had no real option except to finesse in diamonds; down 200.

Bocchi returned a very dangerous ♦10. If declarer could read the position he might actually make the hand now: win the ♦K and clear hearts, then lead a diamond to the queen and ace with a finesse coming back. Not surprisingly, Fantoni could not read the position. He finessed and the ♦J was covered by the queen and ace. Then he finessed to the ♦8 and tried to clear trumps from the top, needing only 3-3 diamonds to come home. Madala won the second trump, led a low spade to his partner, and got his diamond ruff to set the hand at once. And since Fantoni had nowhere to dispose of his small diamond, it was eventually down two. No swing.

Both N/S pairs played an entirely normal game that reduced eventually to a club finesse, and found it working. Then:

Bd: 38  
Dir: East  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ KQ963  
♥ K7  
♦ 7654  
♣ 105

West  
♠ 1087  
♥ J1085  
♦ Q1083  
♣ J6

East  
♠ AJ52  
♥ AQ64  
♦ KJ  
♣ Q92

South  
♠ 4  
♥ 932  
♦ A92  
♣ AK8743

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	2♠	1NT	Pass
All Pass		Pass	3♣

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♦(♥)	1♠	2♥	Pass
All Pass			3♣

Duboin's decision to lead a low trump as West strikes us as downright bizarre, but in a way he did exceedingly well, since declarer was indeed looking for heart ruffs in dummy. Zmudzinski took the ♣9 in hand and led a spade to the ten, queen and ace. The defenders shifted to the ♦K, ducked, but declarer won the next diamond and played ace and another trump. Sementa declined to unblock his ♣Q so he was thrown in with it to lead a heart or a spade around to dummy. (Note that Duboin's helpful signal at trick two cost a trick.)

In the other room Nunes' lead of the ♥J let Fantoni overtake with the queen to shift to a trump. With the tension eliminated in the heart suit declarer has no play for more than his six top tricks. 3imps to Zimmermann; 90-49 now.



Bd: 39  
Dir: South  
Vul: Both

North  
♠ KQJ9832  
♥ 73  
♦ ---  
♣ Q985

West  
♠ 74  
♥ A84  
♦ AKJ92  
♣ AK3

East  
♠ A5  
♥ KQ6  
♦ Q8654  
♣ J76

South  
♠ 106  
♥ J10952  
♦ 1073  
♣ 1042

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
2NT	3♠	3NT	Pass
Closed Room			All Pass

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♣(F)	3♠	3NT	Pass
All Pass			Pass

Nunes must have been close to a move over 3NT here, having guaranteed only 15-17 balanced, but maybe a king over average is not enough. After the lead of the ♠10 Fantoni threw North in with a spade in the three-card ending to lead clubs for him, to gain an overtrick. In the other room no such endplay was possible when Zmudzinski retained his ♠10. 91-49 for Zimmermann.

Bd: 40  
Dir: West  
Vul: None

North  
♠ KQ9  
♥ A1096  
♦ A762  
♣ 43

West  
♠ 82  
♥ KQ83  
♦ K94  
♣ AK95

East  
♠ 10753  
♥ 5  
♦ Q853  
♣ 10872

South  
♠ AJ64  
♥ J742  
♦ J10  
♣ QJ6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
1NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♣(F)	Dbl	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	All Pass	

Madala guessed well to stay low when Bocchi denied extras at his second turn. Fantoni led a club and Bocchi put up an honor from dummy (ducking might have been an option here). A low diamond went around to East for a top club through dummy. Bocchi was forced to ruff the third club and now crossed to dummy with a spade to lead a heart to the ten. When it held, he laid down the ♥A, a strange looking play, and the 4-1 trump break left him unable to take more than seven tricks.

In the other room the defenders led the ♥10 against 1NT. Declarer won in hand and led a diamond to the queen and a diamond back to the king and ace. The fall of the ♦J10 was very helpful, but now the defenders peeled off four spades and led the ♥J through declarer. This was covered all around, and Balicki tucked declarer back in hand with a diamond to give up two more hearts at the end for down two. The 4 imps to Zimmermann gave them a 95-49 lead, and Massimo Ortensi as coach of the Lavazza team made a personal appeal to Colker to stop watching: "How can we gain any imps if neither side scores any?" Obediently Colker passed over the reins to the Junior Editor and all hell immediately broke loose.

Bd: 41	North
Dir: North	♠ 754
Vul: E/W	♥ 10753
	♦ A954
	♣ 94

West
♠ K93
♥ 962
♦ KJ72
♣ AK7

East
♠ AQJ2
♥ Q
♦ Q63
♣ QJ1063

South
♠ 1086
♥ AKJ84
♦ 108
♣ 852

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦(GF)	Pass	2♥	Dbl
Pass	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♣	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	1♣(F)	1♥
1♠(1)	3♥	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	5♣	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

A virtually unopposed sequence for Duboin-Sementa saw them have no trouble in stopping low and avoiding 3NT. Fantoni, by contrast, showed 14+ and then passed over 3♥ with nothing to say. His jump at the next turn suggested clubs unbalanced and a smattering of extras, though diligent review of his 13 cards fails to suggest what extras he might have thought he had. Nunes certainly assumed that he would have two first-round controls, and although West made the last error it would appear that East was at the very least somewhat complicit. 12 imps for Lavazza; trailing 91-65.

Free from the constraints of RC's favorite 4-3-3-3 ten counts, the computer dialed up another snorter. This one looks just right for Bobby Wolff's favorite dictum: "Last bidder gets the zero."

Bd: 42	North
Dir: East	♠ Q
Vul: Both	♥ AQ754
	♦ 9
	♣ KJ9643

West
♠ KJ9642
♥ J96
♦ J54
♣ Q

East
♠ A10853
♥ ---
♦ 8762
♣ A1082

South
♠ 7
♥ K10832
♦ AKQ103
♣ 75

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
		Pass	1♥
1♠	3♠	4♥	Pass
4♠	4NT	Dbl.	5♣
Pass	5♥	5♠	Pass
Pass	6♥	Dbl.	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
		Pass	1♥
1♠	3♦	4♠	5♦
5♠	Dbl.	Pass	6♥
6♠	Dbl.	All Pass	

Balicki used Blackwood to discover that his side was off two keycards. I'm not sure what opening bid he thought his partner could have to make the sacrifice necessary (and of course fit jumps would have made his life easy since that way he would have been able to let his partner take control over 5♠). But he bid on and Sementa informed him of his mistake.

In the other room the jump to 3♦ by Bocchi got everyone into a tizzy. Fantoni's 4♠ bid persuaded Nunes he had no defense; maybe the 4♥ bid found by Sementa was a better idea. But again a very unilateral position by Nunes was harshly punished. Matching 500s for Lavazza changed the whole complexion of the match; it was 95-74 now.

Bd: 43                      North  
 Dir: South                ♠ AK976  
 Vul: None                ♥ A  
                               ♦ KJ104  
                               ♣ 1084

West                                      East  
 ♠ Q3                                      ♠ 10542  
 ♥ KJ5                                      ♥ Q84  
 ♦ AQ32                                    ♦ 85  
 ♣ AQ73                                    ♣ KJ65

South  
 ♠ J8  
 ♥ 1097632  
 ♦ 976  
 ♣ 92

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
2♦(18-19)	2♠	Dbl	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1♣	1♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	2♣	Pass
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Duboin got his hand off his chest at his first turn and made the logical move over the negative double to introduce his cheapest suit. The defenders had four top winners but declarer had nine tricks in the form of a spade, a diamond, two hearts and five trumps by ruffing a spade in the West hand. That meant +110. Against 2♠ Fantoni led a heart and Bocchi won to lead a club. Fantoni shifted to a spade and Nunes let dummy's eight hold. That let declarer run the ♦9 from dummy and repeat the finesse. Declarer ended up winning one diamond and one heart and all five of his trumps. Down one, but 2 imps for Lavazza, down 95-77.

Bd: 44                      North  
 Dir: West                ♠ KQ974  
 Vul: N/S                ♥ K964  
                               ♦ A6  
                               ♣ K3

West                                      East  
 ♠ A1065                                    ♠ J832  
 ♥ 83                                        ♥ 10  
 ♦ Q1097                                    ♦ K53  
 ♣ A96                                        ♣ J10874

South  
 ♠ ---  
 ♥ AQJ752  
 ♦ J842  
 ♣ Q52

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT(1)	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Cezary Balicki perpetrated one of the more uncouth calls I've seen in a long time when he used Blackwood over a 2♥ bid that was consistent with an invitational hand with hearts. On a trump lead 5♥ would need the ♠A right or the suit to be 4-4 or a minor miracle somewhere along the way. Not to worry, though. Duboin led the ♣A and that speeded things up a lot. An imp to Zimmermann when in the other room declarer in 4♥ took no chances and drew trumps before taking a ruffing finesse in spades.

Bd: 45                      North  
 Dir: North                ♠ K632  
 Vul: Both                ♥ ---  
                               ♦ AJ1073  
                               ♣ Q876

West                                      East  
 ♠ A94                                      ♠ QJ107  
 ♥ A75                                      ♥ J62  
 ♦ KQ862                                    ♦ 4  
 ♣ A10                                        ♣ KJ432

South  
 ♠ 85  
 ♥ KQ109843  
 ♦ 95  
 ♣ 95



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥
1NT	Pass	2♣	2♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	Pass	3♥
3NT	All Pass		

Both tables reached 3NT, but it was much harder for Duboin-Sementa when their opponents gave them a rally hard time. 2♥x rates to be down just 200, by the way. Balicki led the ♦J. Duboin won, led the ♣A10 overtaking with the jack to clear clubs (and pitching hearts from hand). When a low diamond came back to Zmudzinski's nine Duboin ducked. He ended up losing one spade, one club and two diamonds.

In the other room Bocchi led a low diamond to the nine and queen. He covered the ♣10 on the second round of clubs and declarer ran the ♠Q, which held, then cleared the clubs. When a diamond came back he could win and cash his heart trick, then endplay North with a spade to lead diamonds or with a diamond to lead spades. Again, no swing.

Rich Colker threatened to look at another deal; Ortensi threatened him with Bocchi: "You don't want to make me angry!" Colker retreated to type up set two, and the Card Gods gave us their next offering.

Bd: 46	North
Dir: East	♠ Q87
Vul: None	♥ QJ10984
	♦ 762
	♣ 9

West	East
♠ K1096	♠ A
♥ 62	♥ AK5
♦ J104	♦ AQ93
♣ KJ52	♣ AQ1084
	South
	♠ J5432
	♥ 73
	♦ K85
	♣ 763

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	2♦	3♥	Pass
2♦	2♥	3NT	Pass
3♠	Pass		Pass
4NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	1♥(♠)	1♣(F)	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
	Pass	3NT	All Pass

It sounds as if Fantoni showed clubs and diamonds by his second bid, then real extras. Nunes may not have been able to raise clubs at his second turn but surely he owed his partner a club raise somewhere along the line.

Duboin heard his partner show a good hand (though Antonio *always* thinks he has a good hand) but whatever the combination of the cue-bid and the notrump bid were supposed to show, the message did not get through. Until we subject them to a polygraph the jury is still out. No swing at 490 and two disgruntled Easts.

On our next hand game is cold, though not perhaps the games you were thinking of.

Bd: 47	North
Dir: South	♠ J95
Vul: N/S	♥ AQ102
	♦ J5
	♣ Q1064

West	East
♠ Q10874	♠ K
♥ J6	♥ K987
♦ A643	♦ K1087
♣ KJ	♣ A953

South
♠ A632
♥ 543
♦ Q92
♣ 872

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
	1♠	2♣	Pass
	2♦	2NT	Pass
	3♣	3♦	Pass
	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	1NT	Pass
Pass	Pass	Rdbl	Pass
2♥	Dbl		
3♦	All Pass		

Fantoni found his way to the best game here, 2♥xx, after Bocchi's [fill in an adjective] double of 2♥. Why

Nunes pulled this I do not know; presumably the redouble did not guarantee heart length, but even so eight tricks are clearly very easy. The hand plays just fine at notrump in essence, with club ruffs on top of that if they do not lead trumps at once.

Sementa played 3NT on a heart lead from South. Balicki shifted riskily to the  $\diamond J$  when on lead against hearts. Declarer had five red-suit winners and could get two clubs and a spade, but the defenders were able to establish the  $\clubsuit 10$  in time and there was nothing East could do. Since  $3\diamond$  proved very straightforward, losing two aces and a trump, it was 101-77 with one deal to go.

Ortensi was wrestling Colker out of the room by now, as the last deal flashed up on the screen.

Bd: 48            North  
 Dir: West         $\spadesuit$  J743  
 Vul: E/W         $\heartsuit$  AQ964  
                     $\diamond$  Q  
                     $\clubsuit$  K32

West  
 $\spadesuit$  1092  
 $\heartsuit$  7532  
 $\diamond$  1096  
 $\clubsuit$  QJ6

East  
 $\spadesuit$  85  
 $\heartsuit$  K  
 $\diamond$  J8532  
 $\clubsuit$  109854

South  
 $\spadesuit$  AKQ6  
 $\heartsuit$  J108  
 $\diamond$  AK74  
 $\clubsuit$  A7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Zmudzinski</i>
Pass	1 $\heartsuit$	Pass	1 $\spadesuit$
Pass	2 $\spadesuit$	Pass	2NT(R)
Pass	3 $\spadesuit$ (Min)	Pass	4 $\clubsuit$
Pass	4 $\diamond$	Pass	4NT
Pass	5 $\clubsuit$	Pass	5 $\heartsuit$
Pass	5NT	Pass	6 $\heartsuit$
Pass	7 $\spadesuit$	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	1 $\heartsuit$	Pass	2 $\clubsuit$
Pass	2 $\spadesuit$	Pass	2NT
Pass	3 $\clubsuit$	Pass	3 $\heartsuit$
Pass	4 $\clubsuit$	Pass	4 $\diamond$
Pass	4 $\heartsuit$	Pass	4NT
Pass	5 $\clubsuit$	Pass	5 $\diamond$
Pass	6 $\clubsuit$	Pass	6NT
All Pass			

Bocchi-Madala did perfectly to get to the only 100% slam. The Poles managed to get to a 50% slam after some confusion about what bids were asking for what. If all our confused auctions had such a potentially happy ending we'd all be world champions. Or at least NEC champions. Not today though (the  $\heartsuit K$  refused to cooperate; poetic justice maybe because of the slam earlier in set one, bid by Sementa, and down on the losing diamond finesse). The margin was down to 10 imps at 101-91, with 16 deals to go.

[ Due to time limitations, coverage of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the NEC Cup final will appear in tonight's bulletin]

## 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.