



NEC Bridge Festival

Sunday, February 14, 2010
Bulletin Number 7

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

Apteker-Gower Triumph in Asuka Cup Shiratori-Shiratori & Ijuin-Ijuin Tie in JCBL Pairs



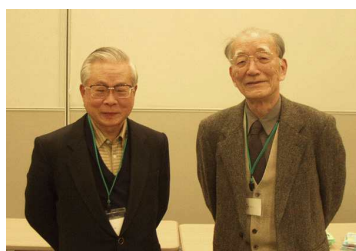
Asuka Cup Runners-Up



Asuka Cup Winners



Asuka Cup 2nd Runners Up



JCBL Cup 2-A Winners



JCBL Cup 2-B Winners

Top Finishers in Asuka Cup And JCBL Pairs

Rank	Asuka Cup		JCBL Pairs	
	Pair	Score	Pair	Score
1	Alon Apteker—Craig Gower	2785.5	Masaki Shiratori—Masato Shiratori	29
2	Osamu Iiyama—Shunichi Haga	2742.0	Takako Ijuin—Akio Ijuin	29
3	Martin Garvey—Jonathan Cooke	2708.5	Tadashi Tsuyama—Koichi Okitani	27
4	Noriaki Koike—Hiroaki Miura	2683.0		
5	Mark LaForge—Fu Cheung	2669.0		
6	Michal Kopecky—Milan Macura	2664.5		
7	Nie Weiping—Phoebe Lin	2618.9		
8	David Gold—David Bakhshi	2595.5		
9	Matt Mullamphy—Ron Klinger	2577.5		
10	Kenji Miyakuni—Yukiko Tokunaga	2571.5		

NEC Cup Bridge Festival 2010

Domo Arigato

On behalf of all the participants, we would like to thank our corporate sponsor **NEC** for once again joining with **JCBL** to produce a bridge event of the highest quality and competitiveness. Each year the **NEC Bridge Festival** attracts the best players in the world, many of whom consider the NEC one of their best bridge experiences. Once again, congratulations to the sponsors and especially to the **JCBL** staff.

Yokohama, and especially the Pacifico, are wonderful places and each year we marvel at the changes (most for the better) and development in the area. The Exhibition Hall is a first-class playing venue. The weather this year was pleasant—if a bit rainy—and Japan was a welcome relief for those of us who will return home to huge snow drifts and the need to dig out from under record snowfalls. As always everyone has been warm and friendly, and it is our continuing great pleasure to be invited back each year to reunite with our many friends and to share the happy times, fun and excitement of this tournament. Your kindness and generosity warm our hearts. And since today is Valentine's Day, we would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a day of love and joy—not just for today, but for every day in the year to come.

The significant prizes and broad participation continue to make the **NEC Bridge Festival** an important event on the bridge calendar, and one which continues to grow in prestige. This year's field of 48 teams in the NEC Cup included more top world-class teams than ever, as well as many improving Japanese teams. We hope our role in this tournament has contributed in some small way to Japan's and JCBL's success.

The Bulletin Editors are grateful to those who provided us with deals, stories and other material to help us keep you informed. Many thanks to *Yoshida-san* for his leadership and friendship. Thanks also to *Richard Grenside*, tormented Director, who as ever ran a smooth and pleasant tournament; to *Sue Grenside* for her friendship and good humor (and for keeping Richard in check); to *Omasa-san*, for his awesome technical, computer, and directing support; to *Watanabe-san (Yumi)* for her wonderful pictures (which as usual we subjected to our peculiar sense of humor); also to *Nakamura-san* for his pictures, but also for suffering with us well into the wee morning hours (he must surely be the unluckiest person in Japan to have drawn the short straw again this year) so that you would have daily bulletins fresh with your morning coffee; to *Tashiro-san* and *Suzuki-san* for their hard work and help with many things, both technical and otherwise; to *Hayashi-san* for his work with BBO and to BBO itself; and to the many who brought us food and moral support during our long work sessions. Thanks also to the many volunteers who perform the myriad functions critical to making this tournament a success, while we remain oblivious to what is going on around us, absorbed in our work. As you know we consider all of you part of our extended family here in Japan. And finally, many thanks to the players, who produced such a rich source of exciting, top-level bridge for us to write about.



Warmest regards, *Rich, Barry, and the Bulletin Staff*

Breaking an Entry

In England the crime of housebreaking or burglary is sometimes referred to as breaking and entry. It is not approved of. By contrast, at the bridge table breaking an entry, whether a Merrimac Coup or the like, is positively encouraged. An unusual example of the genre came up in the Yokohama Swiss teams:

Bd: 17 *Louk Verhees*
Dir: North ♠ A1032
Vul: None ♥ A74
 ♦ 98
 ♣ 8643

Peter Gill
♠ J54
♥ J9863
♦ KQ32
♣ 10

Paul Gosney
♠ K76
♥ Q2
♦ 10754
♣ K975

Ricco van Prooijen
♠ Q98
♥ K105
♦ AJ6
♣ AQJ2

Against the final contract of 3NT by van Prooijen, Gill led the ♥9: A, 2, 5. Next the ♣3 was led to the queen, followed by the ♠8. Gill rose to the occasion and boldly inserted the jack(!)—a critical play which denied declarer an entry to the long spade once it was established. Van Prooijen was forced now to win dummy's ace. He led a second club to the jack, Gill

discarding the ♥6 (he later admitted this was an error; he should have pitched a diamond). Next the ♠Q was ducked all around, and a third spade led to Gosney's king. Now Gosney found another key play by leading the ♦10 (pinning dummy's nine-eight to recover from Gill's earlier error) to the jack, queen and eight, and Gill exited with a low heart to the queen. Van Prooijen allowed this to hold the trick and Gosney accurately switched back to a low diamond to the ace. Van Prooijen cashed the ♥K and exited with his last diamond, hoping Gosney would be forced to win and later concede a ninth trick in clubs. Not on this day. Gill won and cashed out for down two, -200 for N/S.

The Aussies (E/W here) won the 7-board match 40-19 in imps (28-2 in VPs), eventually finishing sixth in the event.



Peter Gill

In Absentia

These two players from the Zimmerman team that finished second in the NEC Cup yesterday, team captain Pierre Zimmermann (left) and his partner Frank Multon (right), were absent for the team photo that appeared in yesterday's bulletin. Here are their smiling faces.



NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 15th 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

Asuka Cup: Second Session

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 4 North
 Dlr: West ♠ Q52
 Vul: Both ♥ 109652
 ♦ 10742
 ♣ 10

West
 ♠ AK7
 ♥ Q
 ♦ KJ8653
 ♣ QJ7

East
 ♠ J9843
 ♥ 7
 ♦ AQ
 ♣ A9632

South
 ♠ 106
 ♥ AKJ843
 ♦ 9
 ♣ K54

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Apteker</i>		<i>Gower</i>	
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♥
Dbf	Pass	4♠	All Pass

This deal offered a challenge for N/S in the bidding and in the defense. At the table I was watching North offered proper respect for her opponents by passing throughout. One can understand her reticence, but at another table as I was reviewing the action I saw a North player bounce to 4♥ at his first turn, which looks to be going just a little too far in the opposite direction.

First, let's look at 4♠. Best defense appears to be repeated heart plays. However, declarer can cope with this. He pitches a club from dummy and ruffs in hand, then *ducks* the first trump, whether South puts in the ten or not. Declarer can win the return in hand, flying up with the ♣A or ruffing a heart, then cashing one more trump, unblocking the two diamond winners, and then taking out the final trump to run the diamonds.

Can the defenders do better? Yes they can. South must lead a diamond to trick two. Declarer cannot now duck a trump or North wins and gives his partner the ruff. If East draws two trumps and takes the ♦AQ, planning to overtake the second, the 4-1 break gets in his way. He has no choice but to give up a club, so ten tricks is the limit.

As for some losing options, after a heart lead and diamond shift if declarer wins the ♠A and leads a low spade towards his hand the defenders win and play a third trump, leaving the diamonds blocked.

Oh, and in case you're wondering, an initial diamond lead also fails for the defense. Declarer wins, cashes the two top spades, takes three diamonds to shake his heart loser, and gives up a club, losing just one trick in each black suit.

Gotta Love This Game



"YOU, play the ACE!"



"Are you talkin' to me?"



"Get around, get around, I get around..."



"There, does that feel better?"



"Klinger, you incredible..."



Hair today...



gone tomorrow



"Th-Th-Th-Th-Th-That's all, folks."

NEC Final (4th Quarter): Zimmermann vs Lavazza

by Barry Rigal

Sixteen deals to go. 10 imps (but also a pair of determined Poles and Italians) standing between Lavazza and glory. In case of a tie, Zimmermann's ½ imp for finishing first in the Round Robin might loom large.

Bd: 49
Dir: North
Vul: None

North
♠ K5
♥ A74
♦ AQ7
♣ A10732

West
♠ QJ642
♥ K963
♦ KJ10
♣ 9

East
♠ 983
♥ QJ10
♦ 9653
♣ QJ4

South
♠ A107
♥ 852
♦ 842
♣ K865

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
	1♣(F)	Pass	1♠(no MAJ)
Dbl	1NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

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

All Pass

(1) Better spades than hearts

Fantoni got to play 1NT virtually undisturbed, having rebid 1NT to show 15-17. The defenders led spades and declarer drove out the defenders' club trick and could afford the diamond finesse in the ending to come to a ninth trick. In the other room clubs offered no real extra chances over notrump. Duboin tried for an endplay but was eventually reduced to the diamond finesse. 1 imp for Zimmermann; 102-91. Had the diamond finesse failed it would have been 5 imps.



"He's always looking down on us."

Bd: 50
Dir: East
Vul: N/S

North
♠ Q62
♥ 107
♦ QJ1093
♣ K74

West
♠ 103
♥ Q43
♦ K74
♣ A9832

East
♠ KJ954
♥ AKJ9862
♦ ---
♣ 6

South
♠ A87
♥ 5
♦ A8652
♣ QJ105

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

Bocchi was never going to bid a slam that required the partner of the take-out doubler to have a spade honor. When Madala bid 2♦ he was almost sure not to have four trumps so even facing the doubleton ♠Q slam might be very poor. Balicki had a chance; his "combination call-out" 2NT bid—Poland's answer to Reverse Rosenkrantz Help-Suit tries—was a long-suit try in spades. Had Zmudzinski bid 3♣ he might have shown at a lower level that he had no spade honor. As it was, the partnership teetered on the brink of what would have been the third 50% slam of the match. I'm sure we'd all rather win matches some other way (not that Balicki would have rejected the 11 imps that would have been riding on the location of the ♠Q). No swing, though.



"So how much do you think I can get for your autograph?"

Bd: 51
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ A976
 ♥ AJ5
 ♦ K92
 ♣ AJ4

West
 ♠ QJ
 ♥ 8642
 ♦ Q543
 ♣ 1052

East
 ♠ K1052
 ♥ 107
 ♦ AJ8
 ♣ Q863

South
 ♠ 843
 ♥ KQ93
 ♦ 1076
 ♣ K97

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

Both tables played 1NT. The only issue was overtricks. Both Easts led a spade and West continued the suit when his jack was allowed to hold. Fantoni ducked two spades, and the defenders shifted to diamonds. Declarer ducked and later misguessed the diamond suit to hold himself to 90. Duboin took the second spade, ran hearts, pitching a diamond from hand, then endplayed East with the fourth spade for an overtrick. An elegant imp back to Lavazza, who trailed 102-92.

Bd: 52
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ Q103
 ♥ K754
 ♦ 864
 ♣ Q74

West
 ♠ AK8
 ♥ 83
 ♦ Q10752
 ♣ J52

East
 ♠ J542
 ♥ Q92
 ♦ KJ9
 ♣ 983

South
 ♠ 976
 ♥ AJ106
 ♦ A3
 ♣ AK106

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

Fantoni's first and second doubles did not guarantee shape, just high cards. He must have been delighted with the way things progressed. Madala avoided the top spade lead (clearly a good moment to do so) but led a trump instead to pickle Bocchi's queen. Declarer guessed clubs as well and had +170. Duboin was in some trouble in 1NT. He won the diamond lead and played hearts from the top (no joy) and clubs from the top (deep joy). Mind you, +90 was a loss of twoimps, but it could have been so much worse. Zimmermann 104-92.

Bd: 53
 Dir: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ Q3
 ♥ QJ42
 ♦ K873
 ♣ AJ7

West
 ♠ AKJ96
 ♥ A
 ♦ Q1042
 ♣ 1063

East
 ♠ 8742
 ♥ K86
 ♦ J6
 ♣ Q854

South
 ♠ 105
 ♥ 109753
 ♦ A95
 ♣ K92

Open Room

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

When Bocchi stretched to raise to 2♠ (note Fantoni's silence over this bid) Madala hoped for a tad more useful cards in dummy, so raised himself to game—not exactly a pessimistic decision, either. On the top heart lead Madala played to ensure down one after the trump queen fell by crossing to dummy with a trump to take his discard.

Zmudzinski failed to take his discard, but went after diamonds once he had cashed the top trumps. The cards forgave, with the ♣9 well placed for him, but

Briggida does not appreciate being taken for granted. 5imps to Zimmermann, up 109-92.

The number of weak and strong notrumps for N/S this set, and thus swings from the Fantoni-Nunes system, seems high. But even the pairs playing a "strong" notrump can differ about valuations. Here came another more serious swing along those lines.

Bd: 54 North
 Dir: East ♠ Q108432
 Vul: E/W ♥ A95
 ♦ 432
 ♣ K

West
 ♠ 75
 ♥ KQJ
 ♦ KJ5
 ♣ AQJ73

East
 ♠ KJ9
 ♥ 32
 ♦ AQ97
 ♣ 10854

South
 ♠ A6
 ♥ 108764
 ♦ 1086
 ♣ 962

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

3NT by East on the ♠A lead was not challenging. Declarer lost a spade, a club and a heart. Of course when declared by East the contract is safe (on a heart lead and spade shift declarer can afford to misguess spades and still make 3NT thanks to the avoidance/safety-play in clubs). Since Zmudzinski may not escape unscathed in the rest of this set, let's take a moment to credit those imps to his decision to open a Polish club and upgrade his hand to 18-19. With a small doubleton in a major, you can see more than one way for his action to gain.

3NT by West on a spade lead was a straight toss-up. The ♠9 would lead to happiness, the ♠J to despair. Madala guessed wrong. Nunes won his ♠A and chewed things over for a while before returning a spade. The tempo of the first trick may have convinced him that declarer had a guess in spades, but one draws those inferences at one's own risk. 3NT went down 300 when declarer failed to follow

the Rabbi's rule. (Incidentally, we wish Rabbi Hellman all the best and hope to see him again here soon.) Zimmermann led by 123-92 now.

The next deal was a 4♠ contract that needed one of the red-suit finesses to work. Both tables played game the right way up and brought home 11 tricks. No swing. Time for the Lavazza charge.

Bd: 56 North
 Dir: West ♠ K43
 Vul: None ♥ K963
 ♦ KJ7
 ♣ A43

West
 ♠ AJ10972
 ♥ J108
 ♦ 96
 ♣ 106

East
 ♠ 85
 ♥ A754
 ♦ AQ543
 ♣ 98

South
 ♠ Q6
 ♥ Q2
 ♦ 1082
 ♣ KQJ752

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

Both tables reached 3NT, both declared it the "wrong" way up. Both Easts led a spade and both declarers found the correct technical move of rising with the queen, forcing the defender to win the suit and thus cut himself off from the long spades. So far so technically competent. But the difference was that Madala knew from the lead of the ♠8 that his partner had two. He shifted to a diamond and found his partner with the perfect hand to defeat the game. Zmudzinski had to deal with the possibility that his partner had started life with, e.g., ♠854 ♥A754 ♦AJ54 ♣98. The ♠5 would be the systemic lead from that holding. All MUD followers know that feeling, and if you play MUD you deserve to encounter it regularly.

If Balicki had three spades, a spade continuation might be necessary. There were two reasons, though, why it was unlikely. The first was that Balicki might have bid 3♠ over the double of 2♦; the second was that with a balanced 15-count Sementa might have bid 2NT at his first turn. If partner has the ♦AQ

and three spades he can revert to spades himself.

Zmudzinski guessed wrongly and continued spades. Declarer won in dummy, crossed to a club winner to set up a heart trick, then led a diamond to the $\diamond J$ and claimed 9 tricks a moment later. 123-102 now.

Bd: 57	North		
Dlr: North	\spadesuit 8		
Vul: E/W	\heartsuit 1092		
	\diamond 109853		
	\clubsuit AK43		
West		East	
\spadesuit KQ1092		\spadesuit J54	
\heartsuit J876		\heartsuit K5	
\diamond 7		\diamond AJ62	
\clubsuit Q95		\clubsuit 10872	
	South		
	\spadesuit A763		
	\heartsuit AQ43		
	\diamond KQ4		
	\clubsuit J6		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
	Pass	Pass	$1\clubsuit$
$1\spadesuit$	$2\diamond(NF)$	$2\spadesuit$	$3\diamond$

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
	Pass	Pass	$1NT$
Pass	$3\heartsuit(1)$	Pass	$3\spadesuit$
Dbf	$4\diamond$	All Pass	

(1) short spades, both minors

As a passed hand Sementa had a way to invite game with short spades. Duboin guessed well at the vulnerability to play his partner not to have anything to spare (when you've been down a road a thousand times before you get to know the lay of the land).

In $4\diamond$ Sementa needed both care and some favorable breaks. He won the spade lead and crossed to a club to take the heart finesse. Then he played to ruff two clubs high in dummy and one spade low in hand. That left him in possession of the first eight tricks, with $\diamond 10985$ and a losing heart in hand. When he led a trump to the ten and jack he could not be prevented from scoring two more trump tricks as the cards lay, thanks to the fall of the $\diamond 7$. East could win the diamond but could not prevent the $\diamond 5$ from scoring a trick.

In the other room Fantoni played safe for $3\diamond$ on a spade lead by following the cross-ruff without risking the heart finesse. Things were going well enough at

his table that he could spare overtrick imps. The only defense to $4\diamond$ is to lead two rounds of trumps, but no one would find that. 123-103 now. Again, note that the location of the $\heartsuit K$ represented a 6-imp swing to Lavazza.

Bd: 58	North		
Dlr: East	\spadesuit Q2		
Vul: Both	\heartsuit K7652		
	\diamond K7		
	\clubsuit 8752		
	West	East	
	\spadesuit A743	\spadesuit K865	
	\heartsuit AJ	\heartsuit 94	
	\diamond AJ9653	\diamond Q4	
	\clubsuit Q	\clubsuit A10943	
	South		
	\spadesuit J109		
	\heartsuit Q1083		
	\diamond 1082		
	\clubsuit KJ6		

Open Room

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

(1) Multi-purpose including...

(2) Splinter for spades (but not a power-house)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
		Pass	Pass
$1\diamond$	Pass	$1\spadesuit$	Pass
$4\clubsuit$	Pass	$4\diamond$	Pass
$4\heartsuit$	Pass	$5\clubsuit$	Pass
$5\diamond$	Pass	$5\spadesuit$	All Pass

Well bid by Bocchi-Madala. All those hours spent on system definition paid off here when both players could explore slam sensibly and still stay low. $4\spadesuit$ is not entirely safe on a heart lead if both diamonds and spades misbehave. But Nunes led an uninspired trump and declarer wrapped up 11 tricks. By contrast, Zmudzinski's $4\clubsuit$ rebid, while limited by his failure to open $1\clubsuit$, left Balicki expecting an important secondary honor in either spades or diamonds; change the $\diamond J$ to the $\diamond K$ and slam is quite playable, even on a heart lead. Against $5\spadesuit$ Duboin knew to lead hearts. When the diamond finesse lost that meant 13 imps to Lavazza, but well-deserved ones, since stopping in $4\spadesuit$ deserves to pick up something to par. 123-116 now; hearts were beating faster.

Bd: 59 North
 Dir: South ♠ AJ3
 Vul: None ♥ Q87543
 ♦ ---
 ♣ A985

West
 ♠ 9542
 ♥ A1092
 ♦ J8
 ♣ J73

East
 ♠ Q106
 ♥ J6
 ♦ KQ9654
 ♣ K2

South
 ♠ K87
 ♥ K
 ♦ A10732
 ♣ Q1064

♥ 87
 ♦ ---
 ♣ A9

West
 ♠ 9
 ♥ ---
 ♦ ---
 ♣ J73

East
 ♠ ---
 ♥ ---
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ K2

South
 ♠ ---
 ♥ ---
 ♦ 107
 ♣ Q10

Both declarers ruffed a heart with ♣Q, and when that could not be over-ruffed they could lead a diamond to dummy to force West to ruff in with the ♣J. They over-ruffed and led a heart to score one of the ♣109 at the death. Well played and 6 imps for Lavazza, trailing now 123-122.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♦ (9-13)
Pass	2NT	Pass	2♠
All Pass			3♣

Closed Room

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

Nunes' limited opening bid saw Fantoni scrambling for a sensible spot to play and clubs was it. Sementa forced to game facing a "real" opening, and the pair did well to avoid 3NT—or indeed 4♥, which is not without play, in the abstract. A trump lead might have worked well today, but Zmudzinski's spade lead would surely avoid criticism from all but the harshest critic (initials CB). The only other lead to set the hand is the ♦J, also not high on our most "likely lead list."

Both tables played the deal perfectly. They put in the ♠J, covered all around, knocked out the ♥A, won the spade return and took their discard, ruffed a heart, played ♦A and ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade, and led a third diamond. When West pitched his last heart, they had reached this position:



"I don't know about you, but I'm tired."

Bd: 60 North
 Dir: West ♠ QJ107
 Vul: N/S ♥ 104
 ♦ Q10964
 ♣ K2

West
 ♠ A4
 ♥ 8753
 ♦ KJ72
 ♣ Q87

East
 ♠ K98653
 ♥ AQ6
 ♦ ---
 ♣ AJ65

South
 ♠ 2
 ♥ KJ92
 ♦ A853
 ♣ 10943

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣(1)	Pass
2♦(2)	Pass	2♠	All Pass
(1) 16+ or ♠+♣ (Gazzilli)			
(2) 8+			

Closed Room

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

Bocchi caught a break here when his sequence left the final decision to his partner. Gazzilli forced Bocchi to rebid 2♠, denying "extras" (at least 16+), and Madala had no reason to know about the extra shape and decent controls facing him, so he passed 2♠. At the other table Balicki thought he needed to

catch up—given the way things had been going at his table—and leapt to game with limited justification. A 3♥ game-try might have let Zmudzinski join in and contribute his opinion.

Both tables led a club. Nunes' ten allowed Bocchi to build an extra club winner by force by covering with the ♣Q. He ended up losing two spades, a club and two hearts, but was under no pressure.

In 4♠ Balicki received a low club lead and the king forced the ace. If clubs are 4-2, maybe it is best to play to ruff the fourth club in dummy: win the lead, club to the queen, club towards the jack, then ruff the fourth club in dummy. This wins when the player with the short clubs has three spades, and never seems to cost.

With trumps 4-1, though, Balicki's only route to a ninth trick was to find Duboin discarding a heart on the second trump. Now declarer was allowed to establish a home for his fourth-round club loser. 4 imps to Lavazza, up 126-123.

Bd: 61 North
 Dlr: North ♠ KQJ2
 Vul: Both ♥ KJ92
 ♦ A5
 ♣ 863

West	East
♠ A108643	♠ 9
♥ A4	♥ 853
♦ K73	♦ QJ109862
♣ 109	♣ A2

South
 ♠ 75
 ♥ Q1076
 ♦ 4
 ♣ KQJ754

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

Everybody judged well to let E/W stop in a diamond partscore, Duboin did well facing Sementa's opening bid to restrain himself, not that hearts plays so terribly for N/S. Both defenders led a top club against 4♦. Balicki established the spades, ruffing with high trumps at the appropriate moment, and then knocked

out the ♦A. Sementa did not cash his side's club trick and now it got away on the long spades. Careless, but an imp to Zimmermann, down 126-124.

Bd: 62 North
 Dlr: East ♠ 10653
 Vul: None ♥ J42
 ♦ A2
 ♣ K853

West	East
♠ ---	♠ A984
♥ AKQ965	♥ 103
♦ J1043	♦ Q75
♣ J106	♣ A742
	South
	♠ KQJ72
	♥ 87
	♦ K986
	♣ Q9

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

Lavazza bought the hand at both tables, in contracts that were not down in top tricks, but not exactly a spread either. Nunes might have opened either a weak notrump or 2♠ (5-6 spades and less than an opening bid).

The defense to 3♠ needed to be precise, and it was. Zmudzinski led three rounds of hearts, Balicki pitching a diamond on the third round. The 4-0 trump break prevented declarer from getting his two ruffs in dummy. Duboin played to ruff diamonds at once and was over-ruffed. Down one.

Against 4♥ the defenders did not find the diamond ruff; they led spades. Declarer ruffed and drew trumps in three rounds, pitching a spade from dummy. Then he led a diamond to the queen and king, ruffed the spade return, and drove out the ♦A (according to the record, Nunes following low from his remaining ♦986). Fantoni played a third spade and declarer now had to commit himself. To succeed he had to play for diamonds to be 4-2 and South to have a doubleton club honor by winning the ♠A and discarding his diamond loser. Instead he settled for

simplicity, pitching a club on the ♠A and losing a third diamond trick in due course. 3 hard-earned imps for Zimmermann, in the lead by 1 imp.

Bd: 63 North
 Dlr: South ♠ 96
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q3
 ♦ K107
 ♣ J75432

West
 ♠ K7
 ♥ KJ85
 ♦ QJ8432
 ♣ Q

East
 ♠ QJ532
 ♥ 10976
 ♦ 9
 ♣ K106

South
 ♠ A1084
 ♥ A42
 ♦ A65
 ♣ A98

Open Room

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

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
2♦(♦+M)	2NT(1eb)	3♥(p/c)	1NT
			All Pass

Madala could not find his way to hearts here. He passed 3♦ unhappily, and did well in a sense to lead a top spade. Declarer won and drew one trump, then went after spades. Bocchi won and shifted to diamonds. Nunes took this in dummy to play a second trump. Even if Bocchi had held a second diamond Nunes would have been able to win in hand and play a third spade and discard a diamond from dummy, to establish the home for the heart loser. Plus 110 gave Zimmermann some hope for a small pick-up.

But against 3♥ Duboin found the incisive trump lead. Balicki ducked in dummy and the defenders played three rounds of trumps. Duboin ducked the first spade, won the second, cashed the ♣A and played a third spade. Declarer could build himself a long spade but that was still only seven tricks: three spades, three trumps and a club. If Balicki had discarded from dummy on the fourth spade Duboin would have underled his ♦A to prevent declarer from establishing an eighth winner. Still Zimmerman by 1 (and ½) imps.

Bd: 64 North
 Dlr: West ♠ Q62
 Vul: E/W ♥ 876
 ♦ J107
 ♣ A1092

West
 ♠ 83
 ♥ K109542
 ♦ 93
 ♣ J83

East
 ♠ K1094
 ♥ ---
 ♦ AQ8642
 ♣ K64

South
 ♠ AJ75
 ♥ AQJ3
 ♦ K5
 ♣ Q75

Open Room

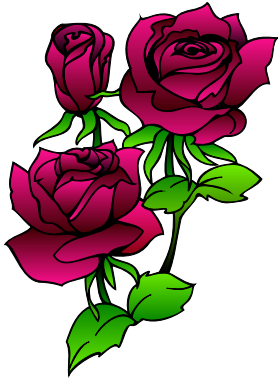
West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	DbI
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

Both E/W pairs attempted to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Who would depart further from par?

Nunes found the low club lead against 2♥. Fantoni took the ♣Q, returned the suit, and Madala forgot to unblock the king. He was put in dummy at trick three and led a low spade to the eight and jack. A diamond came through. Madala went up with the ace and played a second diamond. Fantoni cashed his spade and diamond winners, locking West in hand to ruff his own spade winner. In the five-card ending Madala exited with the ♥10. Nunes won his queen and played the fourth spade, which Madala ruffed with the ♥9. When that held he could exit with a low heart and score his ♥K at the death for down three. Not a triumph, but at least he had done the best he could.

Against 2♥ Sementa led a low spade to Duboin's jack. After much thought he found the incisive shift to the ♣Q, ducked to dummy's king. Zmudzinski tried the ♠K, losing to the ace. The defenders cashed two clubs and shifted to diamonds. Declarer finessed, won the next diamond, ruffed a spade, and exited with the ♥10 to South, who played the fourth spade. When declarer ruffed low, playing North for ♥Q87, the defense had sneaked an extra trump trick. For Zmudzinski's play to be right Sementa would have had to stay silent as North over 1♥ with ♥Qxx and a nine-count. In the three-card ending Duboin could endplay Zmudzinski at trick 11 to lead into the ♥AQ. 3 imps and the match for Lavazza, 129-127.

Despite the somewhat random nature of some of the swings (on what had been a distinctly wild set of deals) the total imps were only 4 per board, an indication of the generally sound nature of the bridge.



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