



NEC Bridge Festival

Wednesday, February 9, 2011
Bulletin Number 2

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

NEDUK Leads After Day One of the 2011 NEC Cup

At the end of Day 1, after four closely contested matches, NEDUK (David Bakhshi, David Gold, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen), with 88 VPs, holds a narrow 1-imp lead over Taipei Weide (Patrick Huang, Jonky Chung, Herstein Liu, Sidney Yang, Grace Lin, Sophia Kuo). In third place, just 4 VPs back, are the Bulgarian All Stars (Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Hristo Hristov) while in fourth place, another 4 VPs back, is Jiuzhaigou (Shunsuke Morimura, Zhao Jinlong, Jiang Yi, Hiroya Abe). Oz Two (Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Paul Gosney, Nabil Edgton) is just 2 VPs behind them in fifth place and Shenzhen Nangang Power, Zhe Jiang Hua Men, and Beijing Trinergy round out the top eight. A few surprises at the end of Day One are: China Women and England ladies lying in 12th and 15-17th places, respectively, and Oz Players in 23-25 place. The complete Day One rankings are shown below; individual match results for Matches 1-4 may be found on page 5.

NEC Cup: Standings After Day One (Four Matches)

Rank	Team(#)	VPs	Rank	Team(#)	VPs	Rank	Team(#)	VPs
1	NEDUK	88	15-17	England Ladies	65	32-33	KATSUMATA	57
2	Taipei Weide	87	18-22	NARITA	62	34	Venus	56
3	Bulgarian All Stars	83	18-22	JAPAN YOUTH	62	35	Rosewood	54
4	Jiuzhaigou	79	18-22	Fairy Tale	62	36	Iza Yokohama II	53
5	Oz Two	77	18-22	AKAMA	62	37	SKOTII	48
6	Shenzhen	75	18-22	Hemant Jalan	62	38	LAS FLORES	47
7-8	Zhe Jiang	73	23-25	NANIWADA	61	39-40	Summer Wine	46
7-8	Beijing	73	23-25	Oz Players	61	39-40	River side	46
9	Spain	70	23-25	Okay+	61	41	Yukinata	44
10-11	Manado-Indonesia	69	26-27	KinKi	60	42	HANA	43
10-11	Hackett	69	26-27	SARA	60	43	Korea	42
12	China Women	68	28-29	Friends	59	44	TimTam	41
13-14	Lion	66	28-29	Good Oxygen	59	45	KAWABATA	37
13-14	ESPERANZA	66	30-31	KISS	58	46	MY-Bridge	36
15-17	Pretty Cats	65	30-31	Heng Sha Ke Ji	58	47	SYNH ₂ O	35
15-17	NAITO	65	32-33	MammoM	57	48	NAGUMO	16

Today's 1st VuGraph Match will feature NEDUK (5) vs Taipei Weide (2)

NEC Cup 2011: Conditions of Contest

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

V.P. Scale: WBF 14-board scale (a copy can be found in the score book provided in your NEC Bridge Festival bag).

Seating Rights: Blind seating 10 minutes before the start of match.

KO-Phase Seating: The winner of a coin toss has the choice of seating in either of the two 16-board segments of the quarter- or semi-finals. In the four 16-board segments of the final, the choices will alternate over segments.

Swiss Pairings: First-round Swiss matches were made by randomly pairing each team in the top half with a team from the bottom half.

Home and Visiting: 1st numbered team sits N/S in the open room, E/W in the closed room.

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

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

Systems: No HUM or Brown Sticker methods are permitted in this event. However, pairs may prepare written defenses against a two-level opening bid in a minor that shows a weak two-bid in either major, with or without the option of strong hand types. These defenses are deemed to be part of the opponents' convention cards.

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

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

Match Scoring: This year Bridgmate scoring terminals will be used. Match results should be verified against the official result sheet (posted at the end of each match); score corrections and notifications of appeals will be permitted up until the start of the next session.

KO Draw: The team finishing 1st in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 4th-8th. The team finishing 2nd will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 4th-8th group. The team finishing 3rd will then have their choice of the remaining teams. In addition, before the start of the Knockout Phase and after all quarter-final draws have been determined, the team that finishes 1st in the Swiss chooses their semi-final opponent from any of the other three quarter-final matches.

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

Smoking: Once play in a qualifying-round match or a KO-round session starts, smoking is prohibited at ALL times (including when a player leaves the playing room to go to the bathroom), until the player completes the play of all boards in the match or session. (For those wishing to smoke at other times, smoking rooms are located on the 3rd and 5th floors of the Conference Center.) Automatic penalties for violations will be assessed by the Director as follows: Qualifying Swiss — 1 VP for the 1st offense, 3 VPs for all subsequent offenses; KO — 3imps for the 1st offense, 10imps for all subsequent offenses.

Screen Hesitations: When a delay in the return of the tray is suspected, a player on the opposite side of the screen must be the first to call attention to it (by summoning the Director). In case of dispute the call from the wrong side will be ignored, but in situations where the wrong side calls or a late call is made and there is no dispute the Director may accept the faulty call.

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

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

Team Rosters: 16th NEC Cup

#	Team Name	Members
1	China Women:	Sun Ming, Wang Hongli, Gu Ling, Sun Yanhui, Feng Xuefeng, Lu Yan, Fan Guansheng (NPC)
2	Taipei Weide:	Patrick Huang, Jonky Chung, Herstein Liu, Sidney Yang, Grace Lin, Sophia Kuo
3	Manado-Indonesia:	Henky Lasut, Eddy Manoppo, Denny Sacul, Donald Tuerah, Munawar Sawirudin, Bambang Hartono
4	Hackett:	Paul Hackett, Justin Hackett, Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann
5	NEDUK:	David Bakhshi, David Gold, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen
6	Bulgarian All Stars:	Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Hristo Hristov
7	KISS:	John Carruthers, Subhash Gupta, PO Sundelin, BG Olofsson
8	Oz Players:	Ron Klinger, Matt Mullamphy, Justin Howard, Michael Whibley
9	Oz Two:	Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Paul Gosney, Nabil Edgtton
10	England Ladies:	Heather Dhondy, Nevena Senior, Fiona Brown, Susan Stockdale
11	Hemant Jalan:	Hemant K. Jalan, Ashish Malhotra, Keyzad Anklesaria, Anal Shah, Sunit Chokshi, K.R.Venkataraman
12	Spain:	Federico Goded, Gonzalo Goded, Miguel Gonçalves, Jordi Sabate
13	Korea:	Park Jungyoon, Sung Kyunghae, Kim Yoonkyung, Park Myungkee
14	Zhe Jiang Hua Men:	Xu Qun, Zhang Yu, Nie Weiping, Wang Xiaojing, Dai Jianming, Zhuang Zejun
15	Heng Sha Ke Ji:	Wang Kui, Liu Haitao, Li Xiaoyi, Zhao Yonghui, Liu Huazong, Peng Jianfeng
16	Beijing Trinergy:	Lu Dong, Ju Chuancheng, Shi Zhengjun, Wang Yanhong, Li Rui
17	Shenzhen Nangang Power:	Chen Shenghong, Shen Jiayang, Shi Xiao, Yang Lixin, Zhan Banxiang, Gui Shengyue
18	Good Oxygen:	Chen Dawei, Kazuo Furuta, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura
19	Okay+:	Kazuhiko Yamada, Akihiko Yamada, Kyoko Ohno, Takahiko Hirata, Katsumi Takahashi, Masaaki Takayama
20	SARA:	Tadashi Teramoto, Kumiko Sasahira, Shugo Tanaka, Takeshi Niekawa, Fu Zhong, Takashi Matsuda
21	Pretty Cats:	Yoko Nenohi, Kyoko Toyofuku, Kumiko Matsuo, Toshiko Kaho, Makiko Sato, Yoshiko Sakaguchi
22	ESPERANZA:	Haruko Koshi, Hideyuki Sango, Nobuko Matsubara, Misuzu Ichihashi, Michiko Iwahashi, Yayoi Sakamoto
23	Lion:	Yuichi Masamura, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Eiji Otaka, Yoichi Ito, Masaru Yoshida, Masayuki Hayasaka
24	AKAMA:	Ayako Miyakuni, Hiroko Ota, Yoko Maruyama, Keisuke Akama, Masako Katsube
25	HANA:	Yuki Fukuyoshi, Takeshi Hanayama, Tadashi Jomura, Hiroaki Iwata
26	NARITA:	Yasuhiro Shimizu, Makoto Hirata, Seiya Shimizu, Hidenori Narita, Takashi Maeda, Nobuyuki Hayashi
27	TimTam:	Kazuko Kawashima, Fumiko Kimura, Kiyoko Usui, Takako Fujimoto, Sumiko Sugino, Kazuko Takahashi
28	Fairy Tale:	Kyoko Shimamura, Akio Kurokawa, Ryo Okuno, Akira Ohara, Brian Senior, Kazunori Sasaki
29	KAWABATA:	Akiko Kawabata, Misako Fukazawa, Teruo Miyazaki, Kunio Kodaira, Yasuko Kosaka, Harue Iemori
30	Iza Yokohama II:	Osami Kimura, Hiroko Kobayashi, Yasuyoshi Toriumi, Aiko Banno, Setsuko Kimura
31	NAITO:	Kikuo Tatai, Kenji Miyakuni, Sakiko Naito, Toru Henmi
32	JAPAN YOUTH:	Hiroaki Miura, Hiroki Yokoi, Noriaki Koike, Yoshiro Kido, Tomoyuki Watanuki, Daisuke Sugimoto
33	SKOTII:	Tsuneo Sakurai, Takahiro Kamiyo, Atsushi Kikuchi, Kenichi Asaoka, Motoharu Ushio
34	Venus:	Atsuko Kurita, Emiko Tamura, Junko Den, Yoshiko Murata, Noriko Takami, Miyako Miyazaki
35	LAS FLORES:	Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura, Michiko Shida, Kotomi Asakoshi, Shimako Yaji, Yoko Komuro
36	Jiuzhaigou:	Shunsuke Morimura, Zhao Jinlong, Jiang Yi, Hiroya Abe
37	Rosewood:	Yoko Fukuyama, Takashi Sumita, Hiromu Nishida, Yoshie Nishida
38	KATSUMATA:	Atsuko Katsumata, Yasuyo Iida, Kimiko Kamakari, Misae Kato
39	Yukinata:	Yukiko Umezu, Etsuko Naito, Yukiko Hoshi, Megumi Takasaka
40	River side:	Yumiko Kawakami, Toyohiko Ozawa, Masakatsu Sugino, Ryoichi Yasuhara, Hiroko Tanaka, Tomoko Sakai
41	NANIWADA:	Masaru Naniwada, Hisami Kataoka, Hikoe Enomoto, Toshiro Nose, Hideo Togawa
42	Friends:	Yoko Saito, Mamiko Odaira, Yumiko Kichise, Toshiko Hagiwara, Koichi Onishi, Taiko Bando
43	Summer Wine:	Shintaro Sentsui, Hiroko Sentsui, Kenichi Ito, Tadashi Yamasaki, Yumi Yanagida
44	MammoM:	Ryo Matsubara, Toru Amano, Mark LaForge, Midori Ito, Takayo Otsuka, Ayako Matsubara
45	KinKi:	Sonoko Namba, Chizuko Sugiura, Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka
46	MY-Bridge:	Masafumi Yoshizawa, Noriko Yoshizawa, Iwao Oishi, Kuniko Miyauchi, Yoshitaka Agata, Aiko Nabeshima
47	SYNH₂O:	Katsuro Hatoyama, Michiko Hatoyama, Miyoko Yonezawa, Mariko Sakamoto, Kiyoko Oki, Yumiko Nagato
48	NAGUMO:	Natsuhiko Nagumo, Kazuko Sakamoto, Kazuko Yamagata, Akira Fujii, Michi Kamatani, Toshiko Sasaki

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 16th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/game/nec/necfest.html>

Follow our featured matches on Vugraph each day at: www.bridgebase.com

Convention Regulations for Side (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 Asuka Cup is rated as a Japanese regional event, 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.

The Asuka Cup is 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 (Asuka Cup)

Opening Bids

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

Responses and Rebids

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

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

Competitive Bids

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

Carding

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

LIST D (NEC Cup/Yokohama Swiss Teams)
Category 3 of WBF Systems Policy applies

Tuesday's Match Results

Team #	Match 1				Match 2				Match 3				Match 4			
	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP
1	28	55	25	25	2	25	6	31	26	47	23	54	4	23	14	68
2	29	97	25	25	1	61	24	49	6	43	20	69	17	30	18	87
3	37	45	18	18	21	41	18	36	24	29	14	50	19	30	19	69
4	42	65	25	25	5	25	8	33	15	50	20	53	1	29	16	69
5	35	75	25	25	4	52	22	47	9	21	16	63	10	46	25	88
6	43	55	25	25	7	59	25	50	2	23	10	60	11	44	23	83
7	48	76	25	25	6	20	5	30	38	19	13	43	15	36	15	58
8	36	27	16	16	20	32	9	25	43	69	25	50	12	10	11	61
9	32	57	25	25	15	67	22	47	5	15	14	61	16	47	16	77
10	39	63	24	24	16	39	16	40	12	44	20	60	5	4	5	65
11	38	36	20	20	14	36	15	35	45	38	20	55	6	12	7	62
12	34	47	21	21	18	36	20	41	10	25	10	51	8	26	19	70
13	46	43	19	19	17	20	5	24	33	39	14	38	26	16	4	42
14	47	54	20	20	11	36	15	35	31	29	17	52	24	45	21	73
15	30	55	25	25	9	40	8	33	4	28	10	43	7	38	15	58
16	44	65	24	24	10	34	14	38	20	42	21	59	9	41	14	73
17	45	54	20	20	13	62	25	45	22	33	18	63	2	18	12	75
18	33	40	21	21	12	15	10	31	41	38	16	47	23	29	12	59
19	26	50	23	23	24	23	16	39	36	33	11	50	3	12	11	61
20	40	39	17	17	8	56	21	38	16	18	9	47	31	7	13	60
21	41	40	18	18	3	27	12	30	28	38	16	46	38	40	19	65
22	27	61	25	25	31	71	20	45	17	20	12	57	36	20	9	66
23	31	3	2	2	29	64	25	27	35	35	21	48	18	42	18	66
24	25	50	23	23	19	18	14	37	3	33	16	53	14	21	9	62
25	24	19	7	7	26	4	7	14	30	10	10	24	47	34	19	43
26	19	18	7	7	25	38	23	30	1	16	7	37	13	63	25	62
27	22	19	5	5	28	25	5	10	47	23	19	29	40	5	12	31
28	1	13	5	5	27	67	25	30	21	31	14	44	34	33	18	62
29	2	7	0	0	23	17	4	4	48	51	23	27	43	17	10	37
30	15	15	5	5	43	45	11	16	25	30	20	36	35	42	17	53
31	23	63	25	25	22	49	10	35	14	21	13	48	20	17	17	65
32	9	4	3	3	42	34	15	18	39	66	25	43	37	48	19	62
33	18	14	9	9	34	47	15	24	13	33	16	40	42	8	8	48
34	12	24	9	9	33	47	15	24	44	42	20	44	28	21	12	56
35	5	0	0	0	48	84	25	25	23	10	9	34	30	34	13	47
36	8	22	14	14	40	71	25	39	19	50	19	58	22	43	21	79
37	3	31	12	12	41	32	10	22	46	37	21	43	32	30	11	54
38	11	14	10	10	46	33	19	29	7	27	17	46	21	23	11	57
39	10	27	6	6	44	36	14	20	32	10	2	22	48	49	22	44
40	20	30	13	13	36	25	4	17	42	20	11	28	17	17	18	46
41	21	28	12	12	37	53	20	32	18	34	14	46	45	26	15	61
42	4	14	3	3	32	36	15	18	40	35	19	37	33	38	22	59
43	8	14	5	5	30	62	19	24	8	10	2	26	29	37	20	46
44	16	30	6	6	39	41	16	22	34	23	10	32	46	73	25	57
45	17	35	10	10	47	59	25	35	11	16	10	45	41	25	15	60
46	13	25	11	11	38	18	11	22	37	12	9	31	44	34	5	36
47	14	34	10	10	45	8	3	13	27	7	11	24	25	16	11	35
48	7	0	0	0	35	19	1	1	29	17	7	8	39	20	8	16

C-VP=Cumulative VPs

Match One: China Women vs Fairy Tale

by Barry Rigal

The Chinese women, winners in 2009, were back to try to improve on last year's performance, when illness got in the way of their bid to defend. They would take on Fairy Tale, a Japanese squad that included the redoubtable Brian Senior in their midst.

Bd: 1
 Dlr: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ QJ
 ♥ Q83
 ♦ A432
 ♣ KJ54

West
 ♠ 765432
 ♥ 1094
 ♦ 987
 ♣ Q

East
 ♠ AK10
 ♥ KJ2
 ♦ K65
 ♣ 10873

South
 ♠ 98
 ♥ A765
 ♦ QJ10
 ♣ A962

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
	1♦	Dbl	1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
2♠	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

The first deal of the day saw N/S with a combined 24 HCP, but E/W with a nine-card spade suit and a possible nine tricks, thanks to a spectacularly favorable lie of the cards. Those of you who know your textbooks will be familiar with the N/S club combination. If Bridge 101 covers safety-plays, this entry would certainly be in the Intermediate Class. If you need four tricks, cashing the ace is *not* the right play; you lead low to the jack as your first play to cover this precise 4-1 break. You lose to the singleton queen offside — but then you were never taking four tricks. Of course if three tricks is all you need the 100% safety-play is to cash the king then lead up to the ace-nine, which works pretty well here.

Senior found himself in 3NT after an enterprising (we don't want to use up our pejorative vocabulary too early; plenty of time for that) auction. The fortunate

spade blockage meant that the defenders could cash only three spades on which Senior pitched a club from dummy and a spade from hand. He won the club shift and took a diamond finesse, ending up with three clubs, three diamonds and a heart endplay for an eighth winner.

Since 3♠ could not be prevented from taking nine tricks, the aggression in both rooms paid off very nicely for Fairy Tale, up 3-0.

Just for the record, four tables bid and made 3NT from the North seat, Gupta for KISS managing that feat on a top spade lead (he must have a magnetic personality to be able to persuade his opponents to lead hearts for him). The others received minor-suit leads after which the task was easier, though not *that* much easier.

Bd: 2
 Dlr: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 863
 ♥ K9872
 ♦ A
 ♣ AQ96

West	East
♠ Q4	♠ KJ107
♥ 65	♥ AJ104
♦ Q87432	♦ K5
♣ 874	♣ K52

South
 ♠ A952
 ♥ Q3
 ♦ J1096
 ♣ J103

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
		1NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
		1NT	Pass
3♣(♦)	Pass	3♦	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

Kurokawa and Okuno had a disagreement as to whether 3♦ was sign-off or invitational here. 3NT on a spade lead saw declarer win in dummy and take a heart finesse. The defenders won and shifted to clubs, declarer emerging with seven tricks when the ♦Q served as an entry to repeat the heart finesse; -100 for E/W.

3♠ in the Closed Room received a heart lead: 6, 7, 10, Q. Sima tried the club finesse at trick two, her jack losing to the king, and back came the ♠J, ducked around, followed by a low spade. She won the ace, crossed to the ♦A, returned to hand with the ♣10, ruffed out the ♦K, cashed dummy's two high clubs pitching a heart from hand as East also pitched a heart and West a diamond, then ruffed a heart. But that was her eighth and last trick for one down, -100. 5 imps to China Women, ahead 5-3.

Bd: 3 North
 Dlr: South ♠ A
 Vul: E/W ♥ J642
 ♦ QJ1087
 ♣ KQ2

West	East
♠ K63	♠ 1098752
♥ 953	♥ A
♦ 6	♦ K943
♣ J109653	♣ 84

South
♠ QJ4
♥ KQ1087
♦ A52
♣ A7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
Pass	2♦	Pass	1♣(str)
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	4♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	5♦

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
Pass	2NT(♥)	Pass	1♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	4♣

Just the 22 imps rode on whether Okuno led a diamond (playing partner for a red ace) or a black suit, playing partner for an entry and an honor in the suit you led. Dummy's use of Blackwood should not necessarily have been construed to guarantee the relevant black-suit controls but in this case she did indeed have them. Okuno led a club, and declarer drew trumps, then took the diamond finesse for her slam. Anders Wirgren (apostle of leading a singleton whenever it is conceivably right to do so) would have been nodding his head and saying "I told you so." By the way, in case you feel like allocating blame here, would you attribute any to East for not doubling the final contract to get a diamond lead?

In the other room Senior made one slam try, then denied a diamond control, and Shimamura sensibly declined to bid on, having already shown strong notrump values at her second turn. 11 imps to China Women, ahead now 16-3.

Quite a few Wests were put to the test on lead. Among others, Etsuko Naito, Nabil Edgtton, Jonky Chung and David Bakhshi did find the diamond lead against 6♥.

Five tables brought home 6♥, but special pride of place must go to Keisuke Akama who played 4♦xx on the North cards, making 11 tricks. Quick, do you know what the score for that is, non-vulnerable? Remarkably it's 920, the same as the non-vulnerable slam. And no, neither did we.

Bd: 4 North
 Dlr: West ♠ AK962
 Vul: Both ♥ A2
 ♦ Q
 ♣ Q10852

West	East
♠ Q75	♠ J
♥ KQ543	♥ J10976
♦ 95	♦ A1073
♣ AJ6	♣ K97

South
♠ 10843
♥ 8
♦ KJ8642
♣ 43

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
1♥	2♥	4♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
1♥	2♥	4♥	4♠
All Pass			

In the Closed Room Wang's decision to pass out 4♠ looks a very big one, but it left her opponents in a contract that would require very careful play. On a top heart lead Shimamura won in dummy, took a top spade, digesting East's play of the jack, then played a diamond. Wang won and exited in hearts. Declarer ruffed and needed to play clubs now. The defenders could continue to give ruff and discards but declarer would take ruffs in dummy and eventually ruff a club back to hand for the trump finesse. The play departed from double-dummy (we give you fair warning, this won't be the last time the Editors may

want to express that sentiment in this match) but rather than repeat ourselves we'll simply say "Alas" and you will get the picture. When declarer played on diamonds West did not discard her club allowing Shimamura to ruff clubs back to her hand safely. She guessed trumps in the ending and had ten tricks.

In the other room Okuno played 5♥x and Lu led her ♦Q, hoping for a quick entry to the South hand for the ruff. Gu followed with the ♦4 but still went ahead and, alas, underled her ♠AK upon winning the ♥A, which seems a little untrusting to us. Now declarer should make. After drawing trumps it should be easy enough either to cash two top clubs and exit with a diamond, or to eliminate spades, cash the top clubs, and play a diamond so that South must lead a diamond and set up the ten for a discard. Alas, this did not happen but -200 still meant a 9-imp pick-up for Fairy Tale, down 16-12.

As you might expect, scores were all over the place here. Nevena Senior for the England Ladies (are you prepared to speculate on why it is England Ladies but China Women? Neither are we) collected 990 in 4♠x while two other declarers collected 790. Meanwhile, Oloffson for KISS collected 790 as West in 4♥x. 15 pairs went down doubled in hearts, 17 went off in spades.

Bd: 5 North
 Dlr: North ♠ K632
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q2
 ♦ J1053
 ♣ K63

West	East
♠ 974	♠ AJ5
♥ 104	♥ 8763
♦ 7	♦ K864
♣ AQ109854	♣ J7

South
 ♠ Q108
 ♥ AKJ95
 ♦ AQ92
 ♣ 2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♠(1)	Dbl	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) ♠ or ♥ + ♦

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
3♣	Dbl	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Lu's somewhat agricultural jump to 3NT got Kurokawa off to the ♣J lead. Lu ducked and the defenders took the ♣A and shifted to a spade, betraying the fact that the diamond finesse was working. Declarer lost just the first three tricks for 630. That held the loss to one imp, when 4♥ on a diamond lead played for 11 tricks easily enough in the other room; 16-13 China Ladies.

At this moment the match appeared close, but there was going to be no happy ending in this fairy tale.

Bd: 6 North
 Dlr: East ♠ AJ54
 Vul: E/W ♥ 7432
 ♦ J52
 ♣ J9

West	East
♠ 6	♠ 932
♥ AQJ1098	♥ K65
♦ K98	♦ AQ3
♣ 643	♣ AQ107

South
 ♠ KQ1087
 ♥ ---
 ♦ 10764
 ♣ K852

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♦(♥)	Pass	2♥	2♠
4♥	4♠	Dbl	Pass
5♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
		1NT	2♦(♠+another)
4♦(♥)	4♥	Dbl	4♠
5♥	All Pass		

Whether you like East's double of 4♠ in the Open Room (we don't) and Okuno's correction to 5♥, the fact remains that both tables got it right in the auction. However after two rounds of spades, whereas Sun simply ruffed then drew one round of trumps and stripped off spades and diamonds before playing on clubs – endplaying South to lead a second club or give a ruff and discard – Kurokawa appears to have lost focus. He embarked on the same play but drew three rounds of trumps prematurely. Now when South won the ♣K a fourth spade shortened declarer and left him with only ten tricks. Down one and 13 giftimps to China leading 29-13.

The E/W +field went plus but about a third collected unsatisfactory penalties against spade sacrifices.

Bd: 7
 Dir: South
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ A843
 ♥ A87
 ♦ 943
 ♣ A75

West
 ♠ QJ
 ♥ QJ106
 ♦ K1052
 ♣ KJ9

East
 ♠ K1076
 ♥ K4
 ♦ AQJ76
 ♣ 42

South
 ♠ 952
 ♥ 9532
 ♦ 8
 ♣ Q10863

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
1♦(PRE)	Pass	2♦(F)	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

3NT by West was far more comfortable on Senior's spade lead than on Lu's club lead, but with all the aces in the North hand both tables huffed and puffed their way to ten tricks. No swing; still 29-13 but a slightly fortunate result for Fairy Tale.

Bd: 8
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ QJ3
 ♥ J7
 ♦ A976
 ♣ J1073

West
 ♠ 8754
 ♥ AQ1092
 ♦ 4
 ♣ 852

East
 ♠ A1062
 ♥ 64
 ♦ QJ1052
 ♣ Q9

South
 ♠ K9
 ♥ K853
 ♦ K83
 ♣ AK64

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
2♥(Majors)	Pass	2♠	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

In 3NT Shimamura received a spade lead, ducked to her nine, which got her to eight tricks (two spades, two diamonds and four clubs). She cashed a top club following low from dummy, then went to the ♦A to take the club finesse. When this was covered, she won, cashed a club, then set up her second spade. However, East could win and remove her diamond entry to hand before the heart winner had been set up. East had the spade entry and diamond winners waiting to cash. After trick one it looks as though once declarer advances the ♣A, she needs to play hearts out of her hand at once to come home. Even if she unblocks the ♣7 under the ace the entries back and forth are so tangled that she needs to lead hearts immediately against best defense. Otherwise, if you cross to dummy with the ♦A West can win an early heart and lead a third club, and that cuts you off from your second spade winner.

The auction in the other room (where North neither promised nor denied spades) saw Okuno in the hot seat again on opening lead. His choice of a club gave declarer a critical tempo. She ducked in dummy, won in hand, ducked a diamond, took the diamond continuation (West pitching an encouraging heart) and knocked out the ♠A. Kurokawa, won the first spade and, alas, played a heart to set up the heart trick for declarer and make her life easy. The defenders would have prevailed here simply by ducking the ♠A, then continuing to attack spades at every turn. Declarer again needed to lead a heart to the jack as early as was feasible. It was 39-13 now in favor of the China Women.

Incidentally, well over half the field made 3NT here but on a spade lead (found at just nine tables) the only declarer to bring home nine tricks was Tony Nunn of Oz Two. Without any clues in the auction he won the spade lead in hand and led a heart to the jack. Well done.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ 43
 ♥ K5
 ♦ Q103
 ♣ KQ6543

West
 ♠ 72
 ♥ A1084
 ♦ KJ862
 ♣ 82

East
 ♠ 865
 ♥ 72
 ♦ A975
 ♣ A1097

South
 ♠ AKQJ109
 ♥ QJ963
 ♦ 4
 ♣ J

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	4♥

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Dbl	Pass	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠

All Pass

The Chinese women are firm believers in taking route one to goal (aficionados of ancient English TV quizzes will know what I mean) and Gu certainly achieved her target of not missing game — albeit at the cost of ending in a very silly spot. Not to worry though. On the lead of the ♣8 Kurokawa, alas, ducked and four top losers had turned into three, and later those three turned into two; +450.

In the other room Shimamura took the slow route to 4♠ and the defenders led a club to the ace, then shifted to a low diamond. West won her king and returned a thoughtful low heart, trying to remove dummy's entry and needing her partner to have no more than the ♥9 to have a chance to set the game. No luck, but a nice play; +420, and 1 imp to China, leading 40-13.

Had East played ace and another diamond declarer would have been able to ruff and use the ♥K after drawing trumps, but East needed to cash the ♦A and shift to a heart (impossible, except maybe at double-dummy) with West covering declarer's card.

This board generated some fine back and forth in other matches. Heather Dhondy for the English Women received the defense of two rounds of diamonds. She ruffed and drew trumps, then played the ♣J. East, Yukiko Umezu, won and exited in diamonds. Dhondy ruffed and led a heart up, but Etsuko Naito ripoisted by winning the ♥A to leave the hearts blocked, then playing a fourth diamond. Declarer ruffed with her last trump, but depending on whether she pitched dummy's ♥K or kept that card she had to concede a club or a heart at the end.

Vlad Isporski for the Bulgarian All Stars also received the defense of two rounds of diamonds. He pitched his club instead of ruffing, and when West made the mistake of winning and leading a club instead of a trump Isporski was home. He ruffed away the ♣A, drew trumps, then led a heart to the king. Whatever

West did now declarer had ten tricks.

Overall, the diamond lead was found against the spade game more often than not, but only defeated 4♠ on six occasions.

Bd: 10	North
Dlr: East	♠ K72
Vul: Both	♥ 103
	♦ 54
	♣ QJ10743

West	East
♠ Q104	♠ A965
♥ K9874	♥ AJ2
♦ AK1093	♦ QJ86
♣ ---	♣ 86

South
♠ J83
♥ Q65
♦ 72
♣ AK952

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Two overtrick imps for China when they found the higher scoring game took the running total to 42-13. Not everybody stopped so low. After all, the diamond slam is no worse than the heart finesse and you might well find the winning line on a club lead: ruff, draw two rounds of trumps, then play king, ace, and a third heart, endplaying South to lead spades for you (and you haven't come all the way to Yokohama to misguess a KJ combination, have you?).

For Taipei Weide Jonky Chung brought home the slam by a slightly less sophisticated line. He drew trumps, then tried the Taiwanese Finesse of passing the ♠Q successfully. It's hard to argue with success but if you want someone to do just that, the Bulletin Editors are your men.

In total, five pairs brought home the slam on the top club lead from South. The other successful declarers were Hiroko Ota, Li Rui, Michiko Iwahashi and Sakiko Naito. If any of these players found the endplay, please let us know.

Bd: 11
 Dir: South
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ AK94
 ♥ 10972
 ♦ 6
 ♣ KQ54

West
 ♠ 102
 ♥ AK5
 ♦ AKQJ983
 ♣ 6

East
 ♠ 753
 ♥ QJ843
 ♦ 72
 ♣ A32

South
 ♠ QJ86
 ♥ 6
 ♦ 1054
 ♣ J10987

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
1♣(ART)	Dbl	Pass	2♠
3♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
5♦			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
1♣(Str)	Pass	1♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Lu cashed only one top spade before shifting to clubs, allowing Okuno an overtrick. But in the other room Shimamura's top club lead meant 4♥ had 13 tricks. Another 3 imps for China, 45-13.

Slam was attempted on the E/W cards on just two occasions: against Ayako Miyakuni the defenders led a top spade and shifted; nice work if you can get it.

Bd: 12
 Dir: West
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 743
 ♥ 62
 ♦ A75
 ♣ Q10872

West
 ♠ Q1095
 ♥ K109
 ♦ K432
 ♣ K4

East
 ♠ AK62
 ♥ 53
 ♦ QJ6
 ♣ A653

South
 ♠ J8
 ♥ AQJ874
 ♦ 1098
 ♣ J9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♦(1 Maj)
Dbl	Pass	Pass	2♥
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

If the defenders guess to lead diamonds against 2♥x they can cash their six top winners and promote a second trump trick on the run of the clubs, but that looks too hard. 4♠ was a simpler way to collect a decent score, with 450 easily available when both spades and diamonds behaved. In the other room E/W were unable to locate their 4-4 spade fit (should East bid 3♥ over 2NT to check back for spades?). That was fine, given the extremely favorable lie of the cards, but on the lead of the ♥Q Kurokawa made the mistake of covering, a play that was easy to see might lose and could never gain. Now the defenders could cash out when in with the ♦A for down one. That was 11 imps to China, moving ahead 56-13.

Bd: 13
 Dir: North
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ KJ63
 ♥ ---
 ♦ K96
 ♣ Q109632

West
 ♠ AQ92
 ♥ J83
 ♦ 103
 ♣ KJ84

East
 ♠ 754
 ♥ 764
 ♦ Q542
 ♣ A75

South
 ♠ 108
 ♥ AKQ10952
 ♦ AJ87
 ♣ ---

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣(Str)
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	3NT(1)
Pass	4♣(2)	Pass	4♦(♥)
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

(1) Solid Major

(2) Asks for the suit below the Major

Neither table looked like they were getting too high here, although if you could see the opponents' cards you would want to play slam. Remarkably, the field managed to avoid going overboard with the one

exception, whom we won't name, playing in 5♦ and not enjoying the experience. Lu-Gu (remember them from their Vaudeville days?) made a second overtrick to increase their lead by 1 imp, 57-13.

Bd: 14 North
 Dlr: East ♠ J
 Vul: None ♥ 8654
 ♦ 108
 ♣ AQJ953

West
 ♠ 109876532
 ♥ J3
 ♦ 2
 ♣ 42

East
 ♠ Q4
 ♥ AKQ
 ♦ AKJ964
 ♣ 106

South
 ♠ AK
 ♥ 10972
 ♦ Q753
 ♣ K87

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Okuno</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Kurokawa</i>	<i>Gu</i>
		1♣(Str)	Pass
1♦(Neg.)	2♣	2♦	3♣
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sun</i>	<i>Senior B</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>
		1♣(Str)	Pass
1♦(Neg.)	2♠(1)	3♦	4♣
4♠	All Pass		

(1) Clubs or the Red suits

Both tables concluded the set by reaching the somewhat unlucky game and having their opponents pinpoint the club lead that would defeat it.

As you can imagine, the club lead was the exception and not the rule here. Approximately one-quarter of the field found it, while a couple of Wests (Motoharu Ushio and Sonoko Namba) brought home 690 in 4♠x.

Well done by the N/S pairs, who in fact performed particularly well at both tables. The final match score, 57-13 for the China Women, was 25-5 in VPs.

Match Two: Hackett vs NEDUK

by Rich Colker

Our Match Two features two teams who had both emerged from their first match with the full 25 VPs. Both UK pairs in the Open Room use natural methods while the Closed Room features a battle of systems: a Canapé Club for the Dutch versus a Swedish-Polish Club for the Irish. And we're off.

Bd: 17 North
 Dlr: North ♠ AKQ2
 Vul: None ♥ J106
 ♦ 752
 ♣ KJ5

West
 ♠ 1094
 ♥ A8754
 ♦ 10
 ♣ 9832

East
 ♠ 8753
 ♥ 93
 ♦ A9863
 ♣ 106

South
 ♠ J6
 ♥ KQ2
 ♦ KQJ4
 ♣ AQ74

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	1NT	Pass	6NT

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

All Pass

In the Open Room Papa and Justin quickly reached what might have been the optimum contract had it not been for the two missing aces (indeed, that's why they invented Blackwood and Gerber isn't it?) and the presence of only 11 tricks without playing on *both* of the topless suits. In cases such as this, one down is good bridge but bad karma. According to the play record Papa Bear did not even play it out, conceding down one on the opening spade lead. Brrr!

In the Closed Room the Dutch bid rather tamely to 3NT. Hanlon's low diamond lead went to the king and

declarer tried a low heart. McGann rose with the ace and returned a spade. Van Prooijen won the ace and led a second diamond toward dummy but Hanlon was having none of it and went up with the ace, at which point play appears to have ceased. The VuGraph score credits N/S with only 10 tricks but we suspect 11 were actually scored at the table. Assuming the latter, NEDUK takes an 11-0 lead.

No fewer than six tables found a way to make 12 tricks, five of them from the North seat, which looks rather harder than doing so from the South seat. Meanwhile, almost half the field did reach slam here. Perhaps it's a tougher board than it looks.

Bd: 18 North
 Dir: East ♠ A8543
 Vul: N/S ♡ J
 ♦ 742
 ♣ K1064

West
 ♠ K10
 ♡ AQ10762
 ♦ J
 ♣ AJ82

East
 ♠ Q97
 ♡ K853
 ♦ AKQ86
 ♣ 7

South
 ♠ J62
 ♡ 94
 ♦ 10953
 ♣ Q953

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♡	Pass	3♡	Pass
3♠	Dbf	4♣	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♡	Pass
6♡	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♡	1♠	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♡	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♡	Pass
6♡	All Pass		

Having seen the Hacketts' approach to slam bidding on the previous deal Bakhshi-Gold delivered a sharp lesson in ace-asking to reach the excellent 6♡. Papa Bear cashed the ♠A and tried a second spade but when Justin followed to trick two declarer claimed.

The Irish had a similar auction to the same end, received the same defense, and claimed one trick later. No swing, still 11-0 NEDUK.

Only five pairs missed this slam; about what one would expect.

Bd: 19 North
 Dir: South ♠ J1097
 Vul: E/W ♡ Q982
 ♦ KJ10
 ♣ K10

West
 ♠ AK3
 ♡ 3
 ♦ Q9842
 ♣ AJ63

East
 ♠ 8542
 ♡ AKJ
 ♦ A75
 ♣ Q82

South
 ♠ Q6
 ♡ 107654
 ♦ 63
 ♣ 9754

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
			Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
			Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Bakhshi-Gold's auction to 3NT seems routine and Justin's normal low heart lead did not strike fear into declarer's heart. Gold won Papa's queen with the ace, ducked a diamond to North, won the heart return with the king, crossed to the ♣A, and played a diamond to the ace and a third diamond. When Papa won and cashed the ♣K rather than playing a third heart Gold emerged with an overtrick; +630.

We think McGann's 1♦ opening promised an unbalanced hand and his odd-looking 1NT rebid showed clubs. Thus, 3NT by Hanlon was clear. Not so the play. Van Prooijen led the ♠J, ducked around, and his low spade continuation went to the queen and ace. McGann played a diamond to the ace, noting North's 10 and its implications for restricted-choice, and a diamond back to the 8 (winning if North started with the singleton 10 or K10 doubleton; losing only to the J10 doubleton). Alas, van Prooijen won the jack and cleared the spades. A third diamond went to the king and van Prooijen cashed the spade he had worked so hard to set up as Verhees pitched a heart and declarer a club. When van Prooijen exited with a heart McGann had to decide right then whether to take the heart finesse for his ninth trick (scoring two spades, three diamonds, three hearts

and one club) or rise with a high heart, cash the other high heart, and rely on the club finesse for his ninth trick. He chose the latter and finished down three when North won his ♣K and cashed his two good hearts. That was -300, and 14 more imps to the Dutch, leading now 25-0.

3NT by East went down 13 times on a heart lead, which your editors for two find rather surprising. Isn't it normal to duck a diamond early and retain your entry to the hearts?

Bd: 20 North
 Dir: West ♠ 108532
 Vul: Both ♥ AQ84
 ♦ A
 ♣ 985

West	East
♠ Q	♠ K76
♥ 5	♥ 10963
♦ KJ108542	♦ Q763
♣ K742	♣ 103

South
 ♠ AJ94
 ♥ KJ72
 ♦ 9
 ♣ AQJ6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
3♦	Pass	4♦	Dbl
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
5♦	5♥	Pass	5♠

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
3♦	Pass	5♦	Dbl

All Pass

Bakhshi committed the pre-emptor's cardinal sin — bidding again after his partner's raise to 4♦ — and it might have worked had Papa not come back in at the five level. Against 5♠ Gold led a heart, hoping to give Bakhshi a ruff. Declarer won in hand, led a low spade to the nine and queen, won the diamond return, took a second spade finesse, and claimed 11 tricks when the ♣K was offside.

Hanlon's more aggressive raise to 5♦ in the Closed Room gave van Prooijen a real problem after Verhees doubled. 5♠ rated to be reasonably safe but there was always the possibility that South was 3=3=1=6 or 3=3=2=5 (in this day of six-card three-level preempts, although the vulnerability argues against it) and that neither major would play all that well — especially at the five level and given the

weakness of North's spades. The editors have some sympathy for passing, although neither of us would have done so, and North was punished for his conservatism when the defense went awry. North led the ♦A, then switched to the ♠8(?). South clearly expected the ♠Q108 from North (or fewer than five of them) and inserted the jack and away went the defense's second undertrick. They collected one diamond, one heart and one club for +200; 10 imps back to Hackett, who trailed 25-10.

11 pairs went down in slam (or 5♥) with the N/S cards, but at least they did better than the opponents of Wang Kui, for Heng Sha Ke Ji, who was allowed to play 4♦x — and make it — for +710.

Bd: 21 North
 Dir: North ♠ 10643
 Vul: N/S ♥ 6
 ♦ AQ965
 ♣ A87

West	East
♠ K972	♠ A8
♥ 9542	♥ J103
♦ J8	♦ K7
♣ KJ3	♣ Q109542

South
 ♠ QJ5
 ♥ AKQ87
 ♦ 10432
 ♣ 6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	Pass	Pass	2♦(1)
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

(1) 5♥, 4+♦, opening values

The Hacketts' auction does not seem unreasonable, especially for a pair as aggressive as they tend to be. Unfortunately, South's heart concentration was not an asset in 3♠. The defense started with the ♣10 to the ace. Papa led a spade to the jack at trick two, which held, and then tried the diamond finesse. Gold won the king and led a second club, ruffed, and Papa cashed two high hearts pitching his last club, then played a diamond to the ace and a third diamond. Bakhshi ruffed and led a third club, ruffed by Papa in hand. Bakhshi ruffed the fourth round of diamonds

as Gold pitched his last heart, and then led a heart for Gold to ruff as the defense scored their two high trumps separately for down one; -100 for N/S.

Verhees' 2♦ in the Closed Room showed five hearts and four diamonds; van Prooijen relayed with 2♠ and 2NT showed a minimum, which allowed van Prooijen to stay low (good, given the wastage in hearts). The defense started gangbusters with a spade to the ace, a spade to the king, and a spade ruff. When East exited with a heart Verhees won and deftly eschewed the diamond finesse, playing low to the ace to pick off Hanlon's now-stiff king. Plus 130 for N/S; 6 imps for NEDUK, ahead now 31-10.

Just for the record, two pairs (F. Goded-Goncalvez and Isporski-Kovachev) bid and made 4♠ with the N/S cards, one on the not-ungenerous lead of the ♦K, while two pairs brought home 5♦ on a club lead.

Bd: 22	North		
Dlr: East	♠ J862		
Vul: E/W	♥ KQ7		
	♦ 742		
	♣ 654		
West		East	
♠ AQ5		♠ 9	
♥ AJ65		♥ 102	
♦ AQJ53		♦ 1086	
♣ 9		♣ AKQJ1087	
	South		
	♠ K10743		
	♥ 9843		
	♦ K9		
	♣ 32		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		1♣	1♠
Dbl	3♠	Pass	Pass
5NT(1)	Pass	6♣	Pass
6♦	Pass	6NT	All Pass

(1) Pick a slam

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		2♣(1)	Pass
2♦(2)	Pass	3♣(3)	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

(1) Natural (Precision-like)

(2) ART, asking

(3) One-suited (minimum?)

The auction in the Open Room could have been much less successful than it actually was had the red-suit kings been reversed and a heart led. But this was Tuesday and everyone knows to lead partner's

suit against slams on Tuesdays. The low spade lead went to the king and ace, and on the run of the clubs the defense conceded with the ♦K onside doubleton; +1470 for E/W.

The Irish auction was perhaps overly conservative, but West did not know that East had seven running clubs opposite his singleton and East had no inkling that a hand of such magnitude sat opposite. Still, West might have tried a natural 4NT (if available, after which East might have leaped to 6♣ with his extra trick-taking potential) or shown his diamonds along the way, after which East's hand starts looking much better. Van Prooijen led the ♥K against 3NT, which McGann let hold, and van Prooijen switched to the ♠2 to the king and ace. McGann now had the rest. Plus 690, but 13 imps to NEDUK, increasing their lead to 44-10.

Slightly less than half the field bid the slam here.

Bd: 23	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 7653		
Vul: Both	♥ K		
	♦ 862		
	♣ AKJ108		
West		East	
♠ A2		♠ 10	
♥ A108653		♥ QJ942	
♦ K43		♦ A975	
♣ 97		♣ 632	
	South		
	♠ KQJ984		
	♥ 7		
	♦ QJ10		
	♣ Q54		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
			1♠
2♥	3♥	4♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
			1♠
2♥	2NT(1)	3♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	Dbl

All Pass

(1) INVIT(+) spade raise

It was not clear at either table who was saving against whom. The auctions suggest that both N/S pairs thought the hand was theirs when in actuality their 4♠ was a save against E/W's makeable 4♥. But neither East player could stand the heat, and both

bid on to 5♥ over 4♠ with their big heart fit, secure in the belief that they were the ones saving. Too bad. A pair of +200s N/S for a push; still 44-10 NEDUK.

Again, just for the record, half the field saved in 5♥ and quite a few pairs bid on to 5♠ over that.

Bd: 24 North
 Dir: West ♠ Q8
 Vul: None ♥ KJ10987
 ♦ J102
 ♣ J4

West
 ♠ KJ109732
 ♥ 65
 ♦ Q8
 ♣ 106

East
 ♠ A
 ♥ A42
 ♦ AK743
 ♣ AK87

South
 ♠ 654
 ♥ Q3
 ♦ 965
 ♣ Q9532

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
3♠	Pass	6♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
3♠	Pass	4NT(1)	Pass
5♣(2)	Pass	5♦(3)	Pass
5♠(4)	Pass	6♠	All Pass

- (1) Keycard
- (2) One keycard
- (3) ♠Q?
- (4) No

One of us (RC) thinks that Gold's 6♠ bid seems just a bit premature. After all, would something like king-queen seventh of trumps and a minor-suit queen, or the ability to set up discards, be too much to ask from West (opposite which seven requires only 3-2 trumps or the jack being singleton)? The other (BR) thinks 6♠ is the prudent bid, as the risk in probing for seven outweighs any possible gain, with the choice between game and slam being more likely than that between a small slam and a grand. Nevertheless, both tables reached the good 6♠ and made all thirteen tricks when the ♠Q fell doubleton. No swing at +1010; still 44-10 NEDUK.

Almost exactly half of the field bid slam, and one pair (no names, no packdrill) went down. If you can guess what route a good declarer followed on the lead of the ♥J to take only 11 tricks, then you're either psychic or were at the table. Ourselves, we think we'd rather remain ignorant.

Bd: 25 North
 Dir: North ♠ K74
 Vul: E/W ♥ 10964
 ♦ J84
 ♣ 832

West
 ♠ Q9
 ♥ A3
 ♦ KQ109753
 ♣ AK

East
 ♠ AJ102
 ♥ Q87
 ♦ A62
 ♣ J107

South
 ♠ 8653
 ♥ KJ52
 ♦ ---
 ♣ Q9654

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1NT	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

Once again the Bakhshi-Gold free-wheeling style led to the more direct auction. Perhaps Bakhshi was just a bit lucky to find declarer with a diamond fit when a less suitable hand opposite must surely have been possible. (Mind you, if that were the case 6♦ would be no bed of roses either). Justin led a heart and when Gold ducked he was playing for the overtrick. He crossed to dummy, tried one high club in case the queen was singleton, then took the spade finesse for +1470.

In the Closed Room McGann's 2♠ response showed diamonds and 2NT was a relay. The rest is anyone's guess but 6♦ is clearly a better contract at IMPs, even though it lost 3 imps this time (who says good bidding is not its own reward?). The play recorded on BBO (though not necessarily the play at the table) was transcendental. Van Prooijen led a low spade. McGann rose with the ace, crossed to hand with a high diamond, and led the ♠Q. North ducked and declarer claimed the rest for +1370. 3 imps to NEDUK, now ahead 47-10.

Talk about transcendental, there was one result on this deal that strikes us as a little surprising. Teramoto and Fu Zhong, who had been the beneficiaries of defeating slam on the previous deal,

were not unhappy to defend 5♥xx holding the N/S cards here. They went +1600 when their opponents could make a grand slam. It is worth noting that for the whole set this pair only just edged out their opponents on the Butler score.

Bd: 26 North
 Dir: East ♠ A6
 Vul: Both ♥ K86
 ♦ A10753
 ♣ A73

West
 ♠ J108
 ♥ A9752
 ♦ ---
 ♣ KQ865

East
 ♠ K97432
 ♥ J103
 ♦ Q9
 ♣ J2

South
 ♠ Q5
 ♥ Q4
 ♦ KJ8642
 ♣ 1094

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		Pass	2♦
2♥	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		2♠	Pass
4♠	Dbl	Pass	5♦
Dbl	All Pass		

One can hardly blame Gold for not opening 2♠ with such a ratty spade suit, vulnerable, but here it backfired. Then, he chose to lead a spade (if they're not good enough to bid, they're not good enough to lead) against 3NT presenting Papa an extra trick in that suit. Papa won the ♠Q in dummy and, looking to set up a heart trick, led a heart toward his hand. Certain his partner needed him to lead the second round of spades through declarer (and his presumed king) Bakhshi flew with the ♥A giving Papa a second undeserved trick. When the smoke had cleared, Papa scored up +660 (for a top on the board).

In the Closed Room Hanlon, a man after our own heart, did open 2♠ with the East hand. McGann raised him to the making 4♠ game and now N/S had a Hobson's choice, either allow them to score +620 in 4♠ (assuming they guess how to play the spade suit correctly) or collect 500 in 5♦x. Van Prooijen doubled and Verhees promptly bid 5♦, which McGann doubled (presumably) based on his fine trump holding. Plus 500 was 15 imps to Hackett, who now trailed by only 12 imps, 47-25.

Half the N/S field made 3NT here while three E/W pairs made 4♠ and Whibley-Howard collected +790 for being doubled there.

Boards 27 and 28 were everyman's 4♠ contracts, both table bidding game and making it on the nose for two pushes. Then came...

Bd: 29 North
 Dir: North ♠ QJ
 Vul: Both ♥ K732
 ♦ A642
 ♣ A92

West
 ♠ 97432
 ♥ AQJ10
 ♦ 3
 ♣ 754

East
 ♠ 1085
 ♥ 64
 ♦ KQ107
 ♣ KQJ8

South
 ♠ AK6
 ♥ 985
 ♦ J985
 ♣ 1063

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♣(1)	Pass	2♠	All Pass

(1) Majors

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	1♦	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

2♠ in the Open Room appears to have six top losers, but that fails to take the quality of the players at the table into account. Justin started with the ♠A, on which Papa dropped the queen, and Justin dutifully underled his ♠K to Papa's jack. Papa then exited with a low club to declarer's king. When declarer continued with the ♣Q Papa won and hastily cashed his ♦A, lest the rats get at it. Now declarer could pitch dummy's three low hearts on the ♦KQ and thirteenth club (in that order) for +110.

In the Closed Room N/S decided to try for a plus score when they bought the hand in 1NT. Once again it is difficult to see where seven tricks would come from as declarer seems to have only three spades and one trick in each of the other suits. But again that fails to take the player factor into account. McGann led a spade to dummy's jack and declarer continued with ace and a second diamond, won by Hanlon with the queen. He got out with a spade to declarer's ace and Verhees now led a heart, putting up the king when West ducked, and leading a third

diamond toward his hand. Hanlon won the king and played a heart, allowing McGann to cash three tricks in that suit but declarer now had seven tricks for +90. That was 5 imps back to NEDUK, increasing their lead to 27 at 52-25.

About 2/3 of the field played 1NT here, with rather more pairs bringing home the bacon than going down.

Bd: 30 North
 Dlr: East ♠ K
 Vul: None ♥ KJ109875
 ♦ Q92
 ♣ 103

West
 ♠ J10764
 ♥ 42
 ♦ 108
 ♣ K975

East
 ♠ 985
 ♥ Q
 ♦ K65
 ♣ QJ8642

South
 ♠ AQ32
 ♥ A63
 ♦ AJ743
 ♣ A

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1♠	2♥	2♠	3♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>V Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
1♥	2♦(♥)	Pass	1♣(1)
Pass	4♥	Pass	2♥
All Pass		Pass	6♥
(1) STR, ART			

Both tables bid easily to 6♥, but with 12 tricks on top the play could only determine the fate of a possible overtrick. In the Open Room Papa won the opening ♣Q in dummy, played a heart to the king, and when the queen fell claimed 12 tricks. Sloppy, because in the Closed Room Verhees won the opening low club lead in hand and claimed 13 tricks by ruffing his second club in dummy and pitching two diamonds on the ♠AQ. A silly imp to NEDUK, who ended up wining the match 53-25, 22-8 in VPs.

Looking at all four hands you want to be in the grand slam. Kudos to England Ladies and Beijing Trinergy, who pushed the board at 1510. That was Shu-Ju and N Senior-Dhondy. Chokshi-Venkataraman also achieved that feat but we won't tell you which pair bid to 7NT, which needs the diamond finesse, of course. But we will drop the hint that you don't get to be in the top three without a little bit of luck.



The Head Banger

Match Three: Taipei Weide vs the Bulgarian All Stars

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 1 North
 Dlr: North ♠ J854
 Vul: None ♥ AK8532
 ♦ A
 ♣ K4

West
 ♠ 10
 ♥ J94
 ♦ 10542
 ♣ AQ762

East
 ♠ AQ9762
 ♥ 7
 ♦ J76
 ♣ J93

South
 ♠ K3
 ♥ Q106
 ♦ KQ983
 ♣ 1085

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
All Pass	1♥	1♠	4♥

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
All Pass	1♥	2♠	4♥

All Pass

The match started with both Souths indicating they would taking no prisoners. Each took what seems to be a wild shot of bidding game instead of showing a limit raise, or the like. Both Norths (especially the one in the Closed Room) must have been tempted to bid

on, but with no safety at the five level opted for discretion rather than valor, probably knowing that when in doubt, don't trust partner. Right they were. both Easts led a club. West took his ace and played for the spade ruff. Matching 420s and no swing.

Not one pair bid to the five level here (well done to the field). Half emerged with an overtrick.

Bd: 2 North
 Dlr: East ♠ K10953
 Vul: N/S ♥ K105
 ♦ 986
 ♣ 42

West ♠ AQJ76 ♥ 7 ♦ 753 ♣ AJ76	East ♠ 82 ♥ A42 ♦ AKQ2 ♣ KQ103
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South
 ♠ 4
 ♥ QJ9863
 ♦ J104
 ♣ 985

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		1♣	1♥
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Dbl	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
		1♣	Pa
1♥(♠)	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Huang played 6♣ after Isporski had doubled a heart cue-bid for the lead. When Kovachev ignored the request in order to lead a spade, Huang smelled a rat. He rose with the ♠A and returned the ♠Q. North covered and played a third spade, letting Huang ruff high and draw two rounds of trumps. When they split he ruffed a third spade high and claimed. The defenders had given him an easy time but with diamonds 3-3 most routes would have led to 12 winners after the first trick.

The inelegant sequence in the Closed Room led to a game with at least nine top tricks. On a diamond lead Hristov made +460 but Taipei Weide had 10imps.

Slam is easier to make with the sight of all four hands, of course. It was a flat board in NEDUK-Oz Two; 6♣ went down in one room, 7♣ in the other. It is really not such a terrible grand slam, in a sense. Half the field bid to the six level or higher; about ten pairs made it and ten went down.

The next deal offered a chance at redemption for the Bulgarians.

Bd: 3 North
 Dlr: South ♠ 52
 Vul: E/W ♥ K98743
 ♦ 97
 ♣ A98

West ♠ KJ1064 ♥ A2 ♦ A8652 ♣ 4	East ♠ AQ87 ♥ Q10 ♦ K4 ♣ KJ1052
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South
 ♠ 93
 ♥ J65
 ♦ QJ103
 ♣ Q763

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
			Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			Pass
1♠	Pass	2NT(♠)	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Slam on a heart lead requires either a guess or both spades and diamonds to split. Yang, facing slam-going values and real spade support, might have cue-bid 4♥ over 3♠ but probably would have needed to drive to slam on his own since Huang had no side-suit first-round controls. Both tables made 12 tricks after a heart lead and moved on, dissatisfied. Still 10-0 for Taipei Weide.

Elsewhere, Klinger played 6♠ for Oz Players. Aided by North's intervention, he won the diamond lead in dummy, crossed to the ♠K and led a club, guessing to put up the king when North ducked smoothly. A fine 1430, tied for a top with six other successful slam-venturers.

Bd: 4
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ QJ94
 ♥ A1097
 ♦ A82
 ♣ J10

West
 ♠ AK87
 ♥ J
 ♦ Q3
 ♣ AK6532

East
 ♠ 5
 ♥ KQ543
 ♦ 9654
 ♣ Q97

South
 ♠ 10632
 ♥ 862
 ♦ KJ107
 ♣ 84

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♣	Dbl(1)	1♦(2)	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	All Pass

(1) Majors

(2) 4-7 HCP

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Liu had an easy diamond lead against 3NT choosing a low one. Pundits could spend hours debating which spot card is right, but here it didn't matter: all roads led to one down. In the other room Huang had shown his approximate values at his first turn, and while the club fit came to light to improve his hand, he could see that his heart values rated to be worthless. 3♣ fetched 130 when the defenders cashed out after winning the ♥A, and that made the score 16-0.

About half the field went down in game here. Only eight pairs benefitted from poor defense to bring home 600.

Bd: 5
 Dir: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ KJ974
 ♥ K
 ♦ A92
 ♣ AK83

West
 ♠ AQ1032
 ♥ J76
 ♦ 83
 ♣ QJ9

East
 ♠ 5
 ♥ Q1085
 ♦ K1064
 ♣ 7652

South
 ♠ 86
 ♥ A9432
 ♦ QJ75
 ♣ 104

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Liu's 2♠ bid showed a minimum in high-cards since he had a 2♦ BART-style action available. Chung devalued his bare ♥K and passed, and on a heart lead played to ruff clubs in dummy. When the high club spots appeared he took a diamond finesse and pitched his winning club on the ♥A. He next led a trump to the king, and the 5-1 split meant he had just the diamond winner to come. That was eight tricks.

Kovachev played 3NT after a somewhat illogical re-evaluation by Isporski (perhaps he miscounted his points; it happens to us all). He won the top club lead in dummy, led a diamond to the queen, then passed the ♠6, which held — as we're sure he expected it to — and played a second spade up. What could West do? He chose to win and play a heart. Declarer won the ♥K, then paused for about ten minutes before playing the ace and another diamond to East. That player could exit with a club but Kovachev could endplay West in clubs to lead to either his hand or dummy for the rest of the tricks. A well-earned 10 imps.

Rather more pairs than you might expect (about one third of the field) did bring home 3NT here.

Bd: 6
 Dir: East
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ QJ843
 ♥ K92
 ♦ 94
 ♣ AQ9

West
 ♠ 5
 ♥ A873
 ♦ A1083
 ♣ J872

East
 ♠ A1076
 ♥ Q105
 ♦ K6
 ♣ K543

South
 ♠ K92
 ♥ J64
 ♦ QJ752
 ♣ 106

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♥	1♠	Dbl	2♠
Dbl	Pass	3♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♥	1♠	1♦	Pass
Dbf	Pass	Dbf	2♠
3♣	All Pass	2NT	Pass

Iliev as West received a spade lead against his 3♣, of course. He ruffed two spades in hand, then played on diamonds, and the defenders allowed him to continue the cross-ruff low, both discarding hearts. He ended up with the first nine tricks. With 3♣ played the other way up in the Open Room Kovachev found a thoughtful trump lead. The ten went to the jack, queen, and king. Huang played the same cross-ruff and achieved the same result: nine tricks.

Well bid and played by the declarers, but here North had the opportunity to ruff the third diamond high and draw another trump. Still 16-10.

Bd: 7	North
Dlr: South	♠ K10975
Vul: Both	♥ J3
	♦ 52
	♣ 8642

West
♠ J82
♥ Q109764
♦ A43
♣ 10

East
♠ 64
♥ A2
♦ QJ6
♣ KQJ753

South
♠ AQ3
♥ K85
♦ K10987
♣ A9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	2♥(♠)	3♣	3♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	2♥(♠)	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♣	3♠
All Pass			

Liu propelled himself to 3♠, then had to make it on the lead of the singleton club. He found the imaginative shot of a low heart from hand, which worked better than he had a right to expect. Iliev ducked — can you blame him? Now Hristev won and tried to cash his side's diamond winners before going

for the trump promotion. West could discard his third diamond on the club winner but South ruffed the third club high, drew trumps with the aid of the finesse, and had nine tricks. Easy game, bridge.

In the other room Huang's direct 3♣ bid made it far harder for Kovachev to pass; it could well have led to a missed game on a different day. Kovachev won the club lead, tried a spade to the ten, then a diamond to the six, king and ace. A nice try, but no cigar. Yang took his ♦A and instead of trying a second trump led a heart to the ace. Huang now persisted with clubs. Declarer ruffed the third one and gave up a diamond. When a club came back he could ruff high but could not quite reduce his trumps sufficiently to endplay West. That was 6 imps, making the score 23-10 for Taipei Weide.

Bd: 8	North
Dlr: West	♠ 75
Vul: None	♥ 96
	♦ AKQ1096
	♣ J87

West
♠ J9863
♥ A4
♦ J53
♣ AK2

East
♠ 2
♥ KJ1073
♦ 42
♣ Q9654

South
♠ AKQ104
♥ Q852
♦ 87
♣ 103

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♠	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♠	2♦	2♥(NF)	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

It seems Yang's opening spade lead against 3NT got what it deserved. When Fate deals you the ♣AK2 she is trying to tell you that you may have a problem at trick two — but not at trick one. The lead made just the four tricks difference since in the other room 3NT went down three on a top club lead. The All Stars now trailed 22-23.

Six pairs were allowed to make 3NT on a spade lead while a diamond partscore was the most common result overall.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ KQ8
 ♥ 832
 ♦ 8654
 ♣ K76

West
 ♠ 9532
 ♥ K7
 ♦ AK109
 ♣ J42

East
 ♠ 107
 ♥ A65
 ♦ J73
 ♣ A9853

South
 ♠ AJ64
 ♥ QJ1094
 ♦ Q2
 ♣ Q10

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Dbl	2♥	3♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	All Pass	

Yang's aggressive double, especially at these colors and facing a passed partner, bought a better facing hand than it had a right to. 3♣ turned out to be a piece of cake, with the ♦Q being onside and the trumps behaving. Since 2♥ was allowed to make on repeated diamond leads (and thus the spade ruff got away) that was 6imps back to Weide, leading 29-22.

Bd: 10
 Dir: East
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ Q10982
 ♥ Q54
 ♦ A102
 ♣ 95

West
 ♠ A5
 ♥ AJ10
 ♦ J654
 ♣ K742

East
 ♠ K74
 ♥ K972
 ♦ 873
 ♣ Q106

South
 ♠ J63
 ♥ 863
 ♦ KQ9
 ♣ AJ83

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦	1♠	Dbl	2♣(♦)
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
Pass	1♠	Pass	Pass
2♣	All Pass		

2♠ was easy to defeat on a club lead; the defenders had four plain-suit winners to cash on the go and could sit back for two trump winners. Yang won his ♣K and shifted to hearts. Bob's your uncle. By contrast, 2♣ looks a very ungainly spot. The defenders led a club: 5,6,8, K. Iliev now passed the ♥J, cashed two more hearts, then played two rounds of spades pitching a diamond as North ruffed in. Iliev ruffed a spade and exited with a diamond, and with South holding three trumps he could not avoid giving dummy one more trump trick for an impressive +90 and a flat board. Still 29-22.

Bd: 11
 Dir: South
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ AK742
 ♥ K
 ♦ 862
 ♣ K432

West
 ♠ 1053
 ♥ 873
 ♦ A1054
 ♣ 976

East
 ♠ QJ9
 ♥ Q10954
 ♦ KQ9
 ♣ Q5

South
 ♠ 86
 ♥ AJ62
 ♦ J73
 ♣ AJ108

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
			1♣
Pass	1♥(♠)	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣(1)	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♥(♠)	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

Clearly you'd like to stay out of game here but in the Closed Room North elected to pattern out rather than jump to 3NT on the second round, and now the diamond duplication never came to light. E/W cashed their diamond winners and declarer guessed the

trump queen for down one.

3NT looks to have slightly better chances: if declarer finds the ♣Q, East must leave his partner to guard spades and keep his hearts. But in practice when Yang led a diamond against 3NT the defenders cashed out that suit. Yang now shifted to spades and Kovachev misguessed the ♣Q and went two down, 2 imps to Taipei. The running score was 31-22 now.

Precisely two declarers were allowed to make 3NT here but a surprising number of players (and we'll name them unless the check is submitted before close of play tomorrow) elected to overcall 2♥ over 1♠ with the East hand. Was it those good hearts or the long, weak spades that tempted you beyond endurance? 2♥x cost 500, or in one case 3♥ cost 800 when West voluntarily upped the ante, just before Hemant Jalan as South could do the same.

Bd: 12 North
 Dlr: West ♠ AJ76
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q973
 ♦ 986
 ♣ A9

West
 ♠ K4
 ♥ K1084
 ♦ 53
 ♣ Q7432

East
 ♠ Q1095
 ♥ AJ2
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ KJ108

South
 ♠ 832
 ♥ 65
 ♦ AJ10742
 ♣ 65

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	1♣	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Both Souths had been dealt a natural diamond lead against 3NT. Declarer knocked out the ♣A and the defenders had the next seven tricks. Kovachev had done well not to overcall 2♦ over 1NT but there again, perhaps he did not have it available. No swing; matching -150s.

Comfortably more than half the field achieved this precise result; exactly one East (Park Jungyoon of

Korea) was allowed to collect nine tricks in 3NT.

Bd: 14 North
 Dlr: East ♠ J9852
 Vul: None ♥ AQ
 ♦ A
 ♣ AK852

West
 ♠ A
 ♥ J9742
 ♦ 1093
 ♣ 10963

East
 ♠ Q7643
 ♥ ---
 ♦ KJ864
 ♣ Q74

South
 ♠ K10
 ♥ K108653
 ♦ Q752
 ♣ J

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	4♥	Pass	2♥

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Liu</i>
3♣(P/C)	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	4♥
Dbl	All Pass		

It looked as if N/S in the Closed Room had done well to collect +590 — and indeed they had (this was the top N/S result for the deal). In practice, though, the timing of the auction in the Open Room left Huang unsure as to whether it might be his side's deal. Eventually he judged to pass, aided by the length of time it had taken North to bid 4♥, which suggested he had extra values, rather than that he was sacrificing.

In the Closed Room against 4♥x Iliev led his ♠A and shifted to a diamond. The timing of the auction made the winning line stand out: Liu ruffed two clubs in hand and two diamonds in dummy before exiting with a spade. West ruffed once and was endplayed in trumps, then thrown in again to concede an extra trump trick for 590.

A trump shift by Iliev at trick two forces declarer to play very precisely. He must cash the top clubs, ruff a club in hand, cross to the ♦A, ruff a club in hand, then a diamond in dummy, and lead the fifth club to pitch his diamond loser. When West ruffs in, declarer's hand is high except for the trump loser. Kudos to Yoshiko Murata, who was the only other declarer to bring home 4♥ here without the benefit of the final double. Senior/Dhondy and the Hacketts bid

to 3NT and brought home nine tricks (yes, diamond leads should set the game).

In the Open Room, after a top spade lead and a diamond shift, Kovachev had no real reason not to try to cash the ♠A and that shortened West's trumps enough to avoid any endplay. Yang exited with a second diamond and Kovachev ran this around to his hand, hoping the ♦K was on his left. No dice. When a spade came back declarer ruffed high, which left him down two. 12 imps for Taipei Weide, who had won 43-23.



"So, where do you get your nails done?"

Match Four: Beijing Trinergy vs Oz Two

By Barry Rigal

The Chinese would be playing Precision, the Aussies natural methods with a fair number of gadgets.

Bd: 17 North
 Dir: North ♠ Q2
 Vul: None ♥ A765432
 ♦ 94
 ♣ 53

West
 ♠ J109854
 ♥ 109
 ♦ 3
 ♣ KJ82

East
 ♠ AK3
 ♥ KQ
 ♦ KQJ872
 ♣ Q4

South
 ♠ 76
 ♥ J8
 ♦ A1065
 ♣ A10976

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgton</i>
	2♦(Multi)	Dbf	2♥
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
	2♥	Dbf	3♥
4♠	All Pass		

Both tables sensibly treated the North hand as a two-level preempt; both Wests introduced their spades and settled for game, the 2-2 trump break with the ♠Q onside coming as a pleasant surprise. No swing. But note that a 3♥ preempt (as perpetrated by Li Xiaoyi) might have given East a problem. Is it so terrible to overcall 3NT here? If you do, as BG

Olofsson discovered, you go about four down against your own game.

Bd: 18 North
 Dir: East ♠ K642
 Vul: N/S ♥ 97
 ♦ J973
 ♣ 985

West
 ♠ J
 ♥ QJ6
 ♦ AQ10852
 ♣ AQ6

East
 ♠ A875
 ♥ A1085
 ♦ K
 ♣ KJ43

South
 ♠ Q1093
 ♥ K432
 ♦ 64
 ♣ 1072

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgton</i>
		1NT	Pass
3♥(1)	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

(1) Minors, short ♠, GF

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠(1)	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass
(1) 4=4=1=4			

Hans seems to have made a pretty fair stab at

showing his singleton diamond honor and extra values. (But no jump to 3♠ at his third turn maybe limited his hand to 15 or so.) Both sides could make one try but it was hard to go past 3NT now. Slam is certainly close to 70% and thus unlucky to fail, though one can certainly feel less sympathy for any auction that starts with East valuing his hand as a 13-15 notrump. Rightly or wrongly, Wang showed his singleton spade and Li assumed clubs would be trumps until informed to the contrary. When neither chance for Wang's slam came in, Oz Two had 10 imps. Note that slam by East might conceivably have been let through on a heart lead and 6♣ is impossible to defeat.

Two pairs did indeed find their way to 6♣ while one brought home 6NT as East on a heart lead. The successful partnerships were Liu-Chung (losing 2 imps since Shi-Gui in the other room had made 6NT) and Maeda-Hayashi for NARITA.

The swing for being aggressive evened out on the next deal.

Bd: 19
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ K8
 ♥ AK72
 ♦ A1098
 ♣ AK9

West
 ♠ Q742
 ♥ 65
 ♦ 32
 ♣ Q10652

East
 ♠ J53
 ♥ 10843
 ♦ K6
 ♣ 8743

South
 ♠ A1096
 ♥ QJ9
 ♦ QJ754
 ♣ J

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgton</i>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦(GF)	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

One rarely sees such an extreme difference in valuation as that exhibited by the two Souths here. There's much to prefer in Ju's, though it is tempting to pass initially and then use Stayman over partner's 2NT and go past 3NT to find the excellent 6♦. Slam posed no problem, but the overtricks in 3NT meant that Beijing had 9 imps only and that Oz Two still led 10-9.

Only a quarter of the field missed slam but, there again, two pairs did bid to a grand in diamonds. Somehow that is a more dignified way to lose imps, don't you think?

Bd: 20
 Dir: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ KQ9753
 ♥ 102
 ♦ K2
 ♣ J106

West
 ♠ 6
 ♥ Q654
 ♦ A107
 ♣ A8432

East
 ♠ J8
 ♥ KJ987
 ♦ Q4
 ♣ K975

South
 ♠ A1042
 ♥ A3
 ♦ J98653
 ♣ Q

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgton</i>
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Both tables steamed into 4♠. Hans led a heart while Gosney received a trump lead and set up a club to pitch his heart loser. He must have been hoping for the ♦A to be offside, but as it was he gained just 1 imp on the deal, not 12. 11-9 for Oz Two.

Bd: 21
 Dir: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ AK9432
 ♥ AJ3
 ♦ 72
 ♣ 96

West
 ♠ 865
 ♥ 107
 ♦ A3
 ♣ AKJ853

East
 ♠ 10
 ♥ Q9864
 ♦ KJ865
 ♣ 107

South
 ♠ QJ7
 ♥ K52
 ♦ Q1094
 ♣ Q42

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
	1♠	2♠	3♠
4♣	Pass	4♦	Dbl

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
	1♠	2♠	Dbl
3♣	3♠	All Pass	

There is much to comment on in these two auctions. First, one must admire Ju's stoicism in the Closed Room. How could one put down that dummy, never having raised spades, and see the contract fail? The defenders cashed two clubs and played hearts, and declarer could not avoid losing five tricks in the plain suits.

By contrast, Edgtton raised spades at once and then took a well-judged, if somewhat speculative, hack at 4♦. Incidentally, West's 4♣ bid was surely poorly thought out, if his partner rated to have the red suits. The defenders led two rounds of spades, ruffed by East, who played a club to dummy and passed the ♥10. Edgtton won and played back a low club, and in the fulness of time declarer lost his two trump tricks to get out for down 300. That meant 9 imps to Oz Two, leading 20-9.

Bd: 23	North
Dlr: South	♠ J6
Vul: Both	♥ 10976
	♦ AQJ5
	♣ 876

West
♠ AKQ7
♥ KJ2
♦ 63
♣ KQ42

East
♠ 10932
♥ 853
♦ 72
♣ A953

South
♠ 854
♥ AQ4
♦ K10984
♣ J10

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
1♣(STR)	Pass	1♦(NEG)	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
			Pass
1♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	1♥	Dbl	Pass
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♦
2♠	3♦	All Pass	

Although 4♠ is a very lucky make you'd expect both pairs to get to spades here – though maybe only a partscore. Not so, though they both went plus in their respective contracts. 1NT fetched 150 on a heart lead to the ♥Q and ♥K, while 3♦ struggled out for down one, when the defenders found themselves endplayed in hearts, after East did not break up the endplay on his partner. 20-11 now for Oz Two.

Bd: 24	North
Dlr: West	♠ AQ873
Vul: None	♥ 84
	♦ AJ73
	♣ 62

West	East
♠ 105	♠ K942
♥ KQ7	♥ J1053
♦ 64	♦ 92
♣ A108743	♣ KJ5

South
♠ J6
♥ A962
♦ KQ1085
♣ Q9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	3♣	4♦

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT

All Pass

There seems to be little play for 4♦ if the defenders get around to hearts early enough. Nunn won the ♣A and duly shifted to a heart, ducked all around. Now he needed to shift back to clubs, which was certainly not obvious. When he played a second heart declarer ruffed out the hearts and ran the trumps, knowing from West's passed-hand status that the black kings were on his left. In the three-card ending East was strip-squeezed down to two spades and one club, and then thrown in to lead spades. Shi who must be obeyed duly recorded a scintillating +130 on his card.

3NT was even less fun for Oz Two. Wang led a top heart and declarer won and immediately finessed in spades. The defenders now unblocked hearts then carefully unblocked clubs by leading king then jack, and cashed out for down five. Only 9 imps for Beijing Trinerger – doesn't that feel like it should be more? It was 20-20 now.

Bd: 25 North
 Dir: North ♠ 952
 Vul: E/W ♥ Q4
 ♦ K5
 ♣ 1087652

West
 ♠ K1086
 ♥ AJ872
 ♦ J1063
 ♣ ---

East
 ♠ AQ74
 ♥ K5
 ♦ Q2
 ♣ AKQ94

South
 ♠ J3
 ♥ 10963
 ♦ A9874
 ♣ J3

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣(1)	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

(1) Puppet
 Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♥(♠)	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♠	All Pass

Hans' decision to drive to slam looks reasonable facing a hand that showed a spade fit and slam interest. Alas for him, he bought precisely the wrong dummy, plus a South on lead with an ace who was not afraid to use it. Down 100, and 13 imps to the Chinese when their Puppet Stayman auction worked a great deal better to set spades a level lower and allow for the diamond weakness to come to light. Beijing Trinergy now ahead 33-20.

Three pairs bid and made slam. Hugh McGann brought it home on a club lead declaring from the West seat. Meanwhile, it was either an embarrassing or a distinguished flat board in the match between Tim Tam and Riverside, since both tables racked up the slam on spade leads.



"You can smile all you want, I'm NOT adjusting your score!"

And as if that was not embarrassing enough...

Bd: 26 North
 Dir: East ♠ KJ1063
 Vul: Both ♥ A
 ♦ K6543
 ♣ 86

West
 ♠ Q
 ♥ Q952
 ♦ AJ2
 ♣ KQ742

East
 ♠ 8
 ♥ K10643
 ♦ Q1097
 ♣ 1053

South
 ♠ A97542
 ♥ J87
 ♦ 8
 ♣ AJ9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
		Pass	Pass
2♣	2♠	3♣	4♣
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
		Pass	1♠
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

As 3-1 fits go we've seen worse, but it was no fun for North on a trump lead. Down 600. A Japanese friend suggested that this be named an Irish splinter, but we would never risk that (especially after the Senior Editor described two member of the Hackett team as being from Great Britain instead of Eire; please don't knee-cap us). That was 15 imps to Oz Two, back in front 35-33.

Bd: 27 North
 Dir: South ♠ K93
 Vul: None ♥ AKQ764
 ♦ 872
 ♣ A

West
 ♠ J105
 ♥ 103
 ♦ 10964
 ♣ KJ94

East
 ♠ Q64
 ♥ J852
 ♦ KJ3
 ♣ Q87

South
 ♠ A872
 ♥ 9
 ♦ AQ5
 ♣ 106532

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦(GF)	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

There's not much to choose between the two games, but 3NT brought home nine tricks on a spade lead when declarer could not afford the diamond finesse, while a club lead against 4♥ allowed North to set up a long spade and finesse the diamond in comfort for 11 tricks. 2 imps to Oz Two, leading 37-33.

Bd: 28

Dlr: West	North
Vul: N/S	♠ Q96
	♥ K87
	♦ 43
	♣ AQ1076

West
♠ 52
♥ Q109652
♦ KJ962
♣ ---

East
♠ AK1073
♥ J
♦ Q75
♣ J985

South
♠ J84
♥ A43
♦ A108
♣ K432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
2♥	Pass	3♣(P/C)	Pass
3♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
4♥	All Pass		

Nunn's wild opening salvo put his opponents under extreme pressure. They came up with the diamond lead (well done) but South won and...shifted to a club. Nunn ruffed and led a low heart from hand. When North ducked, instead of winning to play a second diamond, the defenders could no longer take their ruff. Nunn had 420, the only declarer to bring home a game on this deal, and he would tell you that he received bonus style points as well, for the opening bid. But the judges had their fingers stuffed in their ears, and weren't listening.

3♦ may have been a sounder contract, (after a trump lead the defenders prevented the heart ruff and took their three winners) but Oz Two had 7 imps and were in front 44-33.

Bd: 29

Dlr: North	North
Vul: Both	♠ KJ93
	♥ A5
	♦ K
	♣ Q98764

West
♠ A102
♥ K642
♦ A10962
♣ A

East
♠ Q65
♥ J1087
♦ 853
♣ J102

South
♠ 874
♥ Q93
♦ QJ74
♣ K53

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgtton</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
Dbl	2♣	Pass	Pass
3♦	2♠	Pass	3♣
4♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
	1NT	Pass	Pass
Dbl	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

It is hard to claim you have one of your clubs in with your diamonds or hearts; ten black cards are ten black cards. Shi's imaginative opening bid certainly helped keep his opponents quiet. 3♣ did not rate to be that much fun, but Hans' small club lead gave declarer a trick and a tempo. Nunn compounded the error by shifting to a small diamond at trick two. Now declarer used his entry to dummy in trumps to guess spades and had a miraculous +110. Not enough.

In the other room the Chinese got their wires crossed and were lucky to escape a double. Edgtton's opening diamond lead looks very strange but it did not prevent the defenders from collecting four tricks in the red suits and a spade for down 200. 3 imps to Oz Two, up 47-33 now.

At another table where we were following the action Sundelin and Olofsson doubled 4♣ and found the spade lead from the East seat. Declarer finessed on the second round to let Sundelin play a heart through. When declarer misguessed trumps, he had conceded 800. By way of contrast, Hoshi-Takasaka bid the N/S cards to 3NT by South. On the ♥2 lead and with no heart continuation when West was in with the ♣A they scored a comfortable +600.

Bd: 30 North
 Dir: East ♠ KQJ53
 Vul: None ♥ Q
 ♦ K8743
 ♣ Q3

West
 ♠ 62
 ♥ KJ10432
 ♦ J102
 ♣ J4

East
 ♠ A104
 ♥ A985
 ♦ Q
 ♣ A10985

South
 ♠ 987
 ♥ 76
 ♦ A965
 ♣ K762

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Edgton</i>
2♥	2♠	2♣	Pass
		4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunn</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Ju</i>
		1♣	Pass
2♥	2♠	4♥	4♠
All Pass			

Against 4♠ Hans led his singleton ♦Q. Declarer won in dummy and led a trump to the king, ducked, and a second trump, won by Hans as Nunn echoed: suit preference. That let Hans underlead his ♥A for the diamond ruff and with a trick in each minor to come that was down two. That was excellent defense, but as usual, not enough. In the other room one can hardly blame Edgton for not saving, but that pesky singleton diamond in dummy was all Wang needed to wrap up +420 and an 8-imp pick-up, reducing the margin to 47-41 at the death.

Almost half the field bid and made 4♥ here.

16th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Wednesday (Feb. 9)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (5)	411, 412, 413, 414, 415
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (6)	
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (7)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (8)	
Thursday (Feb. 10)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (9)	411, 412, 413, 414, 415
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (10)	
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (11)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (12)	
Friday (Feb. 11)	10:00-12:15	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (1)	411, 412
	12:35-14:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (2)	
	14:50-16:00	Lunch Break	(16-board segments)
	16:00-18:15	NEC Cup Semi-Final (1)	411, 412
	18:35-20:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)	
Saturday (Feb. 12)	10:00-17:00	Yokohama SRR & Swiss	501, 502
	10:00-12:15	NEC Cup Final (1)	411, 412
	12:35-14:50	NEC Cup Final (2)	
	14:50-16:00	Lunch Break	(16-board segments)
	16:00-18:15	NEC Cup Final (3)	
Sunday (Feb. 13)	18:35-20:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Finals A, B & C	501, 502
	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	501, 502
	18:30-20:30	Closing Ceremony	503

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