



NEC Bridge Festival

Thursday, February 10, 2011
Bulletin Number 3

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

NEDUK Still in the Lead After Day Two of the 2011 NEC Cup

At the end of Day 2, NEDUK (David Bakhshi, David Gold, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen) with 167 VPs, has stretched their lead to 11 VPs over the two teams tied for second place, OzTwo (Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Paul Gosney, Nabil Edgton) and the Bulgarian All Stars (Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Hristo Hristov). In fourth place, 14 VPs back, is Hackett (Paul Hackett, Justin Hackett, Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann) while in fifth place, just 1 VP back, is Beijing Trinergy (Lu Dong, Ju Chuancheng, Shi Zhengjun, Wang Yanhong, Li Rui). Two other teams, Okay+ and China Women, are tied for sixth place just 1 VP back. Heng Sha Ke Ji, 2 more VPs back, completes the top eight. Twenty-two more teams are within a match of qualifying so today should be a great day to watch pressure bridge. The complete Day Two rankings are shown below; individual match results for Matches 5-8 may be found on page 5.

NEC Cup: Standings After Day Two (Eight Matches)

Rank	Team(#)	VPs	Rank	Team(#)	VPs	Rank	Team(#)	VPs
1	NEDUK	167	17-19	England Ladies	126	33	Summer Wine	109
2-3	Oz Two	156	17-19	Jiuzhaigou	126	34	Iza Yokohama II	108
2-3	Bulgarian All Stars	156	17-19	Manado-Indonesia	126	35-36	MammoM	107
4	Hackett	142	20-21	Shenzhen	125	35-36	KATSUMATA	107
5	Beijing	141	20-21	Pretty Cats	125	37-38	Venus	105
6-7	Okay+	142	22	NARITA	124	37-38	ESPERANZA	105
6-7	China Women	140	23	Spain	123	39	TimTam	104
8	Heng Sha Ke Ji	138	24	Hemant Jalan	122	40	Friends	103
9	Taipei Weide	134	25	Oz Players	120	41	Rosewood	99
10	Good Oxygen	133	26	JAPAN YOUTH	119	42	Korea	98
11	Lion	130	27	HANA	118	43	LAS FLORES	97
12-16	NAITO	128	28	KinKi	117	44	Yukinata	95
12-16	KISS	128	29	NANIWADA	115	45	SYNH ₂ O	89
12-16	AKAMA	128	30	River side	113	46-47	Kisaragi	86
12-16	Zhe Jiang	128	31-32	SKOTII	111	46-47	MY-Bridge	86
12-16	SARA	128	31-32	Fairy Tale	111	48	NAGUMO	37

Today's 1st VuGraph Match will feature Taipei Weide (2) vs Heng Sha Ke Ji (15)

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 Bridgemate 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 Edgton
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	Kisaragi:	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 national 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 5				Match 6				Match 7				Match 8			
	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP
1	22	32	20	88	20	14	15	103	36	53	22	125	5	31	15	140
2	5	32	4	91	11	43	20	111	4	29	11	122	19	20	12	134
3	12	17	6	75	18	15	11	86	41	47	25	111	26	43	15	126
4	23	69	25	94	9	19	14	108	2	44	19	127	6	28	15	142
5	2	78	25	113	6	42	14	127	14	56	25	152	1	29	15	167
6	36	72	25	108	5	49	16	124	9	34	17	141	4	29	15	156
7	18	43	15	73	8	34	16	90	17	28	14	104	33	45	24	128
8	41	24	12	73	7	25	13	86	31	33	14	100	27	54	20	120
9	17	58	25	102	4	25	16	118	6	24	13	131	20	46	25	156
10	26	27	11	76	17	45	17	93	24	31	9	102	38	51	24	126
11	24	54	24	86	2	22	10	96	33	33	21	117	16	9	5	122
12	3	53	24	94	14	13	4	98	15	26	12	110	36	32	13	123
13	27	24	9	51	48	102	25	76	44	24	14	90	40	22	8	98
14	16	44	18	91	12	60	25	116	5	17	5	121	15	23	7	128
15	44	52	19	77	31	44	20	97	12	38	18	115	14	54	23	138
16	14	31	12	85	21	46	20	105	19	22	11	116	11	48	25	141
17	9	0	2	77	10	36	13	90	7	32	16	106	32	48	19	125
18	7	43	15	74	3	33	19	93	32	42	15	108	28	57	25	133
19	45	54	20	81	38	56	22	103	16	39	19	122	2	31	18	140
20	42	89	25	85	1	16	15	100	28	50	23	123	9	7	5	128
21	31	33	18	83	16	24	10	93	25	38	17	110	24	43	15	125
22	1	13	10	76	42	27	12	88	45	31	17	105	23	3	0	105
23	4	18	3	69	35	21	11	80	34	75	25	105	22	75	25	130
24	11	17	6	68	30	59	24	92	10	55	21	113	21	41	15	128
25	39	74	25	68	44	45	22	90	21	30	13	103	45	43	15	118
26	10	43	19	81	36	17	9	90	38	45	19	109	3	42	15	124
27	13	50	21	62	42	32	12	74	46	37	20	94	8	34	10	104
28	32	50	17	79	41	44	23	102	20	17	7	109	18	2	2	111
29	46	26	11	48	39	33	18	66	30	30	8	74	35	28	12	86
30	37	18	12	65	24	24	6	71	29	58	22	93	44	32	15	108
31	21	21	12	77	15	24	10	87	8	38	16	103	42	68	25	128
32	28	40	13	75	22	39	18	93	18	43	15	108	17	31	11	119
33	35	51	23	71	37	56	25	96	11	8	9	105	7	8	6	111
34	38	16	5	61	40	27	19	80	23	11	1	81	48	55	24	105
35	33	19	7	54	46	24	14	68	39	31	11	79	29	39	18	97
36	6	6	1	80	26	42	21	101	1	24	8	109	12	41	17	126
37	30	31	18	72	33	9	4	76	40	22	14	90	43	16	9	99
38	34	55	25	82	19	26	8	90	26	27	11	101	10	16	6	107
39	25	0	0	44	29	22	12	56	35	46	19	75	47	43	20	95
40	43	50	18	64	34	12	11	75	37	29	16	91	13	52	22	113
41	8	37	18	79	28	10	7	86	3	3	4	90	46	58	25	115
42	20	24	1	60	27	44	18	78	47	74	25	103	31	1	0	103
43	40	39	12	58	47	24	12	70	48	40	18	88	37	40	21	109
44	15	34	11	68	25	17	8	76	13	30	16	92	30	33	15	107
45	19	32	10	70	23	37	19	89	22	22	13	102	25	44	15	117
46	29	44	19	55	35	31	16	71	27	17	10	81	41	15	5	86
47	48	71	25	60	43	36	18	78	42	13	1	79	39	24	10	89
48	47	18	3	19	13	20	0	19	43	27	12	31	34	18	6	37

C-VP=Cumulative VPs

Yokohama SRR & Swiss

For those who have never played in this event, or who have played in it but have repressed the memory of how it is run, here are the gruesome details.

DAY 1 — Friday, February 11:

Entering teams are divided into sections of 9 or 10 teams each. They play 8 six-board matches, with the top 3 or 4 teams from each section advancing to Flight A in Saturday's Swiss.

The next 3 or 4 teams in each section play in Flight B in Saturday's Swiss.

The remaining 3 or 4 teams in each section play in Flight C in Saturday's Swiss.

DAY 2 — Saturday, February 12:

Swiss Teams with three flights (A, B and C) as described above. Teams play 8 seven-board matches.

Teams eliminated from the KO stages of the NEC Cup may drop-in to Flight A.

Round 4 Revisited

Federico Goded was full of admiration for his opponents here, not just because of the coup they achieved in the bidding and play but because of the coincidence that they had exhibited in both phases.

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>F. Goded</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
	1♠	3♣	Dbl
All Pass			

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

Matt Mullamphy sat East, and had overcalled 3♣ to show the red suits. When Ron Klinger passed 3♣ doubled Mullamphy let it go as if without a care in the world. Goncalves led a top spade and shifted to a low trump. Declarer ran this to his hand, crossed to the ♦A to ruff a spade, and now could not be prevented from taking six club tricks, two diamonds and a ruff for +470. As we've remarked before, easy game, bridge.



"Will you forgive me?"



"I was *sure* we'd be leading the Butler!"



"Not in time trouble...yet."

Match Five: Taipei Weide vs NEDUK

by Barry Rigal

The round five match-up saw the two teams at the top of the table playing one another. It was a match of youth against experience; although none of the NEDUK team were juniors, they still had a few years in hand on almost all of their opponents.

Bd: 1 North
 Dlr: North ♠ KJ983
 Vul: None ♥ K75
 ♦ 104
 ♣ AJ4

West
 ♠ ---
 ♥ A1098
 ♦ J8732
 ♣ Q732

East
 ♠ AQ1064
 ♥ Q632
 ♦ 9
 ♣ 1086

South
 ♠ 752
 ♥ J4
 ♦ AKQ65
 ♣ K95

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Both tables located the 5-3 spade fit and regretted it. It was too early in the morning for East to double — at this hour most of us have at least one spade in with our clubs — and both E/W pairs collected 100 and moved on, unsure if teammates would find 3NT (also down at least a trick?) or if they would be losing 5 imps to the -300 from the other room.

Sartaj Hans was the only North to make a game: he played 3NT on an auction in which East had shown the majors and was treated to a spade lead. He put in the seven and led a low diamond from the board at once, as easy as shelling peas.

By contrast, it was possible to do a lot worse. While two thirds of the N/S pairs went down 100 in one game or the other, and a few more suffered a slightly more severe flesh-wound at -150, seven E/W pairs started using the red card. G. Goded-Sabate collected 500 against 4♠x, as did Tanaka-Niekawa.

But pride of place goes to Kamiyo-Asaoka, who brought in 800 from 4♠x.

On the second deal a passive lead against 1NT saved Taipei Weide an overtrick and got the scoring started, albeit in the quietest possible fashion. NEDUK responded in kind:

Bd: 3 North
 Dlr: South ♠ J4
 Vul: E/W ♥ A875
 ♦ KJ2
 ♣ AK85

West
 ♠ A1087
 ♥ KQ42
 ♦ 85
 ♣ QJ2

East
 ♠ KQ95
 ♥ 10
 ♦ AQ10763
 ♣ 63

South
 ♠ 632
 ♥ J963
 ♦ 94
 ♣ 10974

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
			Pass
1♦(Pre)	Dbl	2♣(♦)	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			Pass
1♣	1NT	Dbl	2♣
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Van Prooijen's slightly surprising decision to double 1♦ (would 1NT have been Polish?) saw Huang transfer to diamonds, then get the spades in, which got E/W to 4♠ in double-quick time. On a club lead and diamond shift Huang put in the ♦Q and led a heart to the jack, queen and ace. Van Prooijen cashed the ♣A before the rats got at it, and exited with a second diamond. Huang took this and after some thought and played a third diamond — presumably if South had followed he would have ruffed high. As it was he could ruff low and draw trumps painlessly for 620.

Bakhshi and Gold had to deal with the 1NT overcall but they too found their way to spades, and on

friendly defense wrapped up 12 tricks when the diamonds came in for discards. 2-1 for NEDUK.

At quite a few tables North ended up in 1NTx when South could not or would not escape. On a diamond lead quite a few Norths escaped for -300, but it was possible for E/W to do much better than that. For example, Edgton-Gosney defended 1NTx on a top spade lead and continuation. Nabil Edgton now shifted to diamonds and the defenders took the first ten tricks. Capping that result were Tanaka-Niekawa (again) who defended 1NTxx on a diamond lead and collected 1000. But best of all were Takahashi-Takayama, who collected 1100 against 1NTx when declarer tried to set up hearts and was rudely disappointed.

Bd: 4 North
 Dir: West ♠ 753
 Vul: Both ♥ 1076
 ♦ J985
 ♣ Q82

West
 ♠ QJ82
 ♥ K532
 ♦ KQ10
 ♣ K6

East
 ♠ A1096
 ♥ AQJ94
 ♦ 7
 ♣ A93

South
 ♠ K4
 ♥ 8
 ♦ A6432
 ♣ J10754

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
1NT	Pass	2♦(1)	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♦	Dbl
4♥	All Pass		

(1) Forcing Stayman

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1NT	Pass	2♦(♥)	Dbl
2♥	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♥	All Pass

Over the 13-15 notrump Huang could use Stayman and splinter, then happily pass the sign-off. Slam is only fractionally worse than the finesse, but with the spade finesse off, 11 tricks were the limit.

In the other room Bakhshi treated his hand as a strongish notrump and Gold simply drove to slam, buoyed by the knowledge that South had diamond values. A rather random 13 imps was therefore going to go one way or the other and it ended up in

Weide's pockets. 14-2 to them.

About a quarter of the field reached slam here. Those playing strong notrumps presumably treated the West hand as minimum balanced and East was not excited by slam possibilities.

Bd: 5 North
 Dir: North ♠ Q10
 Vul: N/S ♥ 86
 ♦ 762
 ♣ AQ9542

West
 ♠ 9863
 ♥ 52
 ♦ AJ1094
 ♣ 103

East
 ♠ AJ7
 ♥ A974
 ♦ Q
 ♣ KJ876

South
 ♠ K542
 ♥ KQJ103
 ♦ K853
 ♣ ---

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
Pass	Pass	2♣	Dbl

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♥(♠)	2♣	1♣	Dbl
Pass	3♣	Pass	2♥
		Dbl	All Pass

A wise man once said, "If both sides attempt contract in same suit, both will be disappointed." As if to prove that adage, along came this awkward deal. Huang opened a Precision 2♣ (not having a way to show a three-suiter with short diamonds) and got nailed where he stood. He ducked the heart lead, won the next, and ruffed a heart high, over-ruffed by North for a trump return. Huang put in the eight, successfully. Now he simply ruffed diamonds in hand and took four clubs, and three aces for down one — operation successful but not a really a triumph, since the deal was such a potential death-trap for whoever ended up declarer.

So it proved when N/S selected their seven-card club fit a level higher. Declarer ducked the ♦Q lead and Gold shifted to the ace and another spade. When declarer failed to cash his second spade winner he lost it (East pitching his spade on the second diamond) and that was a cool -1100; 15 imps for NEDUK, up 17-14 now.

Of the 48 results on the deal seven were making

contracts: notrumps, hearts, diamonds and clubs all came in for seven or eight tricks somewhere or other. The 1100 collected in our match was comfortably the largest penalty in either direction.

Bd: 6 North
 Dir: East ♠ 3
 Vul: E/W ♥ A9643
 ♦ KQ107
 ♣ A54

West
 ♠ K98
 ♥ 1087
 ♦ ---
 ♣ KJ109762

East
 ♠ Q10764
 ♥ KQJ
 ♦ J98
 ♣ 83

South
 ♠ AJ52
 ♥ 52
 ♦ A65432
 ♣ Q

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣(R)	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥(R)	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
		Pass	1♦
2♣	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

in the Open Room a canapé sequence saw South show 6-4, then cue-bids and keycard took N/S competently to the slam. Once South has limited his hand by not opening a club he had in context real extras, so one could argue that this was an excellent hand for the methods.

With hearts 3-3 the bad trump break could be effectively neutralized, and 12 tricks were straightforward enough. That was good for an 11-imp gain when in the Closed Room South refused to cooperate in the slam venture over his partner's forcing diamond raise. Yes, his diamond spots were weak, but with the ♠A and a singleton club he surely owed his partner at least one effort. And in our opinion he had not really shown his diamond length either. That made the score 28-14. For the record, only eight pairs bid slam here.

Bd: 7 North
 Dir: South ♠ KJ872
 Vul: Both ♥ 10975
 ♦ K
 ♣ AK8

West
 ♠ 9654
 ♥ A42
 ♦ 10973
 ♣ Q9

East
 ♠ A10
 ♥ QJ8
 ♦ 8542
 ♣ J1054

South
 ♠ Q3
 ♥ K63
 ♦ AQJ6
 ♣ 7632

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
			1♦
Pass	2♣(R)	Pass	2♦(1)
Pass	2♥(R)	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥(♠)	Pass	3NT

All Pass

(1) minors or 12-14 balanced

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣(R)	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

All Pass

Yang did well to lead a top club against 3NT. Verhees riposted by winning, unblocking diamonds, then crossing to the ♠Q to run the diamonds, pitching a club, heart and spade from the board. Next he led a spade to the jack and ace. Back came a club (when a low heart might have given declarer a nasty guess). Verhees won and played a spade and a second spade, backing his judgment that the ♥A was wrong. Of course at this table there was a real chance that West had the bare ♣J left, in which case declarer would make regardless of the position of the ♥A. Well done. As the cards lay, West could take his spade winner but was then endplayed.

Bakhshi, by contrast, apparently gave declarer an easier time of it when he led a low heart to the first trick. Now it looks natural to unblock diamonds and lead a spade to hand, but declarer could not be sure he had a reentry. His heart return at trick two rode around to Gold's queen, and now a thoughtful low club to the nine and ace left declarer's communications in tangles. He played a spade to the queen and a second spade to the ace, after which a club back saw him overtake the ♦K and try for an

endplay. But this was the Miami variety, where the defenders claim the rest. At the point that a club came back at trick three maybe you have nothing better than to unblock diamonds and play on spades, or at least to test spades to be 3-3 after winning the second club. Whatever the case, another 13 imps made it 41-14.

3NT was made at approximately two thirds of the tables; the datum for N/S was 320.

Bd: 8 North
 Dlr: West ♠ KQ10
 Vul: None ♥ 1087
 ♦ Q108
 ♣ A1083

West
 ♠ 32
 ♥ K42
 ♦ J973
 ♣ K972

East
 ♠ 986
 ♥ AQJ965
 ♦ K2
 ♣ Q5

South
 ♠ AJ754
 ♥ 3
 ♦ A654
 ♣ J64

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠
2♥	Dbl	3♥	Pass
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	1NT	2♦(♥/♠)	2♠
Dbl(P/C)	Pass	3♥	Pass
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

Yang led a trump, and declarer went after diamonds, guessing the suit by leading to the ten. The defenders shifted to hearts, and in the end declarer needed to hold his club losers to one, which he managed to do, knowing East had a doubleton club. Well played for +140.

In the other room Gold overtook the lead of the ♥K to shift the to ♦K. Nice try, definitely no cigar. Declarer drew trumps and cashed out for ten tricks when he misguessed clubs. 41-15 now for NEDUK.

Seven optimistic N/S pairs attempted game. Laurels go to Kurokawa-Senior for both overbidding and overplaying. They collected 450 in 4♠.

Bd: 9 North
 Dlr: North ♠ AJ65
 Vul: E/W ♥ 97654
 ♦ ---
 ♣ 8763

West
 ♠ K732
 ♥ J2
 ♦ K964
 ♣ J54

East
 ♠ 108
 ♥ AKQ83
 ♦ A1052
 ♣ AQ

South
 ♠ Q94
 ♥ 10
 ♦ QJ873
 ♣ K1092

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣(STR)	1NT(Minors)
Dbl	2♣	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	2♦(MAJs)	Dbl	Pass
3NT	2♥	2NT	Pass
	All Pass		

This was not a good hand for either the strong club or the weak major two-suiter opening. While it looks easy enough to get to 3NT here, the intervention in the Open Room made it rather awkward; by contrast it was very straightforward in the Closed Room.

Against 4♥ Verhees led a top diamond. Van Prooijen ruffed and played a club. Huang rose with the ♣A, drew trumps, then unblocked the clubs. But a spade through doomed him to down one.

In 3NT Liu led a spade to the jack and a heart came back. Gold won in dummy and could not set up either a diamond or club without letting South in. But the ♠8 and ♠7 were just enough to insure him a fourth-round spade winner one way or another, or at least to create a blockage in the suit. He emerged with nine tricks without needing to try anything fancy, and another 12 imps made it 53-15.

Half the field played 3NT; almost everyone brought it home. Several pairs wandered off into the hinterland, looking for gold at the end of the rainbow in the form of diamond games or slams. The norm was to take eight tricks in diamonds. Sakurai-Kikuchi got 1100 on defense, but Hirata-Shimizu went one better and collected 1400 against the diamond slam.

Bd: 10
 Dir: East
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ 10
 ♥ KJ853
 ♦ 987
 ♣ 10743

West
 ♠ AQ852
 ♥ 76
 ♦ 1063
 ♣ KQ5

East
 ♠ J9743
 ♥ A9
 ♦ KJ4
 ♣ AJ6

South
 ♠ K6
 ♥ Q1042
 ♦ AQ52
 ♣ 982

Open Room

West Yang	North v Prooijen	East Huang	South Verhees
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2♦(1)	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West Bakhshi	North Chung	East Gold	South Liu
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2♥(♠)	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠			

How would you play 4♠ on a heart lead? Huang followed a line that combined technical expertise with table presence. He won, advanced the ♠J and went up with the ace when Verhees ducked smoothly. Now he stripped off the clubs and exited with a heart, confident that he would come home whenever the ♦Q was onside or he had an endplay. Alas, not tonight Josephine. With the diamond honors wrong he had found the only lie of the cards where this approach would fail.

In the other room after the transfer break got East into the same position, Liu also led a heart. But when Gold advanced the ♠J Liu covered. End of story. Another 12 imps for NEDUK, 65-15.

Only five declarers were able to duplicate the unsuccessful line found by Huang. But if you switch the ♦Q and ♠K it looks to be the only winning line



"Tah-dah!"

Bd: 11
 Dir: South
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ K74
 ♥ 85
 ♦ 1096
 ♣ Q9432

West
 ♠ 109
 ♥ K943
 ♦ J873
 ♣ KJ8

East
 ♠ 8653
 ♥ QJ6
 ♦ AKQ42
 ♣ 6

South
 ♠ AQJ2
 ♥ A1072
 ♦ 5
 ♣ A1075

Open Room

West Yang	North v Prooijen	East Huang	South Verhees
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Pass	1NT	All Pass	
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Closed Room

West Bakhshi	North Chung	East Gold	South Liu
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Pass	1♦	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♣	Dbl	Pass
2♦	3♣	All Pass	

Not a great advertisement for the canapé system here. 1NT had only six tricks after the diamonds and hearts were cashed, while 5♣ has decent play.

Chung had no way to show mild game interest at his second turn and settled for competing in clubs till his opponents gave up. Liu brought home 130 and Taipei Weide had 5 imps, trailing 65-20.

Bd: 12
 Dir: West
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ J85
 ♥ J98
 ♦ Q87
 ♣ AK53

West
 ♠ 10932
 ♥ A754
 ♦ KJ4
 ♣ 84

East
 ♠ 764
 ♥ K1032
 ♦ 1092
 ♣ J92

South
 ♠ AKQ
 ♥ Q6
 ♦ A653
 ♣ Q1076

Open Room

West Yang	North v Prooijen	East Huang	South Verhees
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Pass	Pass	1♥	Dbl
2♥	Dbl	Pass	2NT
3♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The normal 3NT game produced a normal enough result of 630 in the Closed Room, but in the Open Room Huang was steaming after the result on Board 10, and aware that the set had not been going well. He invested in a 1♥ opening bid, and while that got him temporarily to the dizzying heights of -800 territory, he was able to convince van Prooijen that Verhees' actions were based on shape, not balanced high-cards. 5♣ lost the obvious three tricks; 65-32 now.

This same opening bid generated +1100 for Isporski-Kovachev. You won't be surprised to know that when one's opponents take that sort of action they are headed for a 25-1 loss.

Bd: 13 North
 Dlr: North ♠ KJ853
 Vul: Both ♥ J1076
 ♦ 63
 ♣ 106

West
 ♠ A10
 ♥ AKQ842
 ♦ J84
 ♣ K2

East
 ♠ 64
 ♥ 93
 ♦ AK72
 ♣ Q9743

South
 ♠ Q972
 ♥ 5
 ♦ Q1095
 ♣ AJ85

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Yang</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Huang</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣(STR)	1♠	2♣	4♠
Pass	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Chung</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Liu</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Cui culpa in the Open Room? I have some sympathy with both East and West — after all, if the opponents had a ten-card fit you might not get rich on defense but be able to make at least a game your way. Nonetheless, I think East might have doubled 4♠ if he was not in search of a swing. The 4-1 trump break left 5♥ without any practical chances. Not that 3NT was going to be much fun on a spade lead, but North dutifully led diamonds and declarer won, led a club to hand, and set up hearts for nine tricks. Another 13imps gave NEDUK a 25-4 victory, 78-32.

In the Hackett-Lion match both tables played 4♥. Papa led a diamond and continued the suit when in with the ♥J. This is the only way to set the game.

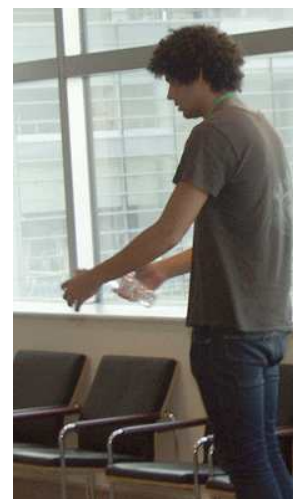
At the other table Hugh McGann received a spade lead and ducked it. He could win the trump return and play four rounds of trump, then catch South in a strip squeeze in the minors after winning the ♦K and leading a club to the king.



"I'd rather have a bottle in front of me than a frontal lobotomy."



"Hurry, let's score up before PO comes out."



"And for my grand finale, a two-and-a-half gainer in the pike position."

Match Six: Spain vs Zhe Jiang Hua Men

by Rich Colker

Round six featured a contest between Spain, then tied for 4th/5th in the rankings with 94 VPs, and Zhe Jiang Hua Men, tied for 6th/7th with 91 VPs.

Bd: 17 North
 Dir: North ♠ 6
 Vul: None ♥ K6
 ♦ A10987
 ♣ AJ1063

West
 ♠ 52
 ♥ AQ872
 ♦ J643
 ♣ 84

East
 ♠ KQJ1098
 ♥ J94
 ♦ K
 ♣ KQ2

South
 ♠ A743
 ♥ 1053
 ♦ Q52
 ♣ 975

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
	1♦	1♠	2♦
2♥	3♣	4♠	Pass
Pass	5♦	Dbl	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
	1♦	1♠	Pass
1NT	2♣	2♠	All Pass

South, with his flat shape and defensive orientation, should not want to encourage a save against E/W's 4♠ game unless North has extreme distribution and a unilateral desire to do so. And North, while five-five with shortness in the opponents' suit, has good defense and no guarantee that partner has a big enough fit (more than three-cards in either of his suits) to have a strong desire to save — or to believe that 5♦ has a chance to make. Combine that with the fact that South got to express his opinion about defending 4♠ or bidding on by passing 4♠ around to North. All of which makes Goded's 5♦ bid not only questionable as a bridge action but also as a matter of partnership discipline. Perhaps with his sterile shape South should have passed 1♠ (or even bid 1NT if his partnership style permits). Or, more on point, in these save/defend situations experienced partnerships often play that double suggests a desire to save along with a willingness to defend, and solicits partner's input. (According to the junior editor, double suggests a desire to be allowed to make the opening lead but he is old-fashioned about things like that.)

North has the ideal hand for such a double and South's holding in spades makes it clear that he would pass and defend, allowing N/S to collect a number (+100) instead of going for one.

In 5♦x Federico won the ♠K lead, played a club to the jack and queen, ruffed the ♠Q return, cashed the ♦A getting the good and bad news about the trump position when the king appeared, and played ace and a third club to the king. Zhuang exited with a third spade. Goded ruffed and played a good club, pitching a heart from dummy. Dai ruffed (pitching does no good; declarer simply cashes another club throwing a second heart from dummy and ends up getting a heart ruff), cashed the ♥A, and settled for +500.

In the Closed Room Xu wisely passed Gonzalo's 1♠ overcall and sold out to 2♠. There has to be some option between Goncalves' aggressive 2♦ bid in the Open Room and Xu's too conservative pass of 2♣ here. Having passed 1♠ Xu might easily have ventured a 3♦ bid over 2♠, which would not have gotten Zhang too excited and would have gone down a quiet 50. Gonzalo received a low diamond lead against 2♠. Zhang won the ace and returned a diamond, allowing Gonzalo to pitch one of his hearts to guarantee no heart losers. Xu won the ♦Q and got out with a heart to dummy's ace. Gonzalo cashed the ♦J, pitching his last heart, and played a club off dummy. If Zhang ducks his side will eventually come to two club tricks, but he rose with the ace (not knowing that Xu's ♠A would prevent declarer from obtaining a club ruff) and switched to a trump. Gonzalo had no problem losing only the ♠A from there. Plus 140 sent the first 8imps to China.

The best result by an E/W pair here was Sasaki-Okuno who managed to collect 800 from a mere 4♦x.

Bd: 18 North
 Dir: East ♠ Q642
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q10842
 ♦ 1092
 ♣ 8

West
 ♠ K10753
 ♥ 97
 ♦ 7654
 ♣ A10

East
 ♠ AJ8
 ♥ A63
 ♦ AK8
 ♣ K753

South
 ♠ 9
 ♥ KJ5
 ♦ QJ3
 ♣ QJ9642

convinced his partner that twelve tricks would be the limit of the hand. Thus, Zhang took control and "gambled" on 6♣ when Xu showed the two missing keycards and the queen of trumps. Did Xu have enough with his extra club and spare queen (wouldn't you rebid 2♣ with ♠Ax ♥xxx ♦xx ♣AQJ10xx?) to bid seven when Zhang's 6♣ bid might already have been a bit of a gamble? Maybe not. Once again thirteen tricks were claimed on the opening lead, this time for +940 and 2 imps to Spain, trailing now 8-2.

One of the three pairs who hit the very top spot were Nunn-Hans, and they even had intervention to cope with. They bid 1♣-1♦-(Dbl)-2♣; 2♥-4♣-4♦-4♠; 4NT-5♠-5NT-7♣; 7NT.

Bd: 20 North
 Dir: West ♠ 10743
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ
 ♦ QJ4
 ♣ Q864

West
 ♠ AKJ6
 ♥ A4
 ♦ K109
 ♣ K1073

East
 ♠ 5
 ♥ 1087632
 ♦ A653
 ♣ J9

South
 ♠ Q982
 ♥ J95
 ♦ 872
 ♣ A52

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
1♣(1)	Pass	1♦(♥)	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦(♥)	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

(1) Precision

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
1♣(1)	Pass	1♦(2)	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♥	All Pass

(1) STR, ART

(2) Negative

Both E/W pairs reached the skinny 4♥ contract, the success of which would depend on several factors (including a reasonable trump split and the behavior of the club and diamond suits — not to mention the ability to declare the contract from the West seat with North effectively endplayed on opening lead). It's no wonder that the pair that declared from the West seat made +420 (North, Federico, led the ♦Q and

shifted to a club when he came in at trick three with the second trump) while the one that was declared from the East seat had no chance when Xu found a devastating low club lead, which beat the game off the top (would you have guessed to rise with the king as declarer?); -100 was 12 imps to China, who led now 20-2.

This was the only table at which South led a low club, but one quarter of the field went down in 4♥ from the East seat.

Bd: 21 North
 Dir: North ♠ K2
 Vul: N/S ♥ J87
 ♦ A10432
 ♣ A108

West
 ♠ AQ9874
 ♥ 10
 ♦ KJ5
 ♣ 542

East
 ♠ J106
 ♥ K54
 ♦ 96
 ♣ KJ976

South
 ♠ 53
 ♥ AQ9632
 ♦ Q87
 ♣ Q3

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥
2♠	Pass	3♠	4♥
4♠	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥
1♠	Pass	2♠	3♥
3♠	4♥	4♠	Dbl
All Pass			

Both tables landed in 4♠x from the West seat, so the issue then became the accuracy of the respective defenses. Both declarers received the ♥7 opening lead, the queen winning. In the Open Room Goncalves switched to a low diamond. Dai accurately inserted the jack, losing to the ace, ruffed the heart return, played the ♦K and ruffed a diamond, took the losing spade finesse, won the trump return, and led a club up and misguessed for down two, -300.

In the Closed Room Xu switched to a low trump at trick two, ducked to Zhang's king. Zhang tried the ♥J, covered and ruffed. Sabate drew the remaining trumps with the queen and then also led a club up and misguessed. Xu returned a diamond and Sabate misguessed that suit as well when he played the

king. The defense still had a diamond and a club to come for down three, -500, and 5 more imps to the Chinese, whose lead was now 25-2.

The datum on the board was 340; about one third of the field missed game or went down in it.

The rain in Spain may be mainly in the plain, but the deluge for Spain is here in Yokohama, and it's not over yet — not by a long shot.

Bd: 22 North
 Dlr: East ♠ K94
 Vul: E/W ♥ AJ873
 ♦ AJ
 ♣ A102

West ♠ 10 ♥ Q102 ♦ Q652 ♣ KJ985	South ♠ AQJ5 ♥ K94 ♦ 10873 ♣ Q4	East ♠ 87632 ♥ 65 ♦ K94 ♣ 763
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♠
All Pass		Pass	4♥

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	1NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	4♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	5♥

Both Norths reached heart contracts, Federico played in game while Zhang played in slam. Looking at all four hands it is easy to see how to make 6♥ (win the opening lead, draw trumps via the finesse, run spades pitching a diamond from hand, then lead a low club inserting the ten if West ducks). But the success of the slam requires more good things to happen (the trumps splitting with the queen onside or a singleton queen offside; a club position that can be played for two winners) than we'd care to bet on. Call us cowards but game is quite high enough, thank you. In the Open Room Goded won the spade lead with dummy's queen, then took the safety-play in

trumps by leading to the ace, then back to the nine when East followed low. He won the diamond return, drew the last trump, pitched his ♦J on the fourth spade, and played a club to the ten when West followed low; +450.

In the Closed Room Gonzalo made life a bit easier for Zhang when he led a club to the jack and ace, insuring two tricks in the suit for declarer. Needing no trump losers Zhang played the suit accordingly, finessing the jack on the second round, and then claimed twelve tricks for +980 and 11 more imps to China, increasing their lead to 34 imps, 36-2.

One quarter of the field bid and made slam; four pairs went down in slam, three on a spade lead, one on the lead of the ♣7. If you know why (or how) those declarers went down please send the answer on the back of a post-card to the editors — but don't expect a response.

Bd: 23 North
 Dlr: South ♠ J8
 Vul: Both ♥ J762
 ♦ Q105
 ♣ AK54

West ♠ AQ10732 ♥ 5 ♦ AK3 ♣ 1032	South ♠ 5 ♥ AQ3 ♦ J8642 ♣ QJ98	East ♠ K964 ♥ K10984 ♦ 97 ♣ 76
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
1♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	All Pass		Pass

They say if you always make the number of tricks you contract for, you will be a winner. Try to explain that to the Spaniards. In the Closed Room it seems that Zhuang, who had been keeping a low profile in the match to this point, saw his six-count as a limit raise (or plays preemptive jump raises of majors) and raised to 3♠, which propelled Dai to game. Despite the wasted ♥K West had only two clubs and a heart

to lose, emerging with ten tricks for +620.

In the Open Room Gonzalo raised Sabate's 1♠ gently. Sabate's 3♠ re-raise looks invitational (we'd have just bid 4♠ with the West hand but differ on what we would have done with the East hand. One of us (RC) would have bid game and has no objections to making a limit raise with that hand, as was done in the other room. The other (BR) would not accept the invitation. Humbug.

Zhang led the ♣A and at trick two played a heart to the king and ace. Xu tried to cash the ♥Q but declarer ruffed, drew trumps, and claimed nine tricks when ten were there for the taking. (We might have made the same claim ourselves; it allows us to point out to our teammates that, since we only made three we saved the teamimps by not coming back with a minus score.) Still, +140 was 10 more imps to China, ahead now 46-2.

Just like the editorial panel, the field was split roughly 50-50 between those bidding game and those staying low. No one, we are glad to say, is reported to have made fewer than 10 tricks so maybe that -140 here got sorted out in the Scoring Room.

Bd: 24 North
 Dir: West ♠ A
 Vul: None ♥ 10532
 ♦ 32
 ♣ QJ9543

West
 ♠ Q9743
 ♥ A6
 ♦ AJ1096
 ♣ A

East
 ♠ K862
 ♥ KQJ874
 ♦ 4
 ♣ 82

South
 ♠ J105
 ♥ 9
 ♦ KQ875
 ♣ K1076

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Dai	F Goded	Zhuang	Goncalves
1♠(1)	2♣	2♥	5♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

(1) Precision
 Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sabate	Zhang	G Goded	Xu
1♠	2♣	4♠	5♣
5♠	All Pass		

Strong club systems usually afford their users an advantage when it comes to game and slam bidding, but there are exceptions. The Open Room here is a case in point. Credit Goncalves for his 5♣ bid, which froze Dai in his tracks and prevented E/W from discovering their huge spade fit. Consequently, they

doubled 5♣ and collected just 300 in exchange for a possible 980 in either major.

Note that bidding slam missing the ace-jack-ten-fourth of trumps is a bit better than a 50-50 proposition in the abstract, and perhaps even better with revealing opposing bidding.

In the Closed Room Sabate got to open 1♠ and the big fit was discovered immediately. We cannot say what Gonzalo's 4♠ bid meant, but we prefer a fit-showing jump in hearts, if available, and otherwise we'd make a strong raise via whatever method (a 3♣ cue-bid, a 2NT ART raise, a diamond splinter) the partnership used. But credit Xu, South, for his 5♣ bid which once again kept E/W out of their potential slam, though they still managed to bid 5♠ since they had already located their big spade fit. Sabate easily brought home twelve tricks when he won the ♣Q lead and tracked a low spade. Plus 480 stopped Spain's four-board run of losses; 5 imps to Spain, trailing now 46-7.

Only two tables set slam, one of which was where Gupta for KISS sat North and heard an auction to slam that started 1♠-2♥-3♦-4♠; 4NT, etc., etc. From his side of the screen he deduced that dummy would put down long hearts, while West appeared not to be worried about clubs. "Cogito ergo I lead a heart." Isporski for the All Stars also hit the jackpot.

Bd: 25 North
 Dir: North ♠ J3
 Vul: E/W ♥ KJ1054
 ♦ J742
 ♣ A3

West
 ♠ K
 ♥ A
 ♦ A1083
 ♣ KJ87652

East
 ♠ AQ92
 ♥ Q62
 ♦ K96
 ♣ Q104

South
 ♠ 1087654
 ♥ 9873
 ♦ Q5
 ♣ 9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Dai	F Goded	Zhuang	Goncalves
2♣	Pass	1♦(1)	Pass
3♣	Pass	2NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♥	Dbl	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

(1) Precision
 Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
	Pass	1NT	2♠
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

In the Open Room Dai-Zhuang had a nice auction to the excellent 6♣ slam. There wasn't much to the play and soon Dai was writing +1370 on his private score.

The auction in the Closed Room leaves us scratching our heads. Sabate's 3♠ bid followed by 4♣ was clearly a slam try (though we would have preferred a forcing club bid directly over 2♠) since he could have jumped to 5♣ over either 2♠ or 3NT if game was the limit of his interest. Gonzalo had a strong undisclosed trump fit, a side ace and king, and full values for his previous bidding even if his ♠Q turned out to be wasted. We'd have cue-bid 4♠ over 4♣ (just think how that would have affected Sabate; he'd have been looking for seven!) and one of us (RC) would have carried on to slam over 5♣ (even without knowing if the pair had a negative double available over 2♠ to suggest heart interest). Again twelve tricks were easy but +620 sent 13 moreimps to China, whose lead soared to 59-7.

Since two-thirds of the field bid slam here, the datum was 1130 for E/W.

Bd: 26	North
Dlr: East	♠ Q10
Vul: Both	♥ QJ2
	♦ 10874
	♣ AKQ2

West
♠ AK97654
♥ 9
♦ J2
♣ J74

East
♠ J2
♥ A108653
♦ A6
♣ 1053

South
♠ 83
♥ K74
♦ KQ953
♣ 986

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
	Pass	Pass	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
		1♥	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Both tables overreached to 4♠ here, so the number of undertricks would be critical. Federico cashed his three top clubs, then switched to a diamond. Dai rose with the ace, played a spade to the ace and ten, returned to dummy, and passed the ♠J, playing South to have started with ♠Q83; down two, -200. In the Closed Room everything was the same up to trick six. Sabate simply cashed the ♠AK and held his loss to -100, picking up 3imps for his effort. Spain trailed 59-10 with three boards remaining.

As a matter of curiosity, would you like to know what the auction was that led to Zhao and Jiang for Jiuzhaigou collecting 1400 from 3NTx here? (You may well ask which way they were sitting. It was North who attempted that game.) We could tell you, but then we'd have to kill you.

Bd: 27	North
Dlr: South	♠ AK2
Vul: None	♥ Q105
	♦ Q106
	♣ AKQ9

West
♠ 1098
♥ 42
♦ 98542
♣ 864

East
♠ QJ73
♥ AJ87
♦ A
♣ J752

South
♠ 654
♥ K963
♦ KJ73
♣ 103

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
			Pass
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♣(1)	Pass	1♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

All Pass

(1) Precision

Both tables had bread-and-butter auctions to the cold 3NT. Federico ducked the ♠Q lead, won the spade continuation, and led the ♥Q. Zhuang won the ace, cleared spades, then cashed his good spade when he won his ♦A to hold declarer to nine tricks, +400. Zhang won the spade lead and tracked the ♦Q. Gonzalo won the ace perforce and led a second spade, ducked, then a third spade. When Zhang led the ♥Q he won the ace and played a second heart

without cashing his good spade, allowing Zhang to win the king and emerge with an overtrick; +430 and 1 imp to China, leading 60-10.

Bd: 28 North
 Dlr: West ♠ 108
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q1085
 ♦ 9864
 ♣ KJ7

West
 ♠ AJ32
 ♥ 6
 ♦ KQ7
 ♣ A10852

East
 ♠ KQ974
 ♥ K9
 ♦ J5
 ♣ Q943

South
 ♠ 65
 ♥ AJ7432
 ♦ A1032
 ♣ 6

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
2♣	Pass	2♦(1)	2♥
2♠	3♥	4♠	All Pass

(1) Relay

Both declarers received a low heart lead, rose with the king, and lost to South's ace. Only Xu now made the only play that gave declarer a change to go down when he switched to a club. Sabate rose with the ace (wouldn't a low club from KJx have been diabolical when the percentage play is the double-finesse?) He drew trumps, and led a club up for a push. Still 60-10.

Five pairs went minus in spade contracts. It's no disgrace — in a way — to go down in 6♠, or 5♠, and a bad guess in clubs might set 4♠. But going down in 3♠ seems...unnecessary.

Bd: 29 North
 Dlr: North ♠ Q102
 Vul: Both ♥ K1076
 ♦ A83
 ♣ A95

West
 ♠ AJ84
 ♥ Q842
 ♦ 2
 ♣ KJ102

East
 ♠ K65
 ♥ J93
 ♦ QJ54
 ♣ Q63

South
 ♠ 973
 ♥ A5
 ♦ K10976
 ♣ 874

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Dbl	1NT	Dbl	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
	1♣(1)	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	Pass
2♠	3♦	All Pass	

Zhuang's 2♥ in the Open Room was a dangerous contract, but when the defense began with the ♥A followed by a low heart things were looking up. Zhuang won the ♥9 and led the ♥J to Federico's king (Goncalves pitching a club). Federico played the ♥A followed by a low diamond to the queen, king and the ♥Q. Next Zhuang played on clubs. Federico won the second round and led a diamond to the jack, dummy pitching a spade. The last two clubs gave North the unenviable choice of ruffing and being endplayed or pitching his natural spade trick; an exhilarating +110.

Xu's 3♦ contract had five inescapable losers (two spades, two clubs and a diamond), but one had to play the trump suit to best effect to achieve that. Xu won the opening heart lead in hand and played a diamond to the ace and a diamond back to...the king!? Oh well, down two. That was 3 imps back to Spain, trailing now 60-13. One board to go.

A couple of outlying results here were Ino-Imakura, who brought home 2♥x for E/W on a diamond lead, while Abe-Morimura played 1NTx from the North seat and collected 580.

Bd: 30 North
 Dlr: East ♠ 53
 Vul: None ♥ 653
 ♦ 752
 ♣ J9875

West
 ♠ 76
 ♥ Q109872
 ♦ 106
 ♣ 1063

East
 ♠ AKJ82
 ♥ AK
 ♦ J94
 ♣ K42

South
 ♠ Q1094
 ♥ J4
 ♦ AKQ83
 ♣ AQ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dai</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Zhuang</i>	<i>Goncalves</i>
		1♣	1NT
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Rdbl
2♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sabate</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Xu</i>
		1♣	1♦
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

3♦ is a contract that we can say with virtual certainty does not have a lot going for it. At the outset, after say a trump lead, declarer has seven potential losers. Goncalves avoided one of them when a low club lead was ducked to his queen. He played the ♠9 to the jack and back came the expected trump. He rose with the ace, led the ♠Q to the king, and a second trump came back. He won the king, ruffed a spade (thus escaping a second loser) and claimed down one; -50.

In the other room Xu received a spade lead to the king and a trump switch. He won, drew three rounds of trumps, then led the ♥J to the queen and king. Gonzalo cashed the ♥A and inadvisedly switched to a club, Xu's queen winning. Now he just had to lose two more spades to come to eight trick. Another -50 for a final push.

China had played well but had been helped more than a little by Spain's blunders. Zhe Jiang Hua Men won the match 60-13, 25-4 in VPs.



In search of the missing imp

Match Seven: Okay+ vs Beijing Trinergy

by Barry Rigal

The two teams on view in round seven would have distinctly Chinese flavors, one from Beijing, the other a Japanese team with some Chinese nationals on it. Both teams were on the bubble for qualifying, but with the Swiss only half-way done there would be plenty of time to waffle about qualifying spots.

Bd: 1	North		East
Dir: North	♠ AK		♠ J86
Vul: None	♥ AKQJ10763		♥ 84
	♦ QJ		♦ K85
	♣ 2		♣ AJ876
	West		South
	♠ 9732		♠ Q1054
	♥ 5		♥ 92
	♦ 109763		♦ A42
	♣ K103		♣ Q954

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
	1♣(STR.)	Pass	1♦(NEG.)
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♦(Q)
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

Yamada's jump to 3♥ was the old fashioned solid suit eliciting a cue-bid from South. That persuaded North that slam could not be worse than a finesse, and one round later he was in slam. Whether or not you think you want to be there (we do since West's failure to double a cue-bid is a very hopeful sign) dummy's ♠Q made life very easy.

In the other room the N/S auction seems counter-intuitive; all that space saved in order to jump to 4♥ ...illogical, Captain. 11-0 for Okay+.

Two thirds of the field reached slam, so maybe the deal is as easy as it looks.

Bd: 2 North
 Dlr: East ♠ A63
 Vul: N/S ♥ A1065
 ♦ AQJ94
 ♣ 2

West East
 ♠ K85 ♠ J107
 ♥ J743 ♥ K2
 ♦ 53 ♦ 8
 ♣ AK97 ♣ QJ108643

South
 ♠ Q942
 ♥ Q98
 ♦ K10762
 ♣ 5

Open Room
West North East South
Takayama Shi Takahashi Ju

5♣ Dbl 3♣ Pass 5♦
 All Pass
 Closed Room

West North East South
Wang Yamada Li Ohno

4♣ Dbl 3♣ Pass 4♠
 All Pass

What you bid with the West cards is a function of your partnership style of preempting at favorable vulnerability (with club preempts always being especially suspect because of the inability to preempt at any lower level). Here we can see that the two Wests went their own ways, but in each instance South ended up in a contract that appeared to have far too much work to do. In 5♦ Ju received a club lead and trump shift. After drawing trumps he passed the ♥Q and the shift to the ♠J now allowed him to lose just one spade trick; down one. In 4♠ Ohno also received a club lead and diamond shift. She tried a spade to the seven, nine and king. Good news, but the defenders took their diamond ruff, then sat back and waited for their heart trick.

Five pairs made partscores as N/S, three as E/W. Pride of place goes to Furuta-Chen for Japan Youth, who collected 510 in 4♣x.



"One club promises *three!*"

Bd: 3 North
 Dlr: South ♠ 8753
 Vul: E/W ♥ J
 ♦ AQ432
 ♣ KQ9

West East
 ♠ K2 ♠ AQJ104
 ♥ AKQ1095 ♥ 7642
 ♦ J87 ♦ 109
 ♣ 54 ♣ 102

South
 ♠ 96
 ♥ 83
 ♦ K65
 ♣ AJ8763

Open Room
West North East South
Takayama Shi Takahashi Ju

3♥ 4♦ 4♥ 3♣
 5♦
 All Pass
 Closed Room

West North East South
Wang Yamada Li Ohno

1♥ 2♦ 4♥ Pass
 5♥ All Pass 5♦

Retaliating in kind, Ju opened 3♣ with somewhat less excuse than East on the previous deal, then elected to raise to 5♦, in competition over 4♥. Perhaps there was no ambiguity that 4♦ should be a suit — if there was, maybe South should bid 4NT to imply suitability in both minors. No double, no trouble. The defenders took their trump promotion on the third spade for down two; +100.

If that was exploiting the vulnerability, Yamada's 2♦ overall was really pushing the boat out — especially with such suitable shape for a take-out double. When the auction reached 5♦ in a hurry Wang intellectually "knew" his partner had a singleton diamond and punished the opponents by bidding on. Right revolver, wrong foot. The defenders did not double — how could they? But they did cash their minor-suit winners and had 7 more imps to lead 18-0.

Bd: 4 North
 Dlr: West ♠ J
 Vul: Both ♥ 5
 ♦ KQJ7642
 ♣ KQ76

West East
 ♠ 10653 ♠ Q42
 ♥ 6 ♥ Q109873
 ♦ A10 ♦ 95
 ♣ AJ9832 ♣ 104

South
 ♠ AK987
 ♥ AKJ42
 ♦ 83
 ♣ 5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
2♣	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

5♦ looks to be not only a far better spot than 3NT, it also looks to be cold. But looks are deceiving. Takahashi led the ♣10 to the ace, and back came a club. With the club ruff threatening, declarer won in hand, then planned to pitch both clubs on dummy's ace-kings; who could blame him? He cashed the spades, then the hearts, but West ruffed in on the second top heart. Declarer over-ruffed, but now the ♦9 was going to score a trick whatever declarer did.

After a more tortuous auction Yamada also reached 5♦ and on two rounds of clubs he ruffed in dummy and set out on the same line of play. Again West ruffed in and declarer's fate was sealed. Down one, and no swing. 18-0 for Okay+.

Does it upset you that 3NT is cold whatever the defenders do? Us too. If declarer passes the ♠J when he's in dummy he cannot be prevented from coming to nine tricks. Not everybody who played 5♦ was defeated, and not everyone who played 3NT made it — but there was a pretty high correlation. What might surprise you is how many pairs played 6♦: one-third of the field. Okay, class, all together, "I will not bid slam without using Blackwood, I will not..."

Bd: 5
Dir: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ 93
♥ 42
♦ K109
♣ QJ8765

West
♠ 87542
♥ 76
♦ Q654
♣ 32

East
♠ AKJ10
♥ AJ95
♦ A2
♣ K104

South
♠ Q6
♥ KQ1083
♦ J873
♣ A9

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥(♠)	Pass	4♠	Pass
All Pass			

Takahashi quite reasonably jumped to 4♠: he was, after all, prepared to play game facing the right two-count — not this one, maybe, but that's showbiz. Ju led a top heart, ducked all around, and accurately shifted to a trump (maybe hoping to find partner with the perfect of ♠Jx?). Declarer won, drew trumps, but had to lose three tricks in the minors; down one.

In the other room Li ducked the first heart as well, and Ohno was weighed in the balance and found wanting. She shifted to the ace and a second club. Declarer now had to guess what to do: were trumps 3-1 with the ♦K right or were the cards lying as they were in real life? He got it wrong. After drawing one trump he played a low diamond to the queen and king. Back came... a second heart. Declarer reverted to playing for the trump split, cashed his ten tricks, and lo there was wailing and gnashing of teeth. 18-10 now for Okay+. Fourteen pairs bid and made 4♠ here while about one quarter of the field managed to stay out of game. Very restrained.

Bd: 6
Dir: East
Vul: E/W

North
♠ J85
♥ 93
♦ 42
♣ AJ10754

West
♠ AK107
♥ 1086
♦ AK1083
♣ 9

East
♠ Q62
♥ KQ7542
♦ 97
♣ 62

South
♠ 943
♥ AJ
♦ QJ65
♣ KQ83

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
2NT	3♣	2♦(Multi)	Dbl
4♥	4NT	Dbl(1)	3NT
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All Pass		5♣
(1) Hearts, max			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
2NT	Pass	2♦(Multi)	Pass
4♥	All Pass	3♣	Pass

It may be a little hard to believe these two auctions are from the same deal, given N/S's passivity in one room and their hypermania in the other. Somehow the net result of -800 in 5♣x seems entirely appropriate. That was just 4imps to Okay+ since 4♥ made 650 easily enough. But maybe Ju felt it was a good investment: would his opponents ever trust his bidding again? 22-10 for Okay+.

For the intellectuals with nothing better to do with their time, would you like to speculate on just what auction led three tables to play 1NT with the North cards? Maybe it would be wiser not to ask.

Bd: 7 North
 Dir: South ♠ AQ
 Vul: Both ♥ 109
 ♦ J842
 ♣ KQ1086

West
 ♠ K
 ♥ A8642
 ♦ AQ10
 ♣ A973

East
 ♠ J985
 ♥ J75
 ♦ K9753
 ♣ 2

South
 ♠ 1076432
 ♥ KQ3
 ♦ 6
 ♣ J54

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
			Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	2♠
3♣	Pass	3♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
			Pass
1♣(STR)	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Takahashi was faced with the typical dilemma facing a game-try of shortage in the critical suit but minimum values and only three trumps. He settled for safety and his partner attempted to justify his inactivity by making only nine tricks. There was more to play for in the other room, where in 4♥ after a top club lead declarer made the instinctive play of ruffing a club and leading a spade to the king and ace. He ruffed the ♠Q return, trumped a club on the board, and made the natural move of discarding his last club on the ♠J. North ruffed in and could now exit in clubs to set the game by force: a trump would be fatal while a diamond would leave declarer in with a shout at double-dummy. Yamada played a diamond,

and declarer quite rationally won in hand and played the ♥A for down one. Had he elected to win in dummy and advance the ♥J South would have had to duck smoothly, after which declarer would have gone wrong. 6imps for Okay+, leading 28-10 now.

Five declarers made 620 as E/W, but Wang-Peng earned their top as E/W by doubling 5♣ and collecting 1100. Top for N/S came when Onishi-Bando scored up 670 in 2♠x.

Bd: 8 North
 Dir: West ♠ Q9
 Vul: None ♥ A10854
 ♦ 9432
 ♣ K5

West
 ♠ 85
 ♥ 93
 ♦ AQ876
 ♣ 10963

East
 ♠ KJ6432
 ♥ K762
 ♦ ---
 ♣ A74

South
 ♠ A107
 ♥ QJ
 ♦ KJ105
 ♣ QJ82

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Facing a passed partner Ohno did a lot of bidding. On a low spade lead to the nine declarer needed miracles. A diamond from hand made it clear that there would be none today. The defense won cheaply, set up spades, and might have set the game four tricks though it emerged with just +150.

In the other room 2♠ on the lead of ♥Q was not without play. The defenders took the ♥A and shifted to the ♣K. Declarer won and played king and a second heart. South ruffed with the ♠10 to play two more rounds of clubs, then shifted to diamonds, giving declarer the opportunity to win and lead a spade to the king and ace. Down one. In this position East might have argued that with the ♠Qx left South would have led a fourth club to force partner to ruff with the ace for the trump promotion. 5imps to

Beijing Trinergy, . Down 28-15 now.

Just for the record, two Souths did make 3NT here when West distrustfully led a diamond and not a spade. We hope that will be a lesson to you both to lead partner's suit in future.

Bd: 10 North
 Dlr: East ♠ 852
 Vul: Both ♥ K7
 ♦ K8
 ♣ AK10843

West
 ♠ AK1094
 ♥ A1062
 ♦ 1065
 ♣ J

East
 ♠ Q763
 ♥ QJ98
 ♦ Q
 ♣ Q952

South
 ♠ J
 ♥ 543
 ♦ AJ97432
 ♣ 76

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
2♠	3♣	Pass	2♦
3♠	Pass	3♦	Dbl
		4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♦
		All Pass	

The Chinese seem to have been a little unlucky here. Ju, who had a 2♦ opening available, elected to treat his hand as a weak two-bid and let the opponents in cheaply. Takahashi guessed nicely to drive to game with his short diamonds apparently facing length, but Shi did well to lead a trump. Declarer, Takayama, won in hand to lead a diamond up and North won and returned a trump. Declarer won in hand, ruffed a diamond, then rejected the heart finesse, leading a heart to the ace and ruffing another diamond before exiting with a club. The defenders had no communication for their heart ruff and Takayama had certainly earned his +620.

In the other room N/S reached a hopeless game but in the process blew their opponents out of the water. Minus 100 when the spades got blocked may not have felt like a triumph, but Okay+ had 11 imps to lead 39-15.

One quarter of the field made a major-suit game with the E/W cards. Conversely, two pairs made 3NT on the N/S cards (one on a heart lead, one on a club

lead) and Maeda-Hayashi brought home 710 in 4♦x on the N/S cards.

Bd: 11 North
 Dlr: South ♠ 63
 Vul: None ♥ Q432
 ♦ AQ97
 ♣ K53

West
 ♠ 1084
 ♥ 1076
 ♦ 106
 ♣ 109842

East
 ♠ K972
 ♥ KJ
 ♦ J82
 ♣ AQJ6

South
 ♠ AQJ5
 ♥ A985
 ♦ K543
 ♣ 7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	

Pass	1♥	Dbl	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>

Pass	4♥	All Pass	2♦(1)
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Both tables reached 4♥ from the North seat, with Shi knowing more about the location of the opposition high cards than did Yamada. Both declarers guessed trumps, following the principle of restricted choice to play East for K10 rather than J10. Both took the spade finesse and emerged with 11 tricks for no swing. Still 39-15 for Okay+.

Bd: 12 North
 Dlr: West ♠ 97
 Vul: N/S ♥ K
 ♦ KQJ107
 ♣ QJ972

West
 ♠ J105
 ♥ AJ652
 ♦ A54
 ♣ A8

East
 ♠ Q84
 ♥ Q974
 ♦ 932
 ♣ K54

South
 ♠ AK632
 ♥ 1083
 ♦ 86
 ♣ 1063

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama Shi</i>		<i>Takahashi Ju</i>	
1♥	2♦	2♥	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	3♥	All Pass

Both Easts respected the law of total tricks to the exclusion of everything else (see Larry Cohen and the Law of Random Adjustment). 3♦ goes quietly one down on the club ruff, while 3♥ has almost no play on either of the auctions shown. (There's bound to be a spade ruff not necessarily with a natural trump trick.) Takayama misguessed trumps for down one but, as if to prove his partner's judgment infallible, Wang won the diamond opening lead and cashed the ♥A, felling the queen as if it were no more than his due. The audience cheered and Beijing accepted theimps. 39-20, with two deals to go.

Bd: 13	North
Dlr: North	♠ 1085
Vul: Both	♥ AK542
	♦ J4
	♣ J43

West	East
♠ K92	♠ AQ643
♥ J8	♥ 7
♦ Q872	♦ A653
♣ 9652	♣ K108
	South
	♠ J7
	♥ Q10963
	♦ K109
	♣ AQ7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Ju</i>
2♠	Pass	1♠	Pass
	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South/
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
2♠	Pass	1♠	Dbl
	4♥	All Pass	

Earlier in the match we'd seen Ju bid hyperactively. Perhaps he'd used up all his aggression by now, since he let his opponents play a partscore while Yamada was punting a game that certainly had play, even if not quite enough when vulnerable atimps (the ♦Q and ♣ K onside was more than a 25 percent chance, but maybe not enough to get the required odds). Since 2♠ made 110 and might have made 140, there was no swing when the ♦Q refused to cooperate; still 39-20 for Okay+.

Bd: 14	North
Dlr: East	♠ 1084
Vul: None	♥ 65
	♦ KQ3
	♣ KQ862

West	East
♠ AQ632	♠ KJ975
♥ Q10	♥ K82
♦ 982	♦ A4
♣ 975	♣ J43

South
♠ ---
♥ AJ9743
♦ J10765
♣ A10

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Takayama</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Ju</i>
2♠	Dbl	1♠	2♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♦
		All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Yamada</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Ohno</i>
2♠	All Pass	1♠	2♥

In a positively spooky reversal of Board 13 Beijing Trinergy bought the hand in both rooms, declaring 2♠ for +110 in one while in the other room Yamada appears to have been asleep to have passed over 2♠, with Ohno positively comatose to let it go in the passout seat. 2♠ had eight winners, so Ju was playing with the house's money.

Ju declared 4♥ on the lead of the ♠A, and looked to be able to draw trumps and claim. Not so fast. Under the ♥A Takayama dropped the ♥Q, a fine play that Ju swallowed, hook, line and sinker. He knocked out the ♦A, ruffed the spade return, cashed a second diamond, then ran clubs. When East followed three times declarer failed to count out the hand: at this point East had shown five minor-suit cards, and was thus (to put it mildly) relatively unlikely to be 5-4 in the majors;. If the ♥Q was a true card West could not hold less than ♥KQ doubleton and a 5-2-3-3 pattern, surely too good for a 2♠ raise.

Whatever the merits of this argument, declarer did indeed play a fourth club. West ruffed and led a third diamond for Takahashi to ruff, with the ♥K being the fourth defensive trick. When your brilliancies hold the loss on a deal to 2imps you may feel it's not your day, but Okay+ won the match 39-22 anyway.

Match Eight: The Bulgarian All Stars vs Hackett

By Barry Rigal

Bd: 17
Dir: North
Vul: None

North
♠ KJ9
♥ 843
♦ 9842
♣ J95

West
♠ 7
♥ KJ
♦ KJ75
♣ AK7432

East
♠ AQ843
♥ 9762
♦ 3
♣ Q108

South
♠ 10652
♥ AQ105
♦ AQ106
♣ 6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

The first deal of the match produced a somewhat random swing when Justin opened the suit where his LHO had a half-stopper, while Kovachev opened the suit where his LHO had a double stopper. 3NT is probably where you want to be and it duly fetched nine tricks on a diamond lead, while the club partscore came home with 11 winners. Even given the N/S methods, where four-card majors are the norm and not the exception, it was hard for West to find a notrump bid here. Hackett led 6-0.

Bd: 18
Dir: East
Vul: N/S

North
♠ 1054
♥ 76
♦ K106
♣ KQ974

West
♠ Q96
♥ K9532
♦ J
♣ A1085

East
♠ K82
♥ QJ1084
♦ 983
♣ 62

South
♠ AJ73
♥ A
♦ AQ7542
♣ J3

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		Pass	1♦
1♥	Pass	3♥	3♠
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		Pass	1♦
Dbl	1NT	2♥	2♠
3♥	Pass	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Both tables bid efficiently to the cold 5♦, and both declarers played on clubs at trick two, selecting a low one. Iliev ducked while McGann, reasonably enough, hopped up with the ace to try to cash a heart. That meant an overtrick for Bulgaria, on the scoreboard at 6-1.

While we hate to intrude on private grief, it is worth noticing that not all diamond contracts met with success here. In particular, the contract of 3♦x by East, down a "mere" 2000 (nicely played East), gave Lasut-Manoppo an 18-imp pick-up.

Those of you with delicate stomachs should skip to the next deal. Others can pay attention, but only after consuming the Dramamine.

Bd: 19
Dir: South
Vul: E/W

North
♠ AQJ1072
♥ KJ72
♦ J107
♣ ---

West
♠ 8
♥ A96
♦ Q43
♣ AQ10842

East
♠ K954
♥ 5
♦ AK852
♣ J95

South
♠ 63
♥ Q10843
♦ 96
♣ K763

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		Pass	Pass
2♣	2♠	2NT	Pass
3♣	Dbl	Rdbl	3♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
3♣	4♥	5♣	2♥
Pass	5♥	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All Pass		

If you believe in sound weak two-bids you might consider the South hand just a tad deficient in high cards, hearts, and indeed anything else you could think of. The defenders led spades and got a ruff and their four top winners for 500.

Of course, 5♥x is a decent save against clubs (after all, as the cards lie 6♣ is cold if not exactly laydown) but E/W in the other room had a major accident on forcing passes and sold out to 3♥ undoubled. Then they did not defend it with the maximum brio, and let it make nine tricks. 13-6 now for the All Stars.

Three E/W pairs reached the slam. In fact, in the Akama-Pretty Cats match *both* E/W pairs played 6♦x. What might have gotten into the water bottles at their table? But while Miyakuni found the club lead to set the slam, Akama-Maruyama racked up 1540.

Bd: 20
Dir: West
Vul: Both

North
♠ J53
♥ J107643
♦ AKJ10
♣ ---

West	East
♠ Q986	♠ K10
♥ A982	♥ K5
♦ ---	♦ Q643
♣ Q10976	♣ J8542
South	
♠ A742	
♥ Q	
♦ 98752	
♣ AK3	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣(R)
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠(R)
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣(R)
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦

All Pass

Closed Room

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

Both tables reached 5♦, Justin on a club lead, Kovachev on a spade lead. The key to the defense is that when East gets in with ♥K he must return a trump to kill the cross-ruff. Hristov missed this but Justin drew a round of trumps himself, prematurely, upon winning the ♠A. That was fatal. In the ending, after declarer had ruffed two plain cards in dummy, East could ruff a winning heart high and play back a trump leaving declarer with a losing spade at trick 13.

In the other room a spade lead forced declarer to rush to take his discards. After he gave up a heart to East Hanlon played back a trump, and McGann erred by discarding a spade (he could surely have afforded a club). Now, when declarer ruffed two spades to dummy, he had set up his long spade and at trick 13 he'd be left with a winner and not a loser. 12 imps to the All Stars, making the score 25-6.

We can't tell from the results which Souths played it right and which defenders made the correct play, but we do know one-quarter of the field brought home 600 when East did not find the diamond shift. And research indicates that Paul Gosney was one of the defenders who found the diamond shift at the critical moment to beat 5♦ by force.

Bd: 21
Dir: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ Q1094
♥ AK6
♦ KJ10
♣ AK8

West	East
♠ 8753	♠ J
♥ QJ73	♥ 84
♦ AQ	♦ 9654
♣ QJ9	♣ 1075432
South	
♠ AK62	
♥ 10952	
♦ 8732	
♣ 6	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

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

Both tables used a form of Puppet Stayman and landed in 4♠ with the minimum of disclosure. With

the diamond honors inside the bad trump break seemed irrelevant. Declarer could lead diamonds toward his hand the appropriate number of times and make 11 tricks.

Papa received a club lead, which made 4♠ slightly more awkward. Isporski got a diamond lead and trump shift and was in no jeopardy. Both took their 11 tricks, as indeed did three-quarters of the field.

The next deal was all about psychology and table presence.

Bd: 22
 Dir: East
 Vul: E/W

West ♠ J9842 ♥ A952 ♦ Q83 ♣ 10	North ♠ 1076 ♥ Q74 ♦ 104 ♣ AKJ87	East ♠ K3 ♥ J1083 ♦ J975 ♣ Q96	South ♠ AQ5 ♥ K6 ♦ AK62 ♣ 5432
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	3NT	Pass	1NT
Pass	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	All Pass		

How should you play 3NT on a spade lead to the king? If you win and the defenders shift to a heart you need the clubs to behave. If you win and play on clubs, then, as here, East clears the spades and West gets in with his ♥A to run them at you. Both Easts gave the matter some thought after the first trick was ducked (also after mature reflection) and both continued spades. Both declarers played clubs from the top — an error since the finesse virtually guarantees the hand while you would go down if West had the guarded club queen and the ♥A. No swing. Plus 600 in both rooms; still 25-6 for the All Stars.

We can't tell from the scores how one-quarter of the field went down in 3NT on a spade lead. Did they win the first spade, or did East shift? Any East who found the heart shift should please let the bulletin know.

Bd: 23
 Dir: South
 Vul: Both

West ♠ Q108 ♥ K6 ♦ KJ4 ♣ K9754	North ♠ KJ97432 ♥ AJ ♦ 853 ♣ Q	East ♠ 65 ♥ 10852 ♦ Q106 ♣ J863	South ♠ A ♥ Q9743 ♦ A972 ♣ A102
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♠	All Pass	2♦
Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♠	All Pass	2♦
Pass			

The difference in valuation of the North cards here was so spectacular that we assumed operator error. Both Norths knew they could have been facing a 5-4 rag, such are the partnership opening styles. Even so... Both declarers emerged with 10 tricks with the minimum of effort, and 10 imps flowed back to Hackett, down 25-16 now.

While we expected game to be the norm here — it was — one result stood out like a sore thumb: Howard-Whibley bid the N/S cards to 6♠ on a club lead. If you're in it it stands to reason you'd better make it. Win the club and take a heart finesse, cash the ♥A, dropping the king, lead a trump to dummy, ruff a heart, and play king and another spade; +1430. What's the problem?

Bd: 24
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

West ♠ Q87532 ♥ 74 ♦ 742 ♣ K4	North ♠ A106 ♥ Q3 ♦ AK1095 ♣ Q97	East ♠ KJ ♥ A982 ♦ Q86 ♣ A1062	South ♠ 94 ♥ KJ1065 ♦ J3 ♣ J853
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
2♠	2NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
2♦(Multi)	Dbf	2♠	All Pass

The quiet 2♠ contract handled smoothly for +140 when the diamond ruff got away. That gave the other table a very comfortable position to protect. Isporski's 2NT bid gave Kovachev an interesting problem that he solved by passing — which might not be to everyone's taste. With the spades blocked he had achieved quite a coup, provided Isporski could find a way home.

Hanlon led his two top spades, and McGann followed with an encouraging eight, then a suit-preference two under the jack. Hanlon shifted to a club to the king (declarer unblocking the nine) and McGann switched to a diamond. But declarer simply won (unblocking the jack) and played on hearts, and East had to concede the clubs or diamonds in due course. 6 imps for the All Stars, and it was back to 31-16.

Bd: 25	North
Dlr: North	♠ KQ1076
Vul: E/W	♥ K10853
	♦ 6
	♣ 82

West	East
♠ A92	♠ 83
♥ J92	♥ AQ74
♦ 1032	♦ AQJ
♣ K973	♣ AQJ5

South
♠ J54
♥ 6
♦ K98754
♣ 1064

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	Pass	1♣(STR)	3♦
Dbf	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Nobody led spades against 3NT. Justin, having bid diamonds, led clubs. Kovachev, not having bid diamonds, led....his singleton heart. Surprisingly, Isporski did not read the position when in with a

spade. He tried a second heart and declarer pushed the board at 10 tricks. No swing; still 31-16 for the All Stars.

Quite a few of the field found this deal too hot to handle. One-quarter of the field went down in game or slam with the E/W cards. Only two N/S pairs climbed to 4♠x, down 800, on reasonably accurate defense.

Bd: 26	North
Dlr: East	♠ Q104
Vul: Both	♥ K952
	♦ 9642
	♣ 87

West	East
♠ AJ732	♠ 85
♥ J	♥ Q8643
♦ K53	♦ AQJ8
♣ J542	♣ A3

South
♠ K96
♥ A107
♦ 107
♣ KQ1096

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	All Pass

Both Wests passed out 2♦ before the auction got uncomfortably high. On this auction one tends to lead trumps first and ask questions later, and that was what Justin did. Hristov went after spades, and the defenders continued trumps. When diamonds were 4-2 declarer had four diamond tricks and two aces, and was allowed to scramble a trick in the ending when the ♣J or ♥Q started playing a role.

By contrast. Kovachev *did* pause to ask questions and came up with the wrong answer. He led a top club, letting Hanlon win and fire back a club. Kovachev still wouldn't play a trump (as if unprepared to admit error). On the spade back Hanlon won and played a club, ruffed and over-ruffed, then gave up a heart. Now on the trump return he had his eight tricks and no more, but that was still 5 imps, to reduce the margin to 21-31.

Rather to our surprise the field did not defend 2♦ accurately. The trump lead was the exception, not the rule.

Bd: 27 North
 Dir: South ♠ 83
 Vul: None ♥ AQ1032
 ♦ 873
 ♣ 984

West
 ♠ A754
 ♥ 96
 ♦ KQ2
 ♣ Q765

East
 ♠ J2
 ♥ KJ54
 ♦ A1065
 ♣ KJ3

South
 ♠ KQ1096
 ♥ 87
 ♦ J94
 ♣ A102

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>

Pass	Pass	Dbf	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>

Pass	Pass	1♦	1♠
Pass	Pass	Dbf	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

3♣ looks to be a comfortable spot, but the defenders did a number on McGann. After the spade lead to the ace declarer might do best to scramble a few tricks by playing on hearts. In fact, a trump to the king held and when declarer crossed back to hand to play a second club up South won and played a third trump (when both sides play trumps one of them crazy). Here declarer did not even exploit the diamond break. He played on hearts, assuming spades were 6-1 (how naive), and North could win and lead a spade to let his partner cash out for down one. Careless play, but a gain of 2 imps when the Closed Room auction reeked of poor judgment or poor memory. 3NT went down two, when surely Iliev had a normal 1NT response facing a Precision 1♦ which rated to be 11-13 balanced. 31-23 now for the All Stars.

Not everybody found that spade lead so easy against notrump. Three pairs let through game here, while a passel of Norths got to preempt in third seat and ended up down 500 or worse in 2♥x.

Bd: 28 North
 Dir: West ♠ K43
 Vul: N/S ♥ 10975
 ♦ J84
 ♣ 963

West
 ♠ 10865
 ♥ 8
 ♦ A1076
 ♣ QJ107

East
 ♠ A
 ♥ AKJ63
 ♦ KQ532
 ♣ 84

South
 ♠ QJ972
 ♥ Q42
 ♦ 9
 ♣ AK52

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>

Pass	Pass	1♣(STR)	1♠
Pass	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>

Pass	Pass	1♣(STR)	1♦(♠)
Dbf	1♠	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	Pass
5♦	All Pass		

Both tables did well to bid to 5♦ and not be tempted by 3NT. With diamonds and clubs behaving normally declarer could simply draw trumps and claim 11 tricks. Nicely done. A quarter of the field stopped in partscore here.

Bd: 29 North
 Dir: North ♠ Q10943
 Vul: Both ♥ Q8
 ♦ KJ9
 ♣ A92

West
 ♠ K762
 ♥ AJ1042
 ♦ Q62
 ♣ 8

East
 ♠ A8
 ♥ K63
 ♦ 854
 ♣ Q10754

South
 ♠ J5
 ♥ 975
 ♦ A1073
 ♣ KJ63

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
McGann	Isporski	Hanlon	Kovachev
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT

All Pass

Both tables settled for 1NT with the hearts ready to cash on them. Five hearts and two spades later Kovachev would at least have had the consolation that he expected to be in good company, and one down is good bridge, we are told. Not so in the Open Room. After five rounds of hearts Iliev shifted to a club, won by declarer in hand. He had come down to the bare ♠J and still had no reasonable prospect to make, so he led it out, losing to the ace. Back came a spade, and West ducked, allowing himself to be squeezed in spades and diamonds one trick later, on the play of the ♣A. That one won't win defense of the year. 31-28 for the All Stars; one to go.

Bd: 30 North
 Dlr: East ♠ 97
 Vul: None ♥ A3
 ♦ AKJ7542
 ♣ K3

West
 ♠ K108
 ♥ Q842
 ♦ Q109
 ♣ 872

East
 ♠ AQ
 ♥ KJ7
 ♦ 86
 ♣ AQJ1065

South
 ♠ J65432
 ♥ 10965
 ♦ 3
 ♣ 94

Open Room

West	North	East	South
McGann	Isporski	Hanlon	Kovachev
		1♣	Pass
1♦	2♦	3♣	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		1♣	Pass
1♦	2♦	Pass	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

The two auctions may look similar but in fact were not, since Hanlon could have had a balanced 12-13 for his 1♣ opening while Hristov's club was strong. Hence, Hanlon had to bid 3♣ to show his extra strength while Hristov could let his partner make the running.

Both Norths set up the diamonds, hoping for a miracle, and the West players pitched a heart from dummy, took a club finesse, overtook the ♠Q to repeat the finesse, and conceded the last two tricks. Plus 400 and no swing, a win for the All stars 31-28.

Reaching and making 3NT was very much the exception here; the datum was E/W+150.

If I agreed with you
we'd both be wrong.



"I told you, it's -730, not -870."



"If you know what's good for you, you'll play it *my* way."



"With results like those I think you should consider an earlier flight back to Australia."

16th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
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)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama SRR & Swiss	501, 502
Saturday (Feb. 12)	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)	
	18:35-20:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Finals A, B & C	501, 502
Sunday (Feb. 13)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	501, 502
	18:00-20:00*	Closing Ceremony	503

* Note the new time

NEC Cup Qualifying Swiss: 12 rounds of 14-board matches

Quarter- & Semi-finals: two 16-board segments

Final: four 16-board segments

