



# NEC Bridge Festival

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## It's NEDUK vs Heng Sha Ke Ji in Today's NEC Cup Final

Three of the top four seeds are in the semi-finals; only Oz Two failed to make the cut. Congratulations to Heng Sha Ke Ji (Wang Kui, Liu Haitao, Li Xiaoyi, Zhao Yonghui, Liu Huazong, Peng Jianfeng), the Bulgarian All Stars (Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Hristo Hristov), NEDUK (David Bakhshi, David Gold, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen) and Hackett (Paul Hackett, Justin Hackett, Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann). Both semi-finals witnessed comeback victories. In the closer of the two, Heng Sha Ke Ji trailed the Bulgarians by 3 at the half, then won the second half by 11 for a 67-59 victory. In the other semi, NEDUK trailed Hackett by 15 at the half, then outscored them by 34 in the second half to win 82-63. The bulletin staff make NEDUK the favorite, but we chose to have the two closest second-half matches on VuGraph yesterday and both ended up blowouts, while the two matches that were first-half blowouts featured dramatic comebacks in which the trailing team fell just 2 and 4 imps short. So you can take our predictions with a pinch of salt — or wasabe.

### Quarter-final Results

Team	Carry	1-16	17-32	Final
Oz Two	.5	28	30	58
Heng Sha Ke Ji		42	55	97
Bulgarian All Stars	.5	53	27	80
China Women		14	62	76
NEDUK	.5	48	37	85
Taipei Weide		13	70	83
Hackett	.5	38	49	87
Beijing Trinergy		35	16	51

### Semi-final Results

Team	Carry	1-16	17-32	Final
Heng Sha Ke Ji	.5	27	40	67
Bulgarian All Stars		30	29	59
NEDUK	.5	26	56	82
Hackett		41	22	63

The results of yesterday's Yokohama SRR and pair games begin on page 4

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

**Security:** No player may leave the 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 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors of the Conference Center.) Automatic penalties for violations will be assessed by the Director as follows: Qualifying Swiss — 1 VP for the 1<sup>st</sup> offense, 3 VPs for all subsequent offenses; KO — 3imps for the 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

# 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 3<sup>rd</sup>- or 4<sup>th</sup>-seat major-suit opener asking the quality of the opening bid.
- Single or higher jump shifts (including into notrump) to indicate a raise or to force to game.
- All responses to;
  - artificial strong opening bids with 15 HCP or more.
  - opening bids of 2♣ or higher (weak 2s must guarantee 10 opening points: opening points=HCP + number of cards in longest suit).

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

### Competitive Bids

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

### Carding

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

## LIST D (NEC Cup/Yokohama Swiss Teams)

Category 3 of WBF Systems Policy applies

## Debutante Cup — 20 pairs

Rank	Member1	Member2
1	Mitsuko Sato	Yuji Sato
2	Hiroko Fuji	Eriko Furusawa
3	Kenji Otani	Yuji Kodama



## Beginners Cup (under 5 MP) — 20 pairs

Rank	Member1	Member2
1	Yoshikazu Uno	Takashi Sakairi
2	Tsuyoshi Imada	Asaka Imada
3	Reiko Mitamura	Yukiko Ono



Under 5 MP Winners



Under 20 MP Winners

## Beginners Cup (under 20 MP) — 18 pairs

Rank	Member1	Member2
1	Akira Koyama	Goro Kobayashi
2	Ikuko Fujimitsu	Hideko Ichikawa
3	Keichi Konno	Misa Muramoto

## Team Rosters: 16<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup

#	Team Name	Members
1	<b>Oz Two:</b>	Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Paul Gosney, Nabil Edgtton
2	<b>NEDUK:</b>	David Bakhshi, David Gold, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen
3	<b>Hackett:</b>	Paul Hackett, Justin Hackett, Tom Hanlon, Hugh McGann
4	<b>Beijing Trinergy:</b>	Lu Dong, Ju Chuancheng, Shi Zhengjun, Wang Yanhong, Li Rui
5	<b>Bulgarian All Stars:</b>	Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Hristo Hristov
6	<b>Heng Sha Ke Ji:</b>	Wang Kui, Liu Haitao, Li Xiaoyi, Zhao Yonghui, Liu Huazong, Peng Jianfeng
7	<b>China Women:</b>	Sun Ming, Wang Hongli, Gu Ling, Sun Yanhui, Feng Xuefeng, Lu Yan, Fan Guansheng (NPC)
8	<b>Taipei Weide:</b>	Patrick Huang, Jonky Chung, Herstein Liu, Sidney Yang, Grace Lin, Sophia Kuo

# Yokohama SRR: Qualifiers

## Flight A (24 Teams)

- 1 Bulgarian All Stars
- 2 Hackett
- 3 Taipei Weide
- 4 Oz Two
- 5 China Women
- 6 Beijing Trinergy;
- 7 Kazuhiko Yamada, Akihiko Yamada, Kyoko Ohno, Takahiko Hirata, Katsumi Takahashi, Makoto Kono
- 8 Spain: Federico Goded, Gonzalo Goded, Miguel Goncalves, Jordi Sabate
- 9 Zhe Jiang Hua Men: Xu Qun, Zhang Yu, Nie Weiping, Wang Xiaojing, Dai Jianming, Zhuang Zejun
- 10 Oz Players: Ron Klinger, Matt Mullamphy, Michael Whibley
- 11 Mitsue Tajima, Kazuo Furuta, Chen Dawei, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura
- 12 KISS: John Carruthers, Subhash Gupta, PO Sundelin, BG Olofsson
- 13 Manado-Indonesia: Henky Lasut, Eddy Manoppo, Denny Sacul, Donald Tuerah, Munawar Sawirudin, Bambang Hartono
- 14 Shunsuke Morimura, Hiroya Abe, Zhao Jinlong, Liu Zheng
- 15 Ryoga Tanaka, Sadako Nakajima, Yukiko Hoshi, Tomoyuki Harada
- 16 Kyoko Shimamura, Brian Senior, Ryo Okuno, Akira Ohara
- 17 Hemant Jalan: Hemant K. Jalan, Ashish Malhotra, Keyzad Anklesaria, Anal Shah, Sunit Chokshi, K.R.Venkataraman
- 18 Yumiko Oda, Kazuo Saeki, Masakazu Hirota, Shuko Umeda
- 19 Tadashi Teramoto, Kumiko Sasahira, Fu Zhong, Shugo Tanaka, Takeshi Niekawa
- 20 Haruyo Iiyama, Sumie Nakagawa, Shunichi Haga, Osamu Iiyama
- 21 Tsuneo Sakurai, Takahiro Kamiyo, Atsushi Kikuchi, Kenichi Asaoka
- 22 Kyoko Sengoku, Hiroko Janssen, Toshihiro Ogata, Shunsuke Gotoda, Takashi Matsuda
- 23 Robert Geller, Setsuko Ogihara, Teruo Miyazaki, Kunio Kodaira
- 24 Keiko Matsuzaki, Kimi Makita, Etsuko Naito, Yukiko Umezu

## Flight B (20 Teams)

- 1 Yuki Fukuyoshi, Takeshi Hanayama, Chieko Yamazaki, Jiang Yi
- 2 Junko Yamashiro, Yoko Shimominami, Kazuko Okamoto, Miyako Miyazaki
- 3 Motoaki Shiga, Hiroyuki Taguchi, Minoru Mizuta, Yumiko Mizuta
- 4 Masayuki Ohashi, Hiroshi Shinjo, Sumiko Suzuki, Yasuko Masuda
- 5 Akiko Yanagisawa, Makoto Kono, Toshiko Kaho, Masayuki Hayasaka
- 6 Yoko Fukuyama, Takashi Sumita, Hiromu Nishida, Yoshie Nishida
- 7 Heather Dhondy, Nevena Senior, Fiona Brown, Susan Stockdale
- 8 Nobuko Matsubara, Sachiko Yamamura, Michiko Iwahashi, Hideyuki Sango
- 9 Michiko Ono, Toyoko Saito, Fumiko Kimura, Minako Takahashi
- 10 Ayako Miyakuni, Hiroko Ota, Megumi Takasaki, Masako Katsube
- 11 Kikuo Tatai, Kenji Miyakuni, Sakiko Naito, Toru Henmi
- 12 Chieko Ichikawa, Kuniko Saito, Yoshiko Murata, Atsuko Kurita, Keiko Oshio
- 13 Chen Shenghong, Shen Jiaxiang, Shi Xiao, Yang Lixin, Zhan Banxiang, Gui Shengyue
- 14 Atsuko Katsumata, Yasuyo Iida, Kimiko Kamakari, Misae Kato, Harue Iemori
- 15 Mariko Matsukawa, Sachiho Ueda, Yoko Maruyama, Keisuke Akama
- 16 Masako Otsuka, Akiko Miwa, Yukiko Akayama, Kosuke Ito, Naoko Hishikawa, Fumiko Nanjo
- 17 Shintaro Sentsui, Hiroko Sentsui, Kenichi Ito, Kensuke Komori
- 18 Toshiaki Nakatani, Mitsuko Sawada, Yoshiko Shiota, Mio Manki
- 19 Kazuko Kawashima, Yoko Tokushige, Yoshiko Fukuda, Aiko Mizuuchi
- 20 Haruko Koshi, Yoko Oosako, Misuzu Ichihashi, Terumi Kubo

## Flight C (18 Teams)

- 1 Hidenori Narita, Makoto Hirata, Yasuhiro Shimizu, Makiko Sato, Takashi Maeda
- 2 Masaru Naniwada, Ryo Matsubara, Ayako Matsubara, Mark LaForge
- 3 Junko Takeda, Asako Asakawa, Fumi Tanaka, Yoko Mitsunashi
- 4 Hiroaki Miura, Hiroki Yokoi, Noriaki Koike, Yoshiro Kido, Tomoyuki Watanuki
- 5 Fumiko Sakabe, Kazuko Nakagawa, Takeo Takatori, Sachiko Kato

- 6 Akiko Kawabata, Misako Fukazawa, Soyoko Yamamoto, Yasuyoshi Toriumi
  - 7 Park Jungyoon, Sung Kyunghae, Kim Yoonkyung, Park Myungkee
  - 8 Kazuko Takahashi, Mayumi Katagiri, Sumiko Sugino, Takako Fujimoto
  - 9 Sayuri Ichinose, Kazuhisa Kojima, Teruko Yoshida, Yumiko Nagato
  - 10 Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura, Michiko Shida, Kotomi Asakoshi
  - 11 Wakana Kawate, Yasuko Sawama, Machiko Ohashi, Keiko Sugita
  - 12 Sonoko Namba, Chizuko Sugiura, Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka
  - 13 Masako Kurita, Yoko Ota, Mikiko Ito, Noriko Tanaka
  - 14 Yoko Yoshimoto, Yumiyo Hari, Shigeeko Ezoe, Noriko Miyoshi
  - 15 Shizuyo Nakagawa, Hisayasu Naito, Yoko Kato, Chikayo Miyako
  - 16 Junko Tsubaki, Keiko Enomoto, Takako Nakatani, Yasuko Kosaka
  - 17 Kyoko Suzuki, Setsu Kimoto, Setsuko Matsuzawa, Makoto Wakabayashi
  - 18 Masafumi Yoshizawa, Kuniko Miyauchi, Yoshitaka Agata, Noriko Yoshizawa, Shigeyuki Murano
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## Shenzhen Rooting Section



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

Rank	IMPs	Member1	Member2	Team	Rds
1	1.46	Takashi Maeda	Nobuyuki Hayashi	NARITA	7
2	1.27	Ayako Miyakuni	Hiroko Ota	AKAMA	4
3-4	1.21	Louk Verhees	Ricco van Prooijen	NEDUK	12
3-4	1.21	Paul Gosney	Nabil Edgtton	Oz Two	12
5	1.14	Tomoyuki Watanuki	Daisuke Sugimoto	JAPAN YOUTH	5
6-7	0.99	Gu Ling	Lu Yan	CHINA WOMEN	8
6-7	0.99	Yang Lixin	Zhan Banxiang	Shenzhen	10
8	0.88	Katsumi Takahashi	Masaaki Takayama	Okay+	8
9	0.85	Tom Hanlon	Hugh McGann	Hackett	12
10	0.8	Yumiko Kawakami	Toyohiko Ozawa	River side	8
11	0.79	Henky Lasut	Eddy Manoppo	Manado INDONESIA	10
12	0.78	Patrick Huang	Sidney Yang	Taipei Weide	12
13	0.76	Nie Weiping	Wang Xiaojing	Zhe Jiang Hua Men	6
14	0.74	PO Sundelin	BG Olofsson	KISS	12
15	0.68	Valio Kovachev	Vladi Isporski	Bulgarian All Stars	12
16	0.67	Paul Hackett	Justin Hackett	Hackett	12
17	0.64	Ju Chuancheng	Shi Zhengjun	Beijing Trinergy	11
18	0.62	Koichi Onishi	Taiko Bando	Friends	8
19-20	0.55	Wang Kui	Peng Jianfeng	Heng Sha Ke Ji	12
19-20	0.55	Shugo Tanaka	Takeshi Niekawa	SARA	8
21-22	0.54	Yoko Nenohi	Yoshiko Sakaguchi	Pretty Cats	4
21-22	0.54	Hiroaki Miura	Noriaki Koike	JAPAN YOUTH	8
23	0.52	Misuzu Ichihashi	Michiko Iwahashi	ESPERANZA	8
24	0.5	Tadashi Jomura	Hiroaki Iwata	HANA	12
25	0.49	Sartaj Hans	Tony Nunn	Oz Two	12
26	0.47	David Bakhshi	David Gold	NEDUK	12
27	0.43	Yoko Nenohi	Kumiko Matsuo	Pretty Cats	4
28	0.42	Ron Klinger	Matt Mullamphy	Oz Players	12
29	0.39	Chen Dawei	Kazuo Furuta	Good Oxygen	12
30-31	0.38	Wang Yanhong	Li Rui	Beijing Trinergy	8
30-31	0.38	Yoshiyuki Nakamura	Masayuki Hayasaka	Lion	8
32-33	0.36	Osami Kimura	Hiroko Kobayashi	Iza Yokohama II	8
32-33	0.36	Kenji Miyakuni	Sakiko Naito	NAITO	12
34-35	0.33	Hemant K. Jalan	Ashish Malhotra	Hemant Jalan	7
34-35	0.33	Atsuko Kurita	Noriko Takami	Venus	8
36	0.31	Ryo Matsubara	Mark LaForge	MammoM	6
37	0.3	Takahiro Kamiyo	Kenichi Asaoka	SKOTII	4
38-39	0.29	Yoichi Ito	Masaru Yoshida	Lion	8
38-39	0.29	Kikuo Tatai	Toru Henmi	NAITO	12
40	0.27	Hisami Kataoka	Hikoe Enomoto	NANIWADA	8
41-43	0.23	Toshiko Kaho	Yoshiko Sakaguchi	Pretty Cats	4
41-43	0.23	Shunsuke Morimura	Hiroya Abe	Jiuzhaigou	12
41-43	0.23	Sonoko Namba	Chizuko Sugiura	KinKi	12
44	0.22	Liu Haitao	Li Xiaoyi	Heng Sha Ke Ji	12
45	0.21	Tadashi Teramoto	Fu Zhong	SARA	12
46	0.2	Heather Dhondy	Nevena Senior	England Ladies	12
47	0.18	Jonky Chung	Herstein Liu	Taipei Weide	12
48-50	0.16	Manol Iliev	Hristo Hristov	Bulgarian All Stars	12
48-50	0.16	Osami Kimura	Setsuko Kimura	Iza Yokohama II	4
48-50	0.16	Shimako Yaji	Yoko Komuro	LAS FLORES	8
51	0.15	Park Jungyoon	Sung Kyunghae	KOREA	12
52-53	0.14	Masaru Naniwada	Toshiro Nose	NANIWADA	7
52-53	0.14	Tadashi Yamasaki	Yumi Yanagida	Summer Wine	4
54	0.1	Masakatsu Sugino	Tomoko Sakai	River side	5

Rank	IMPs	Member1	Member2	Team	Rds
55	0.09	Federico Goded	Miguel Goncalves	SPAIN	11
56	0.08	Kenichi Ito	Tadashi Yamasaki	Summer Wine	6
57	0.06	Masayuki Ino	Tadashi Imakura	Good Oxygen	12
58	0.05	Yoko Maruyama	Keisuke Akama	AKAMA	12
59	0.03	Sun Yanhui	Feng Xuefeng	CHINA WOMEN	7
60-61	0.02	Lu Dong	Wang Yanhong	Beijing Trinergy	4
60-61	0.02	Iwao Oishi	Aiko Nabeshima	MY-Bridge	8
62-63	-0.01	Gonzalo Goded	Jordi Sabate	SPAIN	11
62-63	-0.01	Kiyoko Oki	Yumiko Nagato	SYNH <sub>2</sub> O	8
64	-0.02	Yoshiko Murata	Miyako Miyazaki	Venus	4
65-67	-0.03	John Carruthers	Subhash Gupta	KISS	12
65-67	-0.03	Fumiko Kimura	Kiyoko Usui	TimTam	8
65-67	-0.03	Tsuneo Sakurai	Atsushi Kikuchi	SKOTII	8
68	-0.04	Fiona Brown	Susan Stockdale	England Ladies	12
69	-0.06	Sun Ming	Wang Hongli	CHINA WOMEN	9
70	-0.09	Justin Howard	Michael Whibley	Oz Players	12
71-72	-0.12	Kim Yoonkyung	Park Myungkee	KOREA	12
71-72	-0.12	Yasuhiro Shimizu	Makoto Hirata	NARITA	9
73-74	-0.13	Zhao Jinlong	Jiang Yi	Jiuzhaigou	12
73-74	-0.13	Midori Ito	Takayo Otsuka	MammoM	6
75-77	-0.14	Haruko Koshi	Yayoi Sakamoto	ESPERANZA	7
75-77	-0.14	Ayako Miyakuni	Masako Katsube	AKAMA	4
75-77	-0.14	Kenichi Asaoka	Motoharu Ushio	SKOTII	4
78-80	-0.15	Keyzad Anklesaria	Anal Shah	Hemant Jalan	7
78-80	-0.15	Takako Fujimoto	Sumiko Sugino	TimTam	7
78-80	-0.15	Yoko Fukuyama	Takashi Sumita	Rosewood	12
81-82	-0.17	Denny Sacul	Donald Tuerah	Manado INDONESIA	6
81-82	-0.17	Yoko Saito	Mamiko Odaira	Friends	8
83-84	-0.2	Dai Jianming	Zhuang Zejun	Zhe Jiang Hua Men	12
83-84	-0.2	Hiroko Ota	Masako Katsube	AKAMA	4
85	-0.23	Teruko Nishimura	Junko Nishimura	LAS FLORES	8
86	-0.24	Seiya Shimizu	Hidenori Narita	NARITA	8
87	-0.25	Atsuko Katsumata	Yasuyo Iida	KATSUMATA	12
88-90	-0.27	Kazuko Kawashima	Kazuko Takahashi	TimTam	8
88-90	-0.27	Kyoko Shimamura	Brian Senior	Fairy Tale	9
88-90	-0.27	Hiromu Nishida	Yoshie Nishida	Rosewood	12
91-92	-0.3	Sunit Chokshi	K.R.Venkataraman	Hemant Jalan	9
91-92	-0.3	Yasuyoshi Toriumi	Setsuko Kimura	Iza Yokohama II	4
93	-0.34	Yumiko Kichise	Toshiko Hagiwara	Friends	8
94-95	-0.35	Yuki Fukuyoshi	Takeshi Hanayama	HANA	12
94-95	-0.35	Kimiko Kamakari	Misae Kato	KATSUMATA	12
96	-0.41	Shugo Tanaka	Takashi Matsuda	SARA	4
97	-0.42	Shi Xiao	Gui Shengyue	Shenzhen	7
98	-0.43	Miyoko Yonezawa	Mariko Sakamoto	SYNH <sub>2</sub> O	8
99	-0.45	Katsuro Hatoyama	Michiko Hatoyama	SYNH <sub>2</sub> O	8
100-101	-0.46	Toru Tamura	Mimako Ishizuka	KinKi	12
100-101	-0.46	Natsuhiko Nagumo	Michi Kamatani	NAGUMO	5
102-104	-0.48	Xu Qun	Zhang Yu	Zhe Jiang Hua Men	6
102-104	-0.48	Tsuneo Sakurai	Kenichi Asaoka	SKOTII	4
102-104	-0.48	Shintaro Sentsui	Hiroko Sentsui	Summer Wine	12
105	-0.5	Yuichi Masamura	Eiji Otaka	Lion	8
106	-0.52	Takahiro Kamiyo	Motoharu Ushio	SKOTII	4
107	-0.53	Kazuhiko Yamada	Takahiko Hirata	Okay+	8
108-109	-0.54	Akihiko Yamada	Kyoko Ohno	Okay+	8
108-109	-0.54	Kazuko Okamoto	Harue Iemori	Kisaragi	8
110	-0.55	Yukiko Umezu	Etsuko Naito	Yukinata	12



Rank	IMPs	Member1	Member2	Team	Rds
111	-0.58	Munawar Sawirudin	Bambang Hartono	Manado INDONESIA	8
112-114	-0.61	Akiko Kawabata	Misako Fukazawa	Kisaragi	10
112-114	-0.61	Junko Den	Yoshiko Murata	Venus	4
112-114	-0.61	Ryichi Yasuhara	Hiroko Tanaka	River side	5
115-116	-0.65	Michiko Shida	Kotomi Asakoshi	LAS FLORES	8
115-116	-0.65	Toru Amano	Ayako Matsubara	MammoM	8
117-118	-0.71	Akio Kurokawa	Ryo Okuno	Fairy Tale	9
117-118	-0.71	Teruo Miyazaki	Kunio Kodaira	Kisaragi	4
119	-0.73	Hideyuki Sango	Nobuko Matsubara	ESPERANZA	8
120-121	-0.74	Yukiko Hoshi	Megumi Takasaka	Yukinata	12
120-121	-0.74	Masafumi Yoshizawa	Noriko Yoshizawa	MY-Bridge	8
122	-0.78	Chen Shenghong	Shen Jiaxiang	Shenzhen	7
123	-0.86	Kyoko Toyofuku	Makiko Sato	Pretty Cats	4
124	-0.96	Toshiko Kaho	Makiko Sato	Pretty Cats	4
125-126	-0.99	Hiroki Yokoi	Yoshiro Kido	JAPAN YOUTH	7
125-126	-0.99	Toshiro Nose	Hideo Togawa	NANIWADA	5
127	-1.02	Yasuyoshi Toriumi	Aiko Banno	Iza Yokohama II	7
128	-1.06	Kuniko Miyauchi	Yoshitaka Agata	MY-Bridge	8
129	-1.69	Natsuhiko Nagumo	Akira Fujii	NAGUMO	5
130	-2.71	Kazuko Sakamoto	Kazuko Yamagata	NAGUMO	8

## 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.

### Narita Bus Schedule

From the Intercontinental  
(120 minutes)  
¥3,500

From the YCAT  
(90 min)  
¥3,500

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

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

# NEC Quarter-finals (1<sup>st</sup> half): Oz Two vs Hang Sha Ke Ji

by Barry Rigal

If the Chinese had any pre-match nerves, the first deal would not have settled those jitters.

Bd: 1  
Dlr: North  
Vul: None

North  
♠ 9742  
♥ QJ  
♦ J1095  
♣ AK7

West  
♠ A6  
♥ AK652  
♦ A3  
♣ J853

East  
♠ KQ108  
♥ 3  
♦ KQ4  
♣ Q10942

South  
♠ J53  
♥ 109874  
♦ 8762  
♣ 6

Open Room

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

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦ (Rel.)	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦(0/3)	Pass
6♣	Dbl	All Pass	

In the Closed Room the 2♣ opening was Precision and the 4♦ bid with no aces and bad trumps seems somewhat pushy. The 4NT keycard enquiry got an unwelcome response and left Peng with a choice of places to go down. As the BBO commentators suggested, West really needed to be able to set clubs cheaply and then use Minorwood or the like to find out the best spot at a somewhat cheaper level.

This board generated the same headache for a remarkable number of pairs. One would imagine that in a natural auction West should be able to set up a game force, agree clubs, then use Keycard. But three pairs went down in slam. Van Prooijen (looking at ♥QJ doubleton) did not double 6♣, probably wisely, for fear of a retreat to 6NT. The Chinese Women also reached the doomed slam.

Bd: 2  
Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ 1053  
♥ KJ9  
♦ 108  
♣ AQ1093

West  
♠ J962  
♥ AQ3  
♦ J7643  
♣ 4

East  
♠ KQ8  
♥ 76542  
♦ Q52  
♣ 75

South  
♠ A74  
♥ 108  
♦ AK9  
♣ KJ862

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
		Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Whether the defenders lead diamonds or spades it appears declarer needs a favorable lie of the hearts or a good guess in that suit, with maybe a fallback position of a defensive error if diamonds are 4-4. Edgtton led a spade against 3NT (influenced by the Marston canapé theory?) while Peng led a diamond. On a spade lead declarer could duck twice and play on hearts, but the defenders had four tricks. Against the diamond lead Nunn put up the ten, covered all around, then played a heart. West won and returned a diamond and declarer had 11 tricks; 13-0 Oz Two.

Where Iliev and Hristov were defending 3NT the diamond lead went to the queen and a duck from declarer, a play that could never gain but was admittedly unlikely to lose. However Hristov now ingeniously shifted to spades, and declarer's ten winners had become eight.

Bd: 3  
Dlr: South  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ A1085  
♥ K8  
♦ QJ8742  
♣ 8

West  
♠ KQ6  
♥ A9762  
♦ A5  
♣ 532

East  
♠ J4  
♥ QJ105  
♦ 1063  
♣ AQ106

South  
♠ 9732  
♥ 43  
♦ K9  
♣ KJ974

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♥	2♦	2NT(♥)	3♣(FIT)
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
1♥	2♦	3♦	Dbl
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

After a top diamond lead Peng took a heart finesse and the defense shifted to clubs. Declarer finessed. South won cheaply, unblocked diamonds, and played a spade. The defenders sat back and waited for their second club trick for down two. By contrast, Edgton received the more dangerous-looking club lead. He hopped up with the ace and lost a heart finesse. When North erred by returning a high diamond, blocking the suit, declarer won, drew trumps, then played a spade. North won and exited a diamond to South, who had to return a spade. Declarer cashed the spades and crossed to a heart to lead a third diamond, pitching a club, and forcing the ruff and discard from North for down one, and 3imps. Nicely played; 16-0 for Oz two.

Only two tables went plus with the E/W cards. Huang-Yang stopped in 2♥, while Iliev-Hristov defended 4♠ undoubled, down two.

Bd: 4	North
Dlr: West	♠ J4
Vul: Both	♥ J63
	♦ AJ8653
	♣ J10
West	East
♠ A108	♠ KQ53
♥ 1054	♥ AK92
♦ Q104	♦ K972
♣ Q763	♣ 5
	South
	♠ 9762
	♥ Q87
	♦ ---
	♣ AK9842

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1NT	Pass	Pass	2♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
Dbl	Pass	1♣(STR)	2♣
3♥	All Pass	2♥	Pass

Neither table really got a grip on this awkward deal where E/W come relatively close to 3NT if they duck the low club lead. (A heart shift will set the game now.) 2♦ was a nice low-level contract ruined on the rocks of the 6-0 split. The defenders led a top club and shifted to a spade. Declarer led a diamond to the queen to find the bad news and ruffed the next club. (Perhaps pitching a heart is the indicated play.) From that point on declarer had to lose a heart, a club and four trumps since he could never reach the ♣Q to cash it.

in 3♥ the defenders led two top clubs, ruffed by East, who led a diamond to the queen and ace. Back came a diamond, ruffed, and the ♣9, ruffed by declarer. Now Wang cashed the ♥AK, took two spades ending in dummy, finessed the ♦9, and gave up a trump at the death for an elegant +140. This result was duplicated by Paul Hackett, but it was only a push since Shi-Ju played 2NT for 150.

The board was also a push in the All Stars match, both they and China Women collecting 200 against 2♣x.

Bd: 5	North
Dlr: North	♠ QJ84
Vul: N/S	♥ KQ42
	♦ K52
	♣ 54
West	East
♠ K10976	♠ 53
♥ A	♥ J9753
♦ 8763	♦ Q
♣ KQ6	♣ J10983
	South
	♠ A2
	♥ 1086
	♦ AJ1094
	♣ A72

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♠	1NT	Pass	1♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
3♣(P/C)	All Pass	2♥(♥+m)	Pass

3NT by N/S on a club lead needs the diamonds to play for no losers, but one can hardly blame North for passing in the context of playing standard methods. If the alternative is to rebid to show 11-13 one might choose to open, I suppose. Hans led a trump against 3♣. Declarer tried to set up spades but was held to his four trumps and two aces. That flattened the board when 1NT made nine tricks in the other room: the defenders eventually opened up diamonds for declarer and avoided any guesswork for him. Still 16-6 for Oz Two.

All six of the other tables reached game with the N/S cards, most having opened the North hand. The only casualty was Tom Hanlon, who played it from the North seat after East jumped in hearts and showed five clubs in the play. With that information, the percentage play in diamonds was to run the jack — unlucky, but at least he had something to complain about for the rest of the afternoon. 14 imps to Beijing Trinergy.

Bd: 6                    North  
 Dlr: East             ♠ 74  
 Vul: E/W             ♥ AQJ1096  
                            ♦ KJ4  
                            ♣ 106

West ♠ KJ5 ♥ 5 ♦ A10852 ♣ AK74	East ♠ 9632 ♥ 8432 ♦ 93 ♣ J53
--	---

South  
 ♠ AQ108  
 ♥ K7  
 ♦ Q76  
 ♣ Q982

**Open Room**

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	2♦(FG)	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♥	All Pass	3NT

**Closed Room**

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
Pass	4♣(♥)	Pass	1NT
All Pass		Pass	4♥

4♥ from the North seat goes down on a spade lead but Gosney had many reasons to lead either minor suit and no reason at all to lead spades on the given auction. After the diamond lead declarer simply drew trumps and built a club discard for his spade. No

problem, mate.

Nunn played from the "safe" South seat on a top club lead. Can you see a way to go down now? It's not easy, but he's really not to blame since Peng led a top club and shifted to a diabolical ♠J! Declarer won in hand, drew trumps then decided to finesse in spades for the overtrick; collapse of stout party. The match score was 16-16 now.

Everyone else scored up game, or in the case of Taipei Weide, defended 2♠x by East, which looks lucky to escape for 500.

Bd: 7                    North  
 Dlr: South            ♠ A754  
 Vul: Both            ♥ 1094  
                            ♦ A108654  
                            ♣ ---

West ♠ J982 ♥ AQ ♦ K7 ♣ AK432	East ♠ 3 ♥ K52 ♦ J32 ♣ Q98765
---	---

South  
 ♠ KQ106  
 ♥ J8763  
 ♦ Q9  
 ♣ J10

**Open Room**

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1NT	Pass	2♠(♣)	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

**Closed Room**

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
1♣(STR)	1♦	Dbl	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Well bid by Peng-Wang to the respectable 3NT. On this auction the defenders don't rate to be able to cash their spades, or to do it even if they could. West's rebid showed 17-19. East showed long clubs and less values than a shaded positive, hence a maximum of a bad seven-count (and probably with seven points and a six-carder East would have upgraded). In the other room the quirk of notrump ranges meant that Gosney was looking for the best partscore facing 15-17. 10 more painless imps to Hang Sha Ke Ji.

Two pairs got into the act with the N/S cards. While their teammates were collecting 150 in club partscores, Isporski-Kovachev went for 500 in 4♠x,

but that was considerably better than Chung-Liu, who played 4♠x down 1100.

Bd: 8 North  
 Dlr: West ♠ 9632  
 Vul: None ♥ K54  
 ♦ 1094  
 ♣ K74

West  
 ♠ 5  
 ♥ J1098  
 ♦ AKQJ2  
 ♣ QJ8

South  
 ♠ 874  
 ♥ A2  
 ♦ 7653  
 ♣ A1095

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT(1)	Pass	4♥	All Pass

(1) Four hearts

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

It looked as though the Chinese were about to put yet another big swing past Oz Two when Wang concealed his four-card heart suit in order to potentially wrong-side notrump. That got him to 3NT in a hurry and partner obliged with just the right club and heart suits for his decision. Plus 460 was truly a "Bidding Challenge" result. So could Hang Sha Ke Ji convert the result from the Closed Room into realimps? Well, if ever there was an auction that screamed for a club lead (maybe an underlead of the ace) this was it. Liu did not see it that way. Perhaps trying for diamond ruffs he led a low diamond and Gosney hastened to cash spades to pitch clubs. From that point on the only issue was whether he could make the overtrick; he did not. Just 1 imp to Beijing but it must have felt like a pick-up to the Australian supporters.

Elsewhere, all six tables played 4♥ but only Paul Hackett benefitted from the diamond lead. Hugh McGann did underlead his ♣A — nicely done, Sir. The other tables either led the ♣A, or game was played by West leaving North no problem on lead.

At the halfway point in the other matches it was

Beijing by 3 over Hackett, All Stars by 20 over China Women, and NEDUK by 17 over Taipei.

Bd: 9 North  
 Dlr: North ♠ 92  
 Vul: E/W ♥ 2  
 ♦ 1096543  
 ♣ AKJ10

West  
 ♠ QJ64  
 ♥ Q97543  
 ♦ K  
 ♣ 43

South  
 ♠ 1083  
 ♥ J106  
 ♦ AQ8  
 ♣ Q975

East  
 ♠ AK75  
 ♥ AK8  
 ♦ J72  
 ♣ 862

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♦(♥)	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣(1)	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

(1) Puppeting 2♦ to invite

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

On the next deal, perhaps steaming from the previous string of results, Hans improvised an opening bid where none was visible to the naked eye. Not good enough. Continuing their golden run, Wang raised the invitational jump to 3♥ to game without much excuse except that the game bonus is always worth trying for. Partner produced the magic if unexpected spade length, and that was that.

In the other room facing Gosney's moderate balanced hand Edgton invited game, and Gosney had a super-maximum with three trumps and was good to go. No swing. Still 16-27 for Hang Sha Ke Ji.

Both tables missed game in NEDUK-Taipei Weide, while Li Rui saved in 5♣x but did not guess diamonds and went down 500 — still a 4 imp gain.



"Careful, I know karate!"

Bd: 10  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ 7  
 ♥ Q2  
 ♦ K76432  
 ♣ AJ86

West  
 ♠ AQ82  
 ♥ AK765  
 ♦ Q105  
 ♣ Q

East  
 ♠ K10965  
 ♥ J843  
 ♦ 9  
 ♣ 732

South  
 ♠ J43  
 ♥ 109  
 ♦ AJ8  
 ♣ K10954

Open Room

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

(1) short-suit game try

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♣(STR)	Pass	1♦(NEG)	Pass
1♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Both tables had no problem with this one. In their own ways both Easts got the limited values and four-card trump support across, Gosney by a simple raise then an acceptance of a short-suit try, Wang by a four-card mixed raise. Both tables let the club loser get away. Push +680s; still Beijing Trinergy, 16-27.

This was another possible sacrifice. Isporski found the save, while Huang-Yang missed game as E/W. Everyone else collected 680.

Bd: 11  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ K74  
 ♥ K42  
 ♦ A75432  
 ♣ 8

West  
 ♠ 102  
 ♥ AQJ10  
 ♦ KQ96  
 ♣ AJ6

East  
 ♠ J85  
 ♥ 963  
 ♦ J108  
 ♣ K542

South  
 ♠ AQ963  
 ♥ 875  
 ♦ ---  
 ♣ Q10973

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	Pass	2♠
Dbl	Pass	2NT(1)	Pass
3♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
			Pass
1♣(1)	1♦	Pass	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	All Pass

For the second time this set E/W alighted in Li's six-card diamond suit, this time at the three-level but non-vulnerable. Oh well, beggars can't be choosers. He led a low trump this time, and declarer was faced with the task of making a sizable number of bricks with no obvious straw to work with. He managed three trumps and two aces, losing four imps when 2♥ in the Closed Room lost a trump, two spades and two ruffs. 31-16 now for Hang Sha Ke Ji.

Almost everywhere else N/S played spade part-scores. But Hanlon-McGann stopped in 2♣ as N/S and Isporski-Kovachev went to the opposite extreme, playing 4♠, both contracts going down a trick.

Bd: 12  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: N/S

North  
 ♠ 976  
 ♥ 32  
 ♦ AJ10432  
 ♣ 53

West  
 ♠ AJ5  
 ♥ K6  
 ♦ 65  
 ♣ J108642

East  
 ♠ KQ3  
 ♥ J104  
 ♦ Q87  
 ♣ AKQ9

South  
 ♠ 10842  
 ♥ AQ9875  
 ♦ K9  
 ♣ 7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			All Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
			Pass
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♥
2♣	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Edgtton's mini notrump got him to 3NT the wrong way up. No doubt he would have gone down on a low

diamond lead, but on the lead of the  $\diamond J$  he ducked, and from there on he could not be defeated. Still an imp to Hang Sha Ke Ji since 3NT by East collected the overtrick on a heart lead. 32-16 now.

This was a tough hand for the Hacketts. When N/S got both red-suits into play it was not surprising that they opted to play 5 $\clubsuit$  and not 3NT on the auction: 1NT-(2 $\diamond$ )-3 $\clubsuit$ -(3 $\diamond$ )-3 $\clubsuit$ . Justin raised to 4 $\spadesuit$  and Paul converted to 5 $\clubsuit$ . This was a quiet one down whether the defenders cashed out or not. Beijing led 35-13.

Bd: 13  
Dlr: North  
Vul: Both

North  
 $\spadesuit$  74  
 $\heartsuit$  AQJ1063  
 $\diamond$  1064  
 $\clubsuit$  KQ

West  
 $\spadesuit$  KQJ2  
 $\heartsuit$  K4  
 $\diamond$  AKJ72  
 $\clubsuit$  J3

East  
 $\spadesuit$  106  
 $\heartsuit$  9852  
 $\diamond$  Q983  
 $\clubsuit$  A65

South  
 $\spadesuit$  A9853  
 $\heartsuit$  7  
 $\diamond$  5  
 $\clubsuit$  1098742

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
	1 $\heartsuit$	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	2 $\diamond$	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
	1 $\heartsuit$	Pass	1 $\spadesuit$
1NT	2 $\heartsuit$	Pass	Pass
3 $\diamond$	Pass	3 $\heartsuit$	Pass
3 $\spadesuit$	Pass	3NT	Pass
4 $\diamond$	All Pass		

Peng decided that the delayed route to 3NT meant that North would be able to set up hearts and have a black-suit entry to cash them. Right — up to a point. He pulled to 4 $\diamond$  and found that the defenders had four top tricks there. Still, 4 $\diamond$  rated to be cheaper than 3NT unless Li was going to lead the  $\heartsuit Q$  — which he did. Now declarer had ten top tricks if he played on spades. He elected to take only eight of them by removing his diamond entry to the spades before knocking out that ace. But when Liu took his  $\spadesuit A$  on the first round, a board that Beijing would like to forget as fast as possible had given Oz Two 12 imps. They trailed 32-28 now.

Justin Hackett also benefitted from the heart lead against 3NT, and so did Iliev. Meanwhile, when

David Bakhshi held the West cards he heard hearts bid to his left and spades to his right. He opted to bid diamonds, not notrump, and when his partner raised him in competition he gave up without making a try for game. Very nicely judged. Plus 130 was worth 8 imps when Taipei Weide played 5 $\diamond$  down 200.

Bd: 14  
Dlr: East  
Vul: None

North  
 $\spadesuit$  A  
 $\heartsuit$  Q932  
 $\diamond$  Q863  
 $\clubsuit$  AKJ8

West  
 $\spadesuit$  6542  
 $\heartsuit$  AKJ108  
 $\diamond$  A10  
 $\clubsuit$  72

East  
 $\spadesuit$  KJ98  
 $\heartsuit$  75  
 $\diamond$  972  
 $\clubsuit$  Q1094

South  
 $\spadesuit$  Q1073  
 $\heartsuit$  64  
 $\diamond$  KJ54  
 $\clubsuit$  653

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
		Pass	Pass
1 $\heartsuit$	1NT	All Pass	

Both tables played on a heart lead ducked to the queen. Both declarers knocked out the  $\diamond A$ , and the defenders ran the hearts. When Edgton played back a club declarer rose with the ace, unblocked spades, then crossed to the diamonds to squeeze East. In the same ending Hans finessed in clubs at his first opportunity and made seven tricks. 33-28 now for Beijing Trinergy.

Everybody played notrump partscores for a small plus, except where van Prooijen, sitting North, passed a 1 $\heartsuit$  opening bid on his right to await further developments. He is still waiting, and 1 $\heartsuit$  came home for a 5 imp gain to Taipei.

Bd: 15  
Dlr: South  
Vul: N/S

North  
 $\spadesuit$  Q  
 $\heartsuit$  109742  
 $\diamond$  A84  
 $\clubsuit$  A954

West  
 $\spadesuit$  984  
 $\heartsuit$  K53  
 $\diamond$  J76  
 $\clubsuit$  KJ63

East  
 $\spadesuit$  KJ1075  
 $\heartsuit$  QJ86  
 $\diamond$  103  
 $\clubsuit$  Q10

South  
 $\spadesuit$  A632  
 $\heartsuit$  A  
 $\diamond$  KQ952  
 $\clubsuit$  872

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass
2♠	Dbl	Pass	3♦
All Pass			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass
2♠	3♦	All Pass	

Both tables played the sensible partscore, which brought home 130 in each room. Everyone else collected a small plus as N/S (Hanlon-McGann having the opportunity for a large plus when their opponents foolishly re-competed to 3♠ but they did not double and collected 150).

The exceptions, Lu-Gu, who attempted a sporting 3NT contract and disproved the Kaplan rule that "Where there's eight tricks there's always nine." 6 imps to the All Stars.

Bd: 16      North  
 Dir: West    ♠ KJ6542  
 Vul: E/W     ♥ 863  
                ♦ A105  
                ♣ 7

West	East
♠ A109	♠ Q83
♥ AK4	♥ QJ10972
♦ K4	♦ J
♣ AQ532	♣ J109

South  
 ♠ 7  
 ♥ 5  
 ♦ Q987632  
 ♣ K864

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Gosney</i>	<i>Liu</i>
2NT	Pass	4♦(♥)	5♦
Pass	Pass	5♥	Pass
Pass	5♠	Dbl	6♦
Dbl	All Pass		
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Peng</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
2NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

The defenders collected their three aces against the sacrifice. It looks hard to do any better, though Edgtton shifted to a diamond at trick two to kill the ruffs. That was 9 imps to Hang Sha Ke Ji since 4♥ had collected a painless 680. The margin was 42-28 at the break.

Obviously Liu knew that the delayed spade bid guaranteed diamond support; but at the table where the Hacketts were defending they bid 2NT-3♦-(Dbl)-4♥-(4♠)-Dbl-All Pass. That was a painful down 1100. And which of North or South was most to blame? (I vote for South.) The 9 imps here gave Hackett a 38-35 lead at the half, having trailed 35-13 a few boards earlier.

The All Stars and NEDUK had each held their opponents to two small swings and an overtrick, and led by 39 imps and 35 imps, respectively, with 16 deals to go.

I used to be indecisive.  
 Now I'm not sure.



"See, the Editors liked my bidding."



"I'm not sleeping. I'm just resting my eyes."



## NEC Quarter-finals (2<sup>nd</sup> half): Hackett vs Beijing Trinergy

by Rich Colker

At the end of the first half of the semi-finals, the third-seeded Hackett team led the fourth-seated Beijing Trinergy team by just 3 imps, 38-35. Papa and Justin have vowed not to take any prisoners — and not to be taken alive if they're captured. There's the bugle call. They're off!

Bd: 17      North  
 Dir: North    ♠ AQ107  
 Vul: None    ♥ AKJ10  
                   ♦ 85  
                   ♣ 1083

West  
 ♠ J  
 ♥ Q98653  
 ♦ 107  
 ♣ KQ96

East  
 ♠ 95  
 ♥ 7  
 ♦ AKQ64  
 ♣ AJ742

South  
 ♠ K86432  
 ♥ 42  
 ♦ J932  
 ♣ 5

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
Wang	Papa	Li	Justin
McGann	Shi	Hanlon	Ju
	1NT	2NT(1)	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	All Pass

(1) Minors

Papa was right for a 14-16 notrump. Li bid an unusual 2NT (minors) and Justin, for some reason we're probably better off not knowing, passed. (We would not have passed; we'd have either bid 3♠ non-forcing or 3♦ showing spades, unless the latter implied constructive values.) Perhaps it's just serendipity that N/S are cold for 4♠ here but letting the opponents play 5♣ strikes us as losing bridge long-term. Wang loved his big club fit and went directly to the cold 5♣ (with 5♠ being a great save). He did not pass Go. He did not collect \$200. Papa led the ♥K, Justin contributing the (suit-preference?) four, but Papa shifted to a diamond rather than a spade. (If West has the ♠K aren't his losers in that suit likely to go away on dummy's diamonds if the defense does not cash them? Give Wang a small doubleton spade and the ♦J and the unmakeable contract would have come home without a spade shift.) Wang won the ♦A and now simply needed to give up a spade and ruff the second spade and third round of diamonds (high) in hand and claim. Instead, he drew two rounds of trumps, then cashed two more high diamonds pitching his spade. Papa ruffed and now played the ♠A. Wang ruffed, then ruffed a heart

to dummy, but now he had no more trumps and still had to lose a diamond to Justin's jack. He finished an embarrassing one down; -50.

Not to be outdone by the flailing in the Open Room, Shi and McGann combined in much the same way as Papa and Wang. Shi led the ♥K and at trick two shifted to...a low club. McGann won in hand cheaply and just had to give up a spade and proceed as above. Instead, he ruffed a heart, cashed two top diamonds, then led a spade. Shi won and led a second club presenting McGann with several options, all of them losing ones. Had declarer not cashed the top diamonds, he could have used them to go to dummy twice, once to ruff a spade and the second time to ruff a diamond. Then he could have ruffed a heart back, drawn the last trump, and enjoyed the last diamond for his eleventh trick. Minus 50, and a doubly-embarrassing push.

This board was generally misbid and misplayed around the room. While Liu made 5♣x (on a top heart lead followed by the ace and another spade, giving him no losing options), in the other room the Hang Sha Ke Ji pair had an *unopposed* auction to 4♠ and made it. Perhaps East was barred by a bid out of turn.

In the other two matches at least everybody got to clubs. But Yang for Taipei went down in 5♣ and Kovachev-Isporski missed game. Let's move on to something more appetizing.

Bd: 18      North  
 Dir: East    ♠ 753  
 Vul: N/S    ♥ KJ  
                   ♦ AJ62  
                   ♣ Q932

West  
 ♠ Q108  
 ♥ AQ1075  
 ♦ 10974  
 ♣ J

East  
 ♠ K62  
 ♥ 9643  
 ♦ Q3  
 ♣ K875

South  
 ♠ AJ94  
 ♥ 82  
 ♦ K85  
 ♣ A1064

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wang	Papa	Li	Justin
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
McGann	Shi	Hanlon	Ju
		Pass	1♦
1♥	1NT	2♥	Dbf
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
All Pass			

Justin's spade opening on a four-card suit kept Wang out of the auction when E/W were cold for 2♥, and 3♥ would likely have won some imps as a cheap save. Wang led the ♦10, jack, queen, king. Justin led a heart up. Wang rose with the ace and shifted to the ♣J to the queen, king and ace. Justin played the ♠A and a second spade to the ten, and Wang exited with a heart to dummy's king. Justin could have guaranteed his contract now by playing a third round of trumps. Instead he played the ♣9. If West had pitched on this the defense might have prevailed, but Wang ruffed and found himself endplayed. A heart would allow Justin to ruff in dummy while pitching a loser from hand; a diamond would allow him to avoid a loser there. Justin can still come home if Wang pitches by playing a trump. But if he continues clubs, exiting with the fourth round to Li (Wang pitching hearts), a heart lead promotes a third trump trick for the defense and sets the contract. When Wang led the ♦10 Justin was home with eight tricks; +110.

Shi and Ju found their 4-4 club fit. McGann led the ♣J to the queen, king and ace and Ju was faced with the prospect of five losers (two spades and one trick in each of the other suits). He led a low diamond to the jack and queen and Hanlon switched to a low spade, ducked by declarer. As difficult as it was for us to believe (we had to check the result on the deal), the VuGraph record indicates that McGann won with the *queen*(!?) and returned the ♠8 to the king and ace. Next Ju led a club to dummy's nine, confirming the bad news in trumps suggested by the opening lead. He returned to hand with a diamond and played a heart up. If West duck's declarer can win discard dummy's remaining heart on the fourth spade, and come home with an event-record ten tricks on the deal. But McGann rose with the ace and played the ♦10 for Hanlon to ruff. Still, that was nine tricks for Ju; +110 for an inglorious push.

In general E/W could not find a way to go plus here (bar the pair allowed to play 2♥ for +110: Sun and Feng). But nobody managed to score more than 120 or concede 50. Let's move on to something meatier. And indeed, things were about to get rough.

**You're never too old to learn something stupid.**

Bd: 19 North  
 Dir: South ♠ AK964  
 Vul: E/W ♥ 1063

West	East
♠ Q10	♠ J83
♥ A54	♥ QJ9
♦ J964	♦ 10
♣ KJ76	♣ Q109842
South	
♠ 752	
♥ K872	
♦ AKQ2	
♣ 53	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Wang	Papa	Li	Justin
			1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
McGann	Shi	Hanlon	Ju
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣(1)	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠

All Pass  
 (1) Checkback

In the Open Room East led the ♥Q and Papa must have thought his chances boiled down to a doubleton ♥A, diamonds breaking, or hearts being three-three (declarer gets to pitch his losing diamond on the fourth heart) — not a bad proposition. Papa ducked the heart, and East continued with the jack. Papa, always the gentleman, said "Thank you" and covered, won the third heart in hand, drew trumps, and claimed when the trumps behaved; +420.

In the Closed Room Hanlon started with his singleton diamond ("If you don't lead it at trick one, it can't be a singleton"). Declarer won, drew two rounds of trumps, and led a heart. When Hanlon's nine held, he cashed his good trump and continued with the ♥Q. Declarer's chances at this point had boiled down to the ♥A being onside or doubleton offside. He played for the latter, ducked, and when the queen held the trick was down one, -50. Hackett had drawn the first blood of the second half, up 48-35.

Finding a passive defense here is easier said than done. But after the ♥Q holds, there are only a few layouts where a heart continuation is necessary and a lot where it is fatal. Five tables led the ♦10 against a spade contract and four of them held it to nine

tricks. One led a trump and beat it, two tables led the ♠Q and let it make. Bulgaria and Oz Two were the beneficiaries of the generous defenses here.

Bd: 20 North  
 Dlr: West ♠ AJ72  
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ873  
 ♦ 2  
 ♣ J97

West	East
♠ KQ10963	♠ 85
♥ 109	♥ J654
♦ KQ765	♦ AJ943
♣ ---	♣ K6

South

♠ 4
♥ A2
♦ 108
♣ AQ1085432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1♠	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT	3♣
3♦	3♥	4♦	5♣
5♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			

6♣ by N/S boils down to guessing trumps: finesse or play for the drop. Since neither table reached the slam, the issue was whether E/W would go quietly or find the lucrative diamond save. In the Open Room E/W were never in the auction after Wang's opening bid (six-five, come alive), so Papa and Justin rolled into 5♣ and just made it when Li ducked the ♣J smoothly and Papa went for the drop; +600.

In the Closed Room things did not go quite as well for the Chinese N/S. The first thing was Shi's failure to overcall 2♥. The second thing was Ju's arguably conservative jump to 3♣ (don't the eighth trump and outside ace more than compensate for the broken suit?). Shi's 3♥ bid seems okay on the face of it but with a singleton diamond, the ♠A, and three-card club support maybe Shi's passes of 5♦ (both before and after the double) were a bit too conservative, especially in light of Ju's double. In any case, the defense could only come to three tricks (two hearts and a spade) for +200. That was another 9 imps to Hackett, leading now 57-35.

Not surprisingly, results here were all over the place.

Pride of place for N/S goes to Taipei Weide, defending 6♦x for down 800. Meanwhile, Li-Liu made 5♦x on the West cards on a trump lead and less than stellar defense thereafter. Feng Xuefeng also made 5♦, but she wasn't doubled. Nice try. Better luck next time.

Bd: 21 North  
 Dlr: North ♠ KQ654  
 Vul: N/S ♥ 42  
 ♦ AJ94  
 ♣ 82

West	East
♠ AJ93	♠ 1082
♥ K107	♥ QJ983
♦ 32	♦ 1087
♣ AK94	♣ J10

South

♠ 7
♥ A65
♦ KQ65
♣ Q7653

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Dbl	2♠(1)	Pass	3♦

All Pass

(1) Fit-showing

Closed Room

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

We strongly prefer the Hacketts' fit-jump treatment of 2♠ in this sequence, and in this case it blew East out of the auction and got N/S to their optimum spot in the fewest possible bids. With four losers virtually unavoidable (except on the actual E/W defense) South quickly went +110. So, you might ask, if South scored only nine tricks, why was the actual defense deficient? Well, judge for yourself. Wang led the ♣A and Li played the jack, so Wang tried the ♠A. Li played the two, and Wang — for whatever reason — continued the suit. Now declarer was cold for ten tricks. He cashes the ♠KQ, pitching two heart losers, draws trumps ending in dummy, and plays the ♣8 to the ten, queen and king. Now the defense cannot prevent him from ruffing out the ♣9 and claiming.

In the Closed Room Ju received a trump lead. He won in hand and led the ♦7. McGann rose with the ace and played a heart. Ju won the ace and exited

with a club. Hanlon won, cashed the ♠Q, then switched back to clubs. Ju ducked but McGann overtook with the ace to play another trump. Ju won in hand, drew the last trump ending in dummy, and claimed (ruffing the spades good) for +110 and a push. Still 57-35, Hackett.

The two auctions shown above represent almost the high water mark of N/S accomplishments here. Two N/S pairs went down in spades or notrump, while one pair conceded 140 in 2♥. The other three results were 3♦ making, 3♥ down one, and 2NT making 120. We're not sure we want to know how.

Bd: 22                      North  
 Dir: East                ♠ A83  
 Vul: E/W                ♥ A762  
                               ♦ KQ65  
                               ♣ 97

West ♠ 1065 ♥ 854 ♦ J942 ♣ A85	East ♠ 72 ♥ Q1093 ♦ A108 ♣ KJ32
South ♠ KQJ94 ♥ KJ ♦ 73 ♣ Q1064	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
Pass	2♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	2♠
All Pass		Pass	4♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	2NT(1)	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	3♣
All Pass		Pass	4♣

(1) Forcing spade raise

There are days when 4♠ could be a challenge on this deal; this was not one of them. In the Open Room Wang led a heart, relieving declarer of the need to find a place to get rid of one of his club losers. Justin played a diamond to the king and ace and Li reverted to hearts. Justin won, crossed to the ♦Q, and passed the ♣10. Wang won the ace and played a third heart to the ace, Justin throwing a club. After three rounds of trumps, ending in dummy, Justin called for a club and when Li rose with the ace he could claim ten tricks; +420.

In the Closed Room the play went similarly, the only difference being that Ju played the second club from dummy before drawing any trumps. A push at +420. Still 57-35.

One table managed to make a pig's ear of 4♠. Reluctant as we are to intrude on private grief, our journalistic instincts overrule our good manners. Louk Verhees received a trump lead and went after diamonds (finding the ace wrong), then clubs. It comes down to whether you can set up both a heart and a club trick and Louk didn't manage that. 10imps to Taipei Weide had closed the gap to 34imps, but that match still looked comfortable.

Bd: 23                      North  
 Dir: South                ♠ K6  
 Vul: Both                ♥ KQ9652  
                               ♦ Q3  
                               ♣ 863

West ♠ Q42 ♥ 743 ♦ K75 ♣ QJ54	East ♠ J98 ♥ J10 ♦ J9642 ♣ AK7
South ♠ A10753 ♥ A8 ♦ A108 ♣ 1092	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
Pass	3♥(1)	Pass	1♠
All Pass			4♥

(1) 6+ hearts, 9-11 hcp

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	1NT	All Pass	1♠

The Hacketts had just the right machinery to reach 4♥ on this deal, which had play as long as East did not lead an initial diamond or shift to one before he gave up the lead, with no reentry. (Of course West could lead the suit, but then he would need declarer to misguess.) Li cashed the ♣AK and played a third club to Wang, who switched to a trump. Papa drew trumps, tested the spades, and claimed; +620.

A funny thing happened on the way to the forum in the Closed Room. Shi responded to 1♠ with a non-forcing or semi-forcing 1NT and Ju tapped. Hanlon led a diamond, ducked to the king, and McGann returned the suit as Shi won his queen. To add insult

to injury, on the run of the hearts both defenders pitched spades, so Shi took the rest of the tricks for a spectacular, if unrewarding, +240. That was 9 more imps to Hackett, now pitching a 66-35 second-half shutout.

China Women also bid game and were allowed to make it. They had picked up 22 imps in the second half already, narrowing the All Stars' lead to 17 imps. Note that 3NT is really where you want to be here; and Chung-Liu for Taipei Weide managed just that. That was worth 10 imps. The rest of the field played part-scores.

Bd: 24 North  
 Dir: West ♠ 973  
 Vul: None ♥ 10652  
 ♦ KQ  
 ♣ Q1082

West	East
♠ K10862	♠ J4
♥ 987	♥ Q43
♦ J832	♦ A1095
♣ K	♣ A543

South  
 ♠ AQ5  
 ♥ AKJ  
 ♦ 764  
 ♣ J976

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	Dbl
1♠	2♥	Pass	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	All Pass	

The midpoint board of the set was a quiet one. In the Open Room Wang bought the hand at 2♠. Papa led a club to the king and Wang crossed to the ♦A (noting the fall of the queen from Papa), threw a heart on the ♣A, and led a spade. Justin rose with the ace, cashed the ♥K, and played a diamond to Papa's king. Papa returned a heart to the jack and Justin returned the favor, giving Papa a diamond ruff. The defense still had a trump trick to come and Wang finished one down, -50.

In the Closed Room Shi and Ju got to 2NT when 1NT was plenty high. Shi's modest seven-count does not seem nearly enough to disturb partner's 1NT, especially with all of his values in his short suit and

opener's suit. Fortunately for him, the defense was friendly. McGann led a spade to the jack and queen, and Ju set about playing clubs. McGann's king held and he continued with the ♠10 to the ace. Ju played another club to Hanlon's ace and he got out with a low diamond to dummy. Declarer played a club to hand, cashed the ♥A, returned to dummy with the last club and finessed the ♥J for his eighth trick. A smarmy +120 and 2 imps to Beijing, finally on the second-half scoreboard at 66-37.

When Taipei beat 3♣ in one room and 2♠ in the other they had closed the gap to 19 imps with eight boards to go.

Bd: 25 North  
 Dir: North ♠ AJ5  
 Vul: E/W ♥ A3  
 ♦ AKJ8764  
 ♣ 2

West	East
♠ K98	♠ Q107
♥ J64	♥ KQ108752
♦ Q953	♦ ---
♣ 1086	♣ A97

South  
 ♠ 6432  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ 102  
 ♣ KQJ543

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
Pass	1♦	1♥	Dbl
Pass	2♥	Dbl	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	1♣(1)	3♥	Dbl
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

(1) Precision

The Open Room auction smells of rotting fish. Papa's 2♥ cue-bid suggests doubt about the final strain. After all, with solid diamonds and/or a double heart stopper he would likely have bid 3NT directly. Justin's heart shortage and the paucity of entries to his hand should alert him that notrump may not be the place to be on this hand. Sure enough, Li led the ♥K and Papa was in the deep stuff. He won the ace, cashed the ♦A getting the bad news, and decided to punt with his low heart. On the run of the hearts, Wang wisely pitched all of his clubs so at the end Li knew to cash the ♣A and get out with a spade, which went to the king and ace. Papa ended up scoring just

two diamonds and two aces for down five, -250. Pass 3NT indeed!

Not that Shi and Ju did a whole lot better in the Closed Room. We're not sure what Shi thought Ju's double and later 5♣ bid promised, but his 6♦ bid seems overly optimistic. If slam is really in the cards won't Ju know to bid it over 5♦? And what if the right slam is 6♣? As the cards lie, there appear to be at least three losers on best defense (a spade lead) and at least two losers on the normal heart lead. The latter is what Hanlon found at the table. Shi won the ace and accurately tracked his club. Hanlon won and continued hearts. Shi ruffed, cashed the ♣KQ as he pitched his two losing spades, and thought he might be in with a chance. When he led the ♦10 McGann covered, raising his hopes, but when Hanlon showed out those hopes were dashed. Down one, -50, but 5 useful imps to Beijing, trailing now 66-42.

Only Sun and Wang made game on the N/S cards after a strong club and heart overcall when Sun insisted on diamonds and Wang knew better than to overrule her. China Women had 12 imps when 3NT down four was the result from the other room. The margin was down to just 5 imps now for the All Stars.

Bd: 26 North  
 Dir: East ♠ 96  
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ4  
 ♦ Q832  
 ♣ Q753

West East  
 ♠ Q108 ♠ J732  
 ♥ 92 ♥ J753  
 ♦ A94 ♦ K76  
 ♣ AKJ42 ♣ 98

South  
 ♠ AK54  
 ♥ A1086  
 ♦ J105  
 ♣ 106

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		Pass	1♥
		All Pass	

Dbf 2♥

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
		Pass	1♦
		All Pass	

Pass 1NT

Justin was too weak for a 14-16 notrump and opened an antediluvial 1♥, which became the final strain. Wang led the ♣A and quickly switched to a low trump. Justin won the six and exited with the ♦J to

Wang's ace. Wang continued with a second trump to the king and now Justin led a low diamond to Li's king, at which point a third trump would have been prudent. But Li switched to a spade. Justin won the ace and exited with a club to Wang's ace. Wang got out with a diamond. Justin won in hand, cashed the ♠K, ruffed a spade, and tried the ♣Q. Li ruffed giving up his trump trick and Justin had to lose just one more trick; +110.

Against 1NT Hanlon led a heart. Shi tried the ten, which held, and played the ♦J which rode around to the king. When Hanlon tabled the ♣9 Shi should have covered and blocked the suit. He ducked, as did McGann, and won the queen in hand. He next unblocked the ♥KQ, crossed to the ♠A, cashed his last heart, and claimed one more diamond trick when McGann errantly pitched one of his clubs; +120 for a push. Still 66-42.

Taipei Weide made 1NT as E/W and 2♥ as N/S to pick up 5 imps. NEDUK's lead was still in double digits but fingernails were being bitten — and there were still 6 deals to go.

Bd: 27 North  
 Dir: South ♠ Q  
 Vul: None ♥ 92  
 ♦ KJ1063  
 ♣ 87642

West East  
 ♠ J82 ♠ K75  
 ♥ Q6 ♥ AK1074  
 ♦ A87 ♦ 92  
 ♣ AQ953 ♣ KJ10

South  
 ♠ A109643  
 ♥ J853  
 ♦ Q54  
 ♣ ---

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦(♥)	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
			Pass
1♣	1♦	Dbf(1)	1♠
Pass	Pass	2♥	2♠
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

(1) Negative free-bid double (bids are non-forcing)

4♥ looked like a terrific contract...until the mice got at it. Justin led ace and another spade. Papa ruffed and returned a club as Justin ruffed and the defense quickly crossruffed the first five tricks for down two, -100.

The Irish 3NT in the Closed Room had two things going for it: 4♥ goes down on a crossruff, and there were nine top tricks and no suit the opponents could run. (Okay, so maybe that's three things.) Shi led the ♠Q, covered by the king and ace, and Ju switched accurately to the ♦Q. Declarer won, cashed his clubs and top hearts, and settled for ten tricks when the hearts failed to behave; +430, 11 imps to Hackett, ahead 77-42.

Everyone else outside our featured match made game here. There were only overtricks at stake.

Bd: 28            North  
 Dir: West       ♠ J652  
 Vul: N/S        ♥ 108532  
                   ♦ 9754  
                   ♣ ---

West  
 ♠ 3  
 ♥ KJ4  
 ♦ KJ102  
 ♣ A9873

East  
 ♠ AKQ1097  
 ♥ 976  
 ♦ A3  
 ♣ J6

South  
 ♠ 84  
 ♥ AQ  
 ♦ Q86  
 ♣ KQ10542

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♣
Pass	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

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

Against 4♠ Justin led the ♣K. Papa ruffed away dummy's ace and played a heart to the ace. Justin cashed another club, then exited with a diamond to dummy's ten. Li ruffed a spade and when trumps behaved he claimed ten tricks; +420.

Shi heard Ju's lead director and led a heart against 3NT. Ju put in the queen and McGann won the king and played spades from the top, exiting with a spade to Shi (the "safe" hand). Shi, convinced by Ju's play

of the ♥Q at trick one that declarer started with the ♥AKJ, got out with a diamond, ducked to the queen and king. When declarer cashed the spades, Ju pitched the ♥A at his first chance and now McGann had the rest; +490. 2 more imps to Hackett, now 79-42.

You'd expect E/W to make game at every table, but two pairs stopped in partscores. Does that sound unlikely? Well, to be more specific they stopped off to double the N/S pairs who had wandered into the auction in partscores. Hans and Nunn collected only 800 against South's 2♦x (reached after a rescue redouble from 2♣). Note what would have happened if West had led a trump and not an unimaginative singleton in partner's suit. Four rounds of trumps and six rounds of spades squeeze the South hand and the defenders collect 2000. I guess that makes the 1100 actually collected by Gold and Bakhshi against 2♣x rather pale into insignificance. With four boards to go NEDUK had restored their lead to 26 imps and looked safe. Oz Two trailed Hang Sha Ke Ji 53-73, and the All Stars led China Women 63-60.

Bd: 29            North  
 Dir: North      ♠ Q764  
 Vul: Both       ♥ K105  
                   ♦ K84  
                   ♣ Q109

West  
 ♠ A8532  
 ♥ 9  
 ♦ 7532  
 ♣ 863

East  
 ♠ KJ10  
 ♥ QJ862  
 ♦ J  
 ♣ A752

South  
 ♠ 9  
 ♥ A743  
 ♦ AQ1096  
 ♣ KJ4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1♠	Pass	1♥	Pass
Pass	Pass	2♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
Pass	Pass	1♥	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Wang-Li stole the contract in the Open Room when Justin forgot to bid 2♦ (vulnerability is for children) over Li's 2♣ rebid. The defense led trumps, Li winning the third round and passing the ♠J. Papa made a nice play to duck, and the ♠K now revealed the position in that suit. Li overtook his last spade

with dummy's ace and passed the ♡9, which held! That was five tricks in the bank, and the thirteenth trump was the sixth, but th-th-that's all, folks; -200.

Ju in the Closed Room walked like a man and overcalled 2♦, landing his side in the good 3NT contract. Hanlon led the ♠10 to McGann's ace and the spade back was ducked to the jack. Hanlon switched to a low club as Shi won and led back a second club. Hanlon rose with the ace, cashed the ♠K, but declarer had the rest; +600. That was 9 imps to Beijing, to close the gap to 79-51.

One table in each match bid game and picked up a big swing. One of the trailing teams, Taipei Weide, picked up the same 9-imp swing as in our featured match. Hang Sha Ke Ji and the All Stars gained 11 and 10 imps, respectively, for bidding game and conceding a partscore.

Down 13, the China Women needed to hit back fast; they did not delay.

Bd: 30 North  
 Dlr: East ♠ 8  
 Vul: None ♡ J109  
 ♦ KJ1064  
 ♣ Q643

West East  
 ♠ Q10542 ♠ KJ6  
 ♡ 875 ♡ AKQ62  
 ♦ Q97 ♦ A53  
 ♣ 85 ♣ 72

South  
 ♠ A973  
 ♡ 43  
 ♦ 82  
 ♣ AKJ109

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		1♣(1)	Pass
1♦(2)	Pass	1♡	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	All Pass

- (1) Precision
- (2) Negative

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
		1♣(1)	Pass
1♦(2)	Pass	1NT(3)	Dbl
Pass	Pass	2♡	Pass
Pass	2NT	All Pass	

- (1) Weak or STR BAL, 15+ with clubs or any STR
- (2) Negative
- (3) 18-19 BAL

Papa did not put his best foot forward, so to speak (assuming he has a good foot to put forward), when he chose the ♦J for his opening lead. Wang ducked it to his queen and played on trumps, Justin ducking the first two rounds, then winning the third round and exiting with a diamond to the ace. Wang tried the top hearts but Justin ruffed the third and the defense still had a diamond and two clubs to come ; +110.

Against Shi's 2NT Hanlon cashed his five hearts and switched to a low spade when his partner pitched an encouraging one on a heart. Declarer won the ace and cashed out for down two, -100, and no swing. Still 79-51 Hackett.

In All Stars-China Women a strong notrump auction for the Bulgarians saw them collect 140 in 2♠. But the China Women played 4♡, a contract that could be defeated in more ways than you could shake a stick at. However, three rounds of clubs was not the best way to start, and when the ♠A was taken prematurely +420 meant 7 imps for the ladies, and the margin was down to 6 imps.

Bd: 31 North  
 Dlr: South ♠ QJ965  
 Vul: N/S ♡ AK65  
 ♦ 107  
 ♣ J7

West East  
 ♠ 32 ♠ A10874  
 ♡ QJ943 ♡ 8  
 ♦ QJ ♦ AK853  
 ♣ AQ52 ♣ K6

South  
 ♠ K  
 ♡ 1072  
 ♦ 9642  
 ♣ 109843

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Wang</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Justin</i>
			Pass
1♡	1♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>Shi</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ju</i>
			Pass
1♡	1♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Rdbl
Pass	1NT	Dbl	2♣
Dbl	All Pass		

A trouble hand for N/S. Papa made a normal overcall and found himself whacked — at the one level no less. Li led the ♦A (queen from Wang) followed by a



low diamond to the jack. Wang switched to the ♠Q to the ace and Papa played a spade to Li's ace. A low diamond was ruffed and overruffed and the ♠Q now revealed the expected bad trump break. Papa exited with the ♣J to Li's king and in good time the defense collected four more tricks. Papa scored four trumps and one heart for two down –500.

The auction was more exciting in the Closed Room, N/S finally settling a level higher in 2♣x. McGann led a low trump to the king and Hanlon shifted to his heart. Ju won in dummy and snuck a trick with the ♠K (costing the defense at least two tricks; double-dummy declarer can be held to just three tricks). He got out with a second trump to the queen and when McGann led a second heart declarer was able to win the king in dummy, ruff out the ♠A, and exit with a trump. McGann now cashed a heart, then led the ♦Q followed by the ♦J to Hanlon's ace. Whatever Hanlon led now would promote another trump trick for McGann. Down three, –800, sent another 7 imps to Hackett, ahead now 86-51.

Both Taipei Weide and the China Women went head-hunting while conceding the non-vulnerable game at the other table. Taipei defended 1NT and collected 800, reducing the match margin to 10 imps. China Women defended 1♠x on a heart lead, which looks better than the diamond lead. The defenders ruffed out the other heart honor, cashed the ♠A, then put West back in to take the other two heart tricks. That meant two tricks in each of the plain suits, a ruff, the ♠A and still one more trump trick. Down 800 and 9 imps.

With one deal to go, China Women had come back from 39 down to lead by three imps. Could they hold on?

Let's turn to the final instalment.

Bd: 32            North  
 Dlr: West       ♠ ---  
 Vul: E/W       ♡ 643  
                    ♦ AKQ63  
                    ♣ 108542

West	East
♠ AQ986	♠ J107432
♡ Q2	♡ A8
♦ 10752	♦ 84
♣ 97	♣ A63

South  
 ♠ K5  
 ♡ KJ10975  
 ♦ J9  
 ♣ KQJ

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
Wang	Papa	Li	Justin
Pass	Pass	2♦(1)	2♡
Pass	4♡	All Pass	

(1) Multi  
 Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
McGann	Shi	Hanlon	Ju
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♡
Pass	2♣(1)	Pass	4♡

All Pass  
 (1) Drury

They say that good bridge is its own reward. Wang led the ♠A against 4♡ and Justin ruffed in dummy, then tabled the ♡K — which held! — followed by the ♡J, which brought rain in the form of the ace and queen. The defense did get their ♣A but Justin was in the clubhouse with +450.

McGann led a low diamond to declarer's jack. Ju continued diamonds, Hanlon ruffing the third and Ju overruffing. Ju ruffed a spade and tried another diamond. Hanlon ruffed with the ace as Ju pitched his last spade. The defense still had the ♡Q and ♣A to come, and Ju finished +420 to send one final victory imp to Hackett, who won going away 87-51.

In Taipei Weide-NEDUK, Chung-Liu played 4♡ for 420 while Huang-Yang sacrificed in 4♠. Nobody doubled and the contract went down one. The 8 imps meant that Taipei had come desperately close but NEDUK still had two of their half-time lead of 37 imps left.

Meanwhile, in China Women-All Stars Iliev-Hristov played 4♡ for 420, the best they could reasonably do. In the other room North opened 2NT to show a weak hand with the minors and South picked 3♣, as who would not? That ended the auction and collected 150, swinging 7 imps back in the other direction and leaving the All Stars breathless, but in the finals by 4 imps.



Preparing for lift-off

# NEC Semi-finals (1<sup>st</sup> half): NEDUK vs Hackett

by Barry Rigal

Bd: 1  
Dlr: North  
Vul: None

North  
♠ A5432  
♥ 62  
♦ KJ976  
♣ 4

West  
♠ J86  
♥ A8754  
♦ 102  
♣ K72

East  
♠ KQ1097  
♥ KQ9  
♦ 5  
♣ J1093

South  
♠ ---  
♥ J103  
♦ AQ843  
♣ AQ865

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
McGann	v Prooijen	Hanlon	Verhees
Pass	5♦	1♠	2NT
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Bakhshi	Papa	Gold	Justin
3♠	Pass	1♠	2NT
	5♦	All Pass	

At both tables South sensibly ignored his three-card heart suit, knowing a spade raise was likely to come on his left and that his best chance to get his hand off his chest facing a passed partner was to bid the Unusual Notrump. Both Norths bounced to 5♦, hoping for more action. (Van Prooijen in particular, not knowing for sure of the spade void opposite, may have been a little worried about missing slam.) There was no further bidding. 11 tricks were very straightforward, and both teams were off to a comfortable start.

Off to an even more comfortable start were the All Stars. When Isporski-Kovachev bid to 5♦ on the same sequence as in the Closed Room above, West thought he had two tricks and doubled. Declarer ruffed out the clubs and collected 650 and 6 imps.



Bd: 2  
Dlr: East  
Vul: N/S

North  
♠ K104  
♥ J864  
♦ Q3  
♣ K1098

West  
♠ J97  
♥ KQ105  
♦ 94  
♣ A432

East  
♠ Q865  
♥ A2  
♦ AKJ1085  
♣ 6

South  
♠ A32  
♥ 973  
♦ 762  
♣ QJ75

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
McGann	v Prooijen	Hanlon	Verhees
Bakhshi	Papa	Gold	Justin
1♥	Pass	1♦	Pass
1NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Both Wests delayed bidding 3NT for one round, perhaps in case there was a 6-5 pattern opposite or maybe extreme shape that would jeopardize 3NT. Both Easts settled for the prosaic game, and on a club lead needed the diamond finesse. Of course the odds play in the suit is to finesse twice (playing a top honor picks up the singleton offside but loses out to queen-fourth onside). Both declarers duly ran diamonds, van Prooijen discarding a heart early on, while Paul Hackett did not. 1-0 to Hackett.

Both E/W pairs in our second match missed game here, Hristov playing in 1♠ when Iliev passed at his second turn, while Wang played 3♦ when Peng passed at his third turn; an opportunity missed for both sides. Still 6-0 for All Stars.

Bd: 3  
Dlr: South  
Vul: E/W

North  
♠ KQ9  
♥ 1074  
♦ 654  
♣ K1094

West  
♠ A532  
♥ KQ832  
♦ K107  
♣ 3

East  
♠ J64  
♥ 95  
♦ Q32  
♣ AQ865

South  
♠ 1087  
♥ AJ6  
♦ AJ98  
♣ J72

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
			All Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1♥	Dbl	Pass	1NT
			1♦

All Pass

While it is generally accepted that it is unwise for a team to try to play the same contract in both rooms, an exception can be made for the contract of 1NT. Here, when Justin played 1NT, the defenders let declarer score two heart tricks early, and though they took two clubs, one spade and one diamond, that was still six tricks, not such a bad result. In the Closed Room the defenders led a spade to the queen and shifted to the ♣10. After much thought Hanlon put in the ♣Q, led a heart to the king, and ducked a heart. Since North appeared to have the top spades and the ♣K, presumably South would have the ♦A. Maybe ducking a spade after scoring the first heart winner in dummy might have been a better idea.

The defenders cashed a second spade, but declarer ducked a club and all that N/S could take were their two red aces now. +90 meant an imp for Hackett, leading 2-0; at this rate it would be all over soon.

Bd: 4	North
Dlr: West	♠ AJ86
Vul: Both	♥ 987
	♦ KQJ
	♣ J73

<b>West</b>	<b>East</b>
♠ Q	♠ K107543
♥ AKQJ1042	♥ 63
♦ 982	♦ A6
♣ K8	♣ Q106

<b>South</b>
♠ 92
♥ 5
♦ 107543
♣ A9542

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
4♣(1)	Pass	4♥	All Pass
(1)♥			

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
3NT(1)	Pass	4♣(2)	Pass
4♦	Dbl	4♥	5♦
Dbl	All Pass		

(1) Solid major

(2) Bid the suit below your major

An accident happened to the Hacketts when a lead-directing double (which you can understand with the North cards, can't you?) was interpreted as showing diamonds by Justin (which you can also understand, can't you?). Against 5♦ the defenders led two rounds of hearts. Declarer ruffed and played the ace and another club, Bakhshi winning to play the ♠Q. From here on West's trump length was worth an extra trick after Gold played the king and another spade. That was 1100 (or sticks and wheels to quote Joey Silver). Sticks and stones may break my bones, sticks and wheels breaks one's concentration a little. Lucky it wasn't on Vugraph.

South African Texas in the other room prevented North from getting involved. 4♥ duly made 620, ironically on a diamond lead, but NEDUK had the first real swing of the match and led 10-2.

In our other match, Iliev opened 1♥, Li doubled, and over Hristov's 1♠ response Iliev jumped to 3NT. The fate of that contract was in the balance, but when Liu sacrificed in 4♣ he had turned a possible swing into -800. All Stars led 11-0.

Bd: 5	North
Dlr: North	♠ J10753
Vul: N/S	♥ 862
	♦ 1096
	♣ Q4

<b>West</b>	<b>East</b>
♠ K942	♠ 6
♥ AQ954	♥ KJ7
♦ ---	♦ AJ873
♣ AK108	♣ 9732

<b>South</b>
♠ AQ8
♥ 103
♦ KQ542
♣ J65

Open Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
1♥	Pass	2♦	1♦
4♦	Pass	4♥	Dbl
			All Pass

Closed Room

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
1♥	Pass	2♦	1♦
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
			All Pass

I'm not sure anyone can get too worked up about whether the East hand should make a simple raise or a cue-bid raise. Much may depend on whether South has shown real diamonds. Partner rates to have

some spades, so maybe a simple raise is closer to the truth in the Closed Room. Note Verhees' double of 2♦; he had not really shown the suit yet. Neither West got carried away. Bakhshi made one try, McGann not even one.

At both tables in our other match West doubled 1♦ and started planning the rest of the auction — but then had to find an opening lead instead. The defenses collected 500, holding declarer to one club, one spade and three trump tricks. No swing.

Bd: 6  
 Dir: East  
 Vul: E/W

North  
 ♠ 96  
 ♥ 92  
 ♦ AJ10874  
 ♣ 864

West  
 ♠ 854  
 ♥ Q754  
 ♦ KQ53  
 ♣ QJ

East  
 ♠ AK3  
 ♥ A108  
 ♦ 62  
 ♣ AK973

South  
 ♠ QJ1072  
 ♥ KJ63  
 ♦ 9  
 ♣ 1052

Open Room

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

(1) Weak BAL, or STR

Closed Room

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

(1) 19-20

(2) No major

Both tables reached the normal game on a top spade lead. The normal sequence of plays might be to duck a spade and play on diamonds, as did Gold. That leads to only nine tricks since you can't get a second heart trick for fear of North cashing the diamonds. But when van Prooijen won his ♦A he followed his partner's signal on the second spade and led a heart. That meant an overtrick imp for Hackett, down 10-3 now.

The same 1 imp gave the All Stars a 12-0 lead.

Bd: 7  
 Dir: South  
 Vul: Both

North  
 ♠ 953  
 ♥ Q742  
 ♦ AK8  
 ♣ A65

West  
 ♠ K862  
 ♥ AK10  
 ♦ 742  
 ♣ K93

East  
 ♠ QJ10  
 ♥ 3  
 ♦ J10953  
 ♣ J1082

South  
 ♠ A74  
 ♥ J9865  
 ♦ Q6  
 ♣ Q74

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	All Pass

Closed Room

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

Bakhshi and Gold had a normal auction. McGann, at his second turn, showed 11-13 with four spades or a strong hand with spades, and edged into an ugly 4-3 fit. He received a top diamond lead and trump shift, and rejected the line of ruffing a heart in dummy. Instead, he led a club to the king and ace. Now the defenders unblocked diamonds and drew trumps, but that left them only one more winner, the ♣Q. No swing, and still 10-3.

Hang Sha Ke Ji bought the hand in both rooms, doubling a 1♦ opening by West to play 2♥ from the South seat for 110; opening 1NT in the other room to play there, and not enjoying the experience. The defense led hearts, won the ♠A to clear the heart suit, and declarer subsequently misguessed clubs to go down 300. 5 moreimps to All Stars, leading 17-0.

Bd: 8  
 Dir: West  
 Vul: None

North  
 ♠ AQ5  
 ♥ Q842  
 ♦ Q10952  
 ♣ J

West  
 ♠ K87642  
 ♥ A103  
 ♦ K86  
 ♣ 10

East  
 ♠ 10  
 ♥ J965  
 ♦ AJ4  
 ♣ AK432

South  
 ♠ J93  
 ♥ K7  
 ♦ 73  
 ♣ Q98765

Open Room

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

Closed Room

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

(1) Polish; hearts and a minor

2♠ was an easy make with spades 3-3. The defenders could not maneuver a club ruff, so scored three trumps and a heart.

Against 3NT Verhees led a diamond, the minor he knew partner had. Hanlon won in hand, led a spade to the king and ace, won the club return and led a heart to the ten and ace. When a low heart was returned he inserted the nine, then finessed on the third round, but still had only eight tricks. That meant down one and 5 imps for NEDUK, leading 15-3.

Both tables played 3NT in our other match. Kovachev as South (if the record is to be believed) led the ♠J, the suit West had bid just the three times, and set 3NT 100, while the club lead found in the other room only beat 3NT one trick. 19-0 to All Stars.

Bd: 9	North
Dlr: North	♠ 863
Vul: E/W	♥ J874
	♦ J73
	♣ KQ6

West
♠ K
♥ 10532
♦ AQ865
♣ 873

East
♠ Q9
♥ AKQ96
♦ K4
♣ J1095

South
♠ AJ107542
♥ ---
♦ 1092
♣ A42

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	Pass	1♥	4♠
Dbl	All Pass		

Closed Room

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

Bakhshi's 2NT limit raise tempted Gold to try game,

and Justin to save. Unless you plan to cash out the clubs on the go perhaps you should be saving here; It's a cheap investment at -100.

Verhees settled for simplicity, as I confess I would have, by jumping to 4♠ at once. He bought it undoubled and escaped for the same one down but a 2 imp gain. 17-3 now for NEDUK.

The same 2 imp pick-up for Hang Sha Ke Ji got them on the board, down 19-2.

Bd: 10	North
Dlr: East	♠ KQ54
Vul: Both	♥ J3
	♦ AJ82
	♣ 543

West
♠ A10
♥ K96542
♦ 3
♣ AQJ9

East
♠ 987
♥ A10
♦ KQ965
♣ 1072

South
♠ J632
♥ Q87
♦ 1074
♣ K86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♥	Dbl	Rdbl	1♠
Pass	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

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

Bakhshi's 2♥ rebid may have been influenced by partner's passed hand status or Gazilli issues on a 2♣ rebid. Had he bid 2♣ and received preference to 2♥ I suppose he might have considered further action? 2♥ played quietly for 170 when hearts split and the club finesse worked.

In the other room the auction took on an entirely different perspective, and when East showed values, West was always going to play game. The defenders led a top spade, then took the ♦A and cashed a spade. McGann eventually had no choice but to take the club finesse and doubtless did not fancy his chances, but when it held that was the first major swing for his side. 17-13 now to NEDUK.

In our other match Isporski doubled 1♥ as North. Wang bid 2♣ to show diamonds en route to 2♥ and passed Peng's 2♥ correction. By contrast, Iliev as West in the other room opened 1♥, heard a 1NT response, and jumped to 4♥. Hard as it is to argue with a decision that gains 10 imps I can't refrain from comment. *Bozhe moi!* There, I've said it. I thought about "Bulgar me" but the Senior Editor censored it. 29-2 now for the All Stars.

Bd: 11            North  
 Dir: South      ♠ 109  
 Vul: None       ♥ Q7  
                    ♦ A542  
                    ♣ AQ1054

West ♠ KJ85 ♥ 4 ♦ 1087 ♣ J9632	East ♠ 7 ♥ A1086532 ♦ KJ9 ♣ K7
--	--

South  
 ♠ AQ6432  
 ♥ KJ9  
 ♦ Q63  
 ♣ 8

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
Pass	2♦(1)	3♥	1♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	3♠
Dbf	All Pass		Pass

(1) Invitational somewhere

Closed Room

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

(1) GF or a spade invitation

Well judged by both Hacketts here. With 4♠ down in top tricks (though 3NT might come home) the defenders' target was to collect 300, though 500 would have been even nicer. Two rounds of clubs, (North signaling neutrally) then the ♠A, ♦A, a club ruffed and over-ruffed, left South on lead. He advanced the ♥K. Gold ducked, endplaying South to lead diamonds or spades for the discard. Minus 100 was an eye-of-the-storm result. What happened in the other room would lead to the swing, if any.

Verhees' opening bid could have been canapé so he felt compelled to act at his second turn (note Justin's passivity, by contrast). McGann felt he could afford to up the stakes, and on a heart lead and continuation he had the satisfaction of having the

setting tricks in the bag. He shifted to a diamond, obeying his partner's suit-preference signal, and that was 300 for the Irish. We had a new leader, 22-17 for Hackett.

Both tables played 4♠ down 100 in our other match. Maybe Iliev was worn out after his previous endeavors or he would surely have doubled on the labored auction his opponents took (1♠-1NT-(2♥)-2♠-3♠-4♠).

Bd: 12            North  
 Dir: West       ♠ AK9532  
 Vul: N/S        ♥ 9  
                    ♦ 1086  
                    ♣ J76

West ♠ --- ♥ AQ543 ♦ AJ95 ♣ Q982	East ♠ QJ10764 ♥ K10 ♦ 4 ♣ A1053
--	--

South  
 ♠ 8  
 ♥ J8762  
 ♦ KQ732  
 ♣ K4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
1♥	2♠	Pass	Pass
Dbf	All Pass		

Closed Room

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

Valentine's Day in Japan consists of women giving presents to men, who return the favor on White Day a month later. Here both Easts may have felt that the Norths had got in on the present giving a little early but they weren't going to refuse the gift just for that reason.

David Gold's table was two boards ahead; hence we cover the table actions in chronological sequence. Gold led a top heart and shifted to a club. Bakhshi won and played a top heart, ruffed low, and then won the ♦A to return a club (at this point either a heart or diamond would have generated the extra trick). Gold took the ace and led the ♠Q to declarer's king.

This was the ending with declarer having lost four tricks:

♠ K953	
♥ ---	
♦ 106	
♣ ---	
West	East
♠ ---	♠ J10764
♥ Q5	♥ ---
♦ J95	♦ ---
♣ 9	♣ 10
South	
♠ ---	
♥ J87	
♦ K73	
♣ --	

Paul Hackett led a low diamond from his hand. Gold ruffed and led the ♠J, ducked. Then he played a club and declarer ruffed to lead a diamond. Gold could ruff but was then trump endplayed and could only collect 500.

In the other room Hanlon led a top heart and shifted to the ♠Q, which facilitated the defense. East ruffed the second and third diamonds low and still had club exits. E/W collected two clubs, one trick in each red suit and four trumps for 800 and 7 imps. Hackett led 29-17 now.

In our other match Isporski as North overcalled 1♠ and passed his partner's 1NT bid, foreseeing the penalty double that was to come. More, he sat for 1NT when it was doubled, not that it did his side any good. While there are chances for -500, the defenders collected 800, which was 12 imps when liev, as West, let his opponents off the hook by bidding a second suit in front of partner. What goes around, comes around, I suppose. It was 29-14 now.

Bd: 13	North
Dir: North	♠ K74
Vul: Both	♥ KJ10973
	♦ AJ108
	♣ ---
West	East
♠ QJ932	♠ A65
♥ 86	♥ A5
♦ Q6	♦ 9742
♣ 9542	♣ A1063
South	
♠ 108	
♥ Q42	
♦ K53	
♣ KQJ87	

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
	2♦(♦+♥)	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦(1)	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) 6+♥			

Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
	1♥	Pass	2♣(GF/♥ INV)
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Both tables played 4♥ here, and you could argue that Hackett was unlucky when by right-siding the game to protect the ♠K he gained just an overtrick rather than the 12 imps that might have materialized if North had been 2-1 in the black suits. As it was, McGann led the ♠Q and Verhees had to ruff the third spade and lead a diamond to the queen to make his game, which he did. Well done, but still 30-17 for Hackett.

The same overtrick imp to China for finding the ♦Q narrowed the gap to 14 imps.

Bd: 14	North
Dir: East	♠ J5
Vul: None	♥ 65
	♦ 86
	♣ KQJ9752
West	East
♠ A1087	♠ KQ962
♥ 10874	♥ Q932
♦ QJ54	♦ K72
♣ 6	♣ A
South	
♠ 43	
♥ AKJ	
♦ A1093	
♣ 10843	

Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
		1♠	Pass
3♦(1)	Pass	4♠	All Pass
(1) Mixed Raise in ♠			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
		1♠	Dbl
3♠	4♣	All Pass	

In the Closed Room 4♣ made +130 painlessly. I'm not sure if Bakhshi had a mixed raise available and chose to downgrade his hand or if the jump was actually better than a preemptive raise. East's pass suggests West had somewhat understated his hand — not that you'd want to be in game here of course. Verhees led out a top heart, North following with the six (which seems strange if playing reverse attitude and count) and East with the nine. Verhees shifted to the ♦10 (playing partner for the ♦Kx, perhaps) and

declarer won in hand, drew trumps, stripped off the clubs as North gave upside-down count with the ♣9, and exited with a second diamond. At this point South needed to cash hearts if his partner was 2-3-3-5 with the ♥Q and ♦862, but then surely North would have played an upside-down ♦8 at the first turn. Verhees did try to cash two hearts now, trying to save the overtrick, so the contract came home. If he "knew" his partner had three hearts, I suppose the play could not cost. But as it was, 11 imps to Hackett made the score 41-17.

4♠ was quietly down one at both tables in our other match.

Bd: 15 North  
 Dir: South ♠ 7  
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q4  
 ♦ J97532  
 ♣ 9753

West  
 ♠ Q942  
 ♥ K109765  
 ♦ A106  
 ♣ ---

East  
 ♠ KJ8  
 ♥ AJ3  
 ♦ 84  
 ♣ J10642

South  
 ♠ A10653  
 ♥ 82  
 ♦ KQ  
 ♣ AKQ8

Open Room

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

(1) Majors or minors

Closed Room

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

The strong club as preempt strikes again! 3♣ eventually lost five tricks, three in the red-suits and two trumps, but the 4♥ contract by E/W could not be prevented from taking 10 tricks and in fact ended up with 11 when, after the spade ruff, declarer could draw one trump, discard dummy's diamond on the spades, and ruff two diamonds in dummy. Nicely played. 8 imps back to NEDUK, down 41-25.

In our second match both tables played 4♥ and the All Stars collected an imp for the overtrick.

Bd: 16 North  
 Dir: West ♠ 9853  
 Vul: E/W ♥ 92  
 ♦ Q  
 ♣ AQ9432

West  
 ♠ K  
 ♥ AKQJ864  
 ♦ J973  
 ♣ J

East  
 ♠ AQ10742  
 ♥ 5  
 ♦ K642  
 ♣ K10

South  
 ♠ J6  
 ♥ 1073  
 ♦ A1085  
 ♣ 8765

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>McGann</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Verhees</i>
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Papa</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Justin</i>
3NT(1)	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Again the 3NT opening worked well; here it was just an overtrick by avoiding putting the singleton diamond on lead. An imp to NEDUK left them down 26-41 after what felt like a generally well-played set.

While the Chinese reached 4♥ in one bid, Iliev, who had been ast the center of almost all the action this set, opened 1♥. He heard 3♣-3♠-5♣ to him and quite reasonably bid 5♥, turning +800 into -100 (a curious symmetry with the result on Board 4). The defenders took their ruff and Hang Sha Ke Ji had closed the gap to 30-27 at set-end.

Due to technical difficulties we experienced with one of our computers, and the lateness of the hour as we write this, our report on the second half of the NEC semi-finals will be postponed until tomorrow's bulletin. Stay tuned: same bat-time, same bat-channel.



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

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
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: new time

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

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

Final: four 16-board segments

### NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 16<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

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

Follow our featured matches on Vugraph each day at: [www.bridgebase.com](http://www.bridgebase.com)

