



NEC Bridge Festival

Saturday, February 11, 2012
Bulletin Number 5

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

It's Down Under vs Bulgarian All Stars in the NEC Cup Final

The third seed Bulgarian All Stars (Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Hristo Hristov) will face the sixth seed, Down Under (Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Martin Reid, Peter Newell), in today's NEC Cup final. The All Stars had to stage a comeback in their semi-final match and did so in style, outscoring defending champion NEDUK 41-22 in the second half to reach the final. Down Under, on the other hand, assumed a comfortable halftime lead of 55-22 and emerged the victor over a hard-fighting Japanese ONI-TAKA team. Japan narrowly won the second half but never really seemed to threaten the Aussies. For those interested in such things, the bulletin staff have made Down Under today's clear favorite, but our predictions should definitely be taken with a pinch of salt — or wasabe. After all, we predicted that Canada would be the 51st US state by now. Don't say you haven't been warned.

Quarter-final Results

Team	Carry	1-16	17-32	Final
China Geely Auto	.5	29	25	54
Down Under		39	42	81
ONI-TAKA	.5	42	32	74
China Women 2		31	30	61
Bulgarian All Stars	.5	26	42	68
Oz Players		34	18	52
NEDUK	.5	14	60	74
Stamatov		17	28	45

Semi-final Results

Team	Carry	1-16	17-32	Final
ONI-TAKA	.5	22	27	49
Down Under		55	24	79
Bulgarian All Stars	.5	33	41	74
NEDUK		40	22	62

**Yokohama IMP Pair, Beginner and Debutante Cups results on page 4
NEC Qualifying datum rankings are on pages 5-7**

NEC Cup 2012: 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: Bridgmate scoring terminals will be used. Match results should be verified against the official result sheet (posted at the end of each match); score corrections and notifications of appeals will be permitted up until the start of the next session.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Convention Regulations for Side (Pair) Games

(An explanation for foreign players)

Unlike the NEC Cup, which is an international event, and the Yokohama Swiss Teams, in which all non-brown-sticker conventions are permitted, the Yokohama IMP Pairs and Asuka Cup are rated as Japanese regional or national events, for which JCBL regulations for domestic events apply strictly. We ask for your compliance with the regulations explained below. If you have any questions about what is allowed, please ask the JCBL staff. Please note that use of unauthorized conventions may be penalized. We thank you for your cooperation.

All side games at the NEC Bridge Festival (the Yokohama IMP Pairs and Asuka Cup) are restricted to "List C" conventions as described below. The use of the Multi-2♦ is strictly prohibited and will be subject to penalty.

LIST C (Yokohama IMP Pairs/Asuka Cup)

Opening Bids

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

Responses and Rebids

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

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

Competitive Bids

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

Carding

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

LIST D (NEC Cup/Yokohama Swiss Teams)

Category 3 of WBF Systems Policy applies

Yokohama IMP Pairs — 40 pairs

Rank	Names		Score
1	Gu Ling	Lu Yan	1543
2	Shugo Tanaka	Hiroki Yokoi	1456
3	Herstein Liu	Patrick Huang	1158
4	Tadashi Imakura	Shunsuke Morimura	977
5	Kenji Miyakuni	Yukiko Tokunaga	678
6	Hwang Iyn Ryung	Sung Kyung Hae	671
7	Yasuko Kosaka	Mark LaForge	670
8	Ilsu Chung	Taeho Cho	502
9	JuiYiu Shih	ChiMon Lin	501
10	Mitsue Tajima	Takahiro Kamiyo	499
11	Chen Dawei	Kazuo Furuta	424
12	Kunio Ueda	Ying Xiaoying	398
13	Kyoko Ohno	Akihiko Yamada	363
14	Yoko Maruyama	Keisuke Akama	350



Lu Yan — Gu Ling

Beginners Cup (under 20 MP) — 24 pairs

Rank	Names		Score
1	Masakatsu Yamazaki	Ayako Yonezawa	120.50
2	Hiroko Onishi	Mari Nakayama	113.00
3	Miho Fujii	Noriko Ikeda	104.50
4	Yuji Kodama	Kenji Otani	101.00
5	Ayako Tanaka	Tazuko Suzuki	99.50
6	Satoshi Tagashira	Michiko Yamaguchi	98.50
7	Momoyo Yoshida	Kazuko Hirata	98.00
8-10	Kazuo Genchi	Yuso Hirashita	94.50
8-10	Mieko Miyoshi	Yumi Yamane	94.50
8-10	Keizo Kamosida	Chikara Ozawa	94.50



Beginners Cup (20)

Beginners Cup (under 5 MP) — 21 pairs

Rank	Names		Score
1	Yuriko Yamamoto	Rika Nagai	99.00
2	Chiemi Umeyama	Miwako Uenishi	92.81
3	Giichi Iida	Hiroshi Kitamura	91.50
4	Kiyomi Okukawa	Kazuko Mishima	83.81
5	Taeko Shibata	Tomiko Sugawara	83.25
6	Fusako Sugiyama	Masako Tobita	82.00
7	Hiroshi Inoue	Yoko Ito	78.19
8	Kimiko Teshima	Ei Sasaki	77.06



Beginners Cup (5)

Debutante Cup — 12 pairs

Rank	Names		Score
1	Mitsuharu Yoshida	Hisaya Hattori	67.00
2	Misako Okada	Kyoko Honda	53.50
3	Kunihiko Ono	Yositada Fujinami	53.00
4	Kimio Nagasaki	Kazuya Fujimoto	52.00
5	Kiyoshi Hasebe	Kazuko Ozawa	50.50



Debutante Cup

17th NEC CUP Qualifying Datum Rankings (4 matches or more)

Rank	IMPs	Member1	Member2	Team	Rds
1	1.61	Katsumi Takahashi	Masaru Yoshida	PYON	6
2	1.47	Yang Lixin	Dai Jianming	China Geely Auto	5
3-4	1.13	Takahiko Hirata	Kazuhiko Yamada	ONI-TAKA	4
3-4	1.13	Yayoi Sakamoto	Sachiko Yamamura	ashley6	4
5	1.11	Gui Shengyue	Dai Jianming	China Geely Auto	6
6	1.05	Shugo Tanaka	Yumiko Mizuta	YOKOI	4
7	0.88	Hideo Togawa	Hisami Kataoka	NANIWADA	4
8	0.86	Masayuki Ino	Masaaki Takayama	ONI-TAKA	6
9-10	0.82	Wang Wenfei	Wang Liping	China Women 2	11
9-10	0.82	Kazuo Furuta	Chen Dawei	TAJIMA	7
11	0.81	Valio Kovachev	Vladi Isporski	Bulgarian All Stars	12
12	0.80	Julian Stefanov	Vladimir Mihov	Stamatov	12
13	0.74	Shunsuke Morimura	Tadashi Imakura	Jiuzhaigou	12
14	0.67	Bill Jacobs	Ben Thompson	Oz Players	12
15	0.65	Zhang Banxiang	Zhuang Zejun	China Geely Auto	8
16-18	0.64	Ju Chuancheng	Shi Zhengjun	Beijing Trinergy	11
16-18	0.64	Yoko Nenohi	Yoshiko Sakaguchi	Pretty Cats	4
16-18	0.64	Chisato Kiriya	Yoko Shimominami	Iza Yokohama III	8
19	0.61	Kazuhiko Yamada	Takeshi Niekawa	ONI-TAKA	6
20-21	0.60	Louk Verhees	Ricco van Prooijen	NEDUK	12
20-21	0.60	Herstein Liu	Patrick Huang	Yeh Bros	12
22	0.57	Haruko Koshi	Misuzu Ichihashi	ESPERANZA	4
23	0.54	Hideki Takano	Minoru Mizuta	YOKOI	6
24-25	0.52	Hiroki Yokoi	Shugo Tanaka	YOKOI	6
24-25	0.52	Robert Geller	Setsuko Ogihara	Abe Chan	8
26	0.50	Kuniko Saito	Kei Nemoto	Blue Hawaii	8
27	0.48	Hideyuki Sango	Nobuko Matsubara	ESPERANZA	8
28-29	0.46	Setsuko Ogihara	Nobuko Tanai	Abe Chan	4
28-29	0.46	Shintaro Sentsui	Hiroko Sentsui	Strawberry Fields	12
30-31	0.43	Yukiko Tokunaga	Kenji Miyakuni	TANAKA	12
30-31	0.43	Masakatsu Sugino	Sumiko Sugino	Oriental Angels	4
32-33	0.37	Zhang Shudi	Fu Zhong	Fairy Tale	12
32-33	0.37	Tadashi Jomura	Hiroaki Iwata	Papa & Rabbits	8
34	0.35	Lusje Olha Bojoh	Julita Grace Tueje	Syabas Indo Ladies	12
35-36	0.33	Mitsue Tajima	Chen Dawei	TAJIMA	5
35-36	0.33	Yoko Komuro	Shimako Yaji	LAS FLORES	8
37	0.32	Ryoga Tanaka	Sakiko Naito	TANAKA	12
38	0.31	Ron Klinger	Matt Mullamphy	Oz Players	12
39	0.29	Martin Reid	Peter Newell	Down Under	12
40	0.28	Gu Ling	Lu Yan	China Women 1	12
41-43	0.27	David Bakhshi	David Gold	NEDUK	12
41-43	0.27	Kristina Wahyu Murniati	Suci Amita Dewi	Syabas Indo Ladies	12
41-43	0.27	Teruo Miyazaki	Makoto Nomura	Kachofugetsu	4
44-45	0.26	Manol Iliev	Hristo Hristov	Bulgarian All Stars	12
44-45	0.26	Wang Ping	Wu Shaohong	China Women 2	11
46	0.23	Misuzu Ichihashi	Fumiko Kimura	ESPERANZA	4
47	0.22	Fiona Brown	Susan Stockdale	England Ladies	12
48	0.20	Sartaj Hans	Tony Nunn	Down Under	12
49-50	0.19	Masayuki Ino	Tadashi Teramoto	ONI-TAKA	6
49-50	0.19	Akiko Miwa	Makoto Nomura	Kachofugetsu	6
51-52	0.18	Sumiko Sugino	Kazuko Takahashi	Oriental Angels	4
51-52	0.18	Michiko Hatoyama	Katsuro Hatoyama	KANDM	8
53	0.17	Tsuneo Sakurai	Atsushi Kikuchi	SKOTII	12
54-55	0.16	Michiko Iwahashi	Sumie Nakagawa	ashley6	4
54-55	0.16	Junko Den	Yoshiko Murata	Blue Hawaii	4

Rank	IMPs	Member1	Member2	Team	Rds
56	0.15	Tom Hanlon	Hugh McGann	Hackett	12
57	0.13	Osami Kimura	Takahiro Kamiyo	Iza Yokohama III	8
58	0.11	Yoko Saito	Mamiko Odaira	Friends	8
59-60	0.10	Paul Hackett	Justin Hackett	Hackett	12
59-60	0.10	Masayuki Ohashi	Makoto Wakabayashi	Con Brio	12
61	0.09	Michiko Ono	Sumie Nakagawa	ashley6	4
62	0.08	Motomi Shirogane	Yasuko Sugiyama	SHIROGANE	6
63	0.06	Soyoko Yamamoto	Yumiko Kawakami	Goisagi	8
64-65	0.05	Kyoko Ohno	Akihiko Yamada	JAPAN Senior	12
64-65	0.05	Satoki Takizawa	Toshiro Yamaguchi	SHIROGANE	12
66	0.04	Masaru Naniwada	Toshiro Nose	NANIWADA	8
67-68	-0.04	Li Rui	Shi Miao	Beijing Trinergy	7
67-68	-0.04	Yu Ina	Park Jungyoon	Korea-Alpha	12
69	-0.05	Haruko Koshi	Terumi Kubo	ESPERANZA	4
70	-0.07	Michiko Shida	Kotomi Asakoshi	LAS FLORES	8
71	-0.09	Jerry Stamatov	Diyan Danailov	Stamatov	12
72	-0.10	Keisuke Akama	Yoko Maruyama	Aka Maru	12
73	-0.11	Sun Ming	Wang Hongli	China Women 1	12
74	-0.12	Hiroko Ota	Ayako Miyakuni	Aka Maru	12
75	-0.13	Kiyoko Oki	Makiyo Takikawa	KANDM	8
76-77	-0.14	Heather Dhondy	Nevena Senior	England Ladies	12
76-77	-0.14	Sung Kyunghae	Hwang Inryung	Korea-Hammer	12
78	-0.17	Kenichi Ito	Yumi Yanagida	Strawberry Fields	12
79	-0.18	Kyoko Toyofuku	Makiko Sato	Pretty Cats	4
80	-0.20	JuiYiu Shih	ChiMou Lin	Yeh Bros	9
81	-0.21	Hideo Togawa	Toshiro Nose	NANIWADA	4
82	-0.23	Michiko Ono	Yoko Oosako	ashley6	4
83-84	-0.26	Yuki Fukuyoshi	Takeshi Hanayama	PYON	12
83-84	-0.26	Keiko Yoshino	Michiko Kikuchi	Friends	8
85-86	-0.27	Masako Otsuka	Takako Fujimoto	Kachofugetsu	8
85-86	-0.27	Akiko Miyata	Junko Tsubaki	Setsugekka	8
87-88	-0.28	Kenichi Asaoka	Motoharu Ushio	SKOTII	12
87-88	-0.28	Yoko Fukuyama	Takashi Sumita	Con Brio	12
89	-0.29	Robert Parasian Tobing	Taufik Gautama Asbi	TAJIMA	12
90	-0.31	Motomi Shirogane	Etsuko Takano	SHIROGANE	6
91	-0.33	Yoshiko Endo	Katsumi Takahashi	PYON	6
92-93	-0.38	Lu Dong	Wang Yanhong	Beijing Trinergy	4
92-93	-0.38	Hisami Kataoka	Hikoe Enomoto	NANIWADA	8
94	-0.41	Takashi Maeda	Nobuyuki Hayashi	Papa & Rabbits	12
95	-0.42	Ryo Okuno	Akira Ohara	Fairy Tale	12
96-97	-0.43	Michiko Iwahashi	Sachiko Yamamura	ashley6	4
96-97	-0.43	Masakatsu Sugino	Kazuko Takahashi	Oriental Angels	4
98-100	-0.46	Kazuko Kawashima	Yoko Tokushige	Setsugekka	8
98-100	-0.46	Teruko Nishimura	Junko Nishimura	LAS FLORES	8
98-100	-0.46	Yukiko Hoshi	Megumi Takasaka	Yukihinata	8
101-102	-0.48	Hiroko Tanaka	Ryoichi Yasuhara	Oriental Angels	8
101-102	-0.48	Tadashi Jomura	Koji Ito	Papa & Rabbits	4
103	-0.50	Akiko Kawabata	Misako Fukazawa	Goisagi	8
104	-0.52	Chung Isub	Cho Taeho	Korea-Hammer	12
105	-0.54	Kyoko Toyofuku	Kumiko Matsuo	Pretty Cats	4
106	-0.55	Hiroko Tanaka	Masakatsu Sugino	Oriental Angels	4
107	-0.56	Atsuko Katsumata	Yasuyo Iida	KATSUMATA	8
108	-0.57	Yoshiyuki Nakamura	Makoto Hirata	JAPAN Senior	12
109-110	-0.58	Zhao Jinlong	Jiang Yi	Jiuzhaigou	12
109-110	-0.58	Hiroko Yanagisawa	Yuko Kimura	Yukihinata	8
111	-0.59	Yoko Oosako	Yayoi Sakamoto	ashley6	4

Rank	IMPs	Member1	Member2	Team	Rds
112	-0.63	Hiroki Yokoi	Fumi Tanaka	YOKOI	6
113	-0.64	Yoshiko Sakaguchi	Toshiko Kaho	Pretty Cats	4
114-115	-0.65	Hiroya Abe	Chieko Yamazaki	Abe Chan	12
114-115	-0.65	Misae Kato	Kimiko Kamakari	KATSUMATA	8
116	-0.69	Hideko Kobayashi	Noriko Akira	Goisagi	8
117	-0.77	Harue Iemori	Takako Nakatani	KATSUMATA	8
118	-0.81	Kim Yoonkyung	Park Myungkee	Korea-Alpha	12
119	-0.85	Etsuko Naito	Yukiko Umezu	Yukihinata	8
120	-0.89	Koichi Onishi	Taiko Bando	Friends	8
121	-0.92	Kazuko Okamoto	Miyako Miyazaki	Setsugekka	8
122	-0.95	Kazuki Iizuka	Hisaki Takeda	JAPAN Youth	12
123	-0.96	Sosuke Yagi	Daisuke Sugimoto	JAPAN Youth	4
124	-0.98	Chieko Ichikawa	Atsuko Kurita	Blue Hawaii	4
125	-1.00	Atsuko Kurita	Yoshiko Murata	Blue Hawaii	4
126	-1.04	Miyoko Yonezawa	Mariko Sakamoto	KANDM	8
127	-1.12	Yoshiaki Aida	Setsuko Kimura	Iza Yokohama III	8
128	-1.15	Kosuke Ito	Daisuke Sugimoto	JAPAN Youth	8
129	-1.21	Chieko Ichikawa	Junko Den	Blue Hawaii	4
130	-1.27	Fumiko Kimura	Terumi Kubo	ESPERANZA	4

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 17th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/home/English/nec/tabid/662/Default.aspx>

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

Narita Bus Schedule

From the Intercontinental
(120 minutes)

¥3,500

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

From the YCAT
(90 min)

¥3,500

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

Team Rosters: 17th NEC Cup

#	Team Name	Members
1	China Geely Auto:	Gui Shengyue, Zhang Banxiang, Yang Lixin, Dai Jianming, Zhuang Zejun
2	ONI-TAKA:	Masayuki Ino, Takahiko Hirata, Masaaki Takayama, Kazuhiko Yamada, Takeshi Niekawa, Tadashi Teramoto
3	Bulgarian All Stars:	Valio Kovachev, Vladi Isporski, Manol Iliev, Hristo Hristov
4	China Women 2:	Wang Wenfei, Wang Ping, Wang Liping, Wu Shaohong
5	NEDUK:	David Bakhshi, David Gold, Louk Verhees, Ricco van Prooijen
6	Oz Players:	Ron Klinger, Matt Mullamphy, Bill Jacobs, Ben Thompson
7	Stamatov:	Julian Stefanov, Vladimir Mihov, Jerry Stamatov, Diyan Danailov
8	Down Under:	Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Martin Reid, Peter Newell

Notice from the JCBL

The 2012 NEC Bridge Festival proudly announces
A MIND SPORTS event: Open to the Public

When? Friday and Saturday, February 10-11 from 11:00 to 16:30

Where? Room 503

**Come and play your favorite Mind Sport: GO, CHESS, DRAUGHTS and XIANGQI
Special Games for Beginners — Everyone is Welcome!**

1. Play MIND SPORTS

Open to public: Mini lessons for the five mind sports that were played at the 2008 World Mind Sports Games (The NEC Bridge Festival provides an excellent chance for players of all five Mind Sports organizations to get together in one place, once a year. Thank you, NEC.)

Program:

- 1) BRIDGE: Mini Bridge lessons will be offered. Open for everyone.
- 2) GO
- 3) CHESS
- 4) DRAUGHTS/CHECKERS
- 5) XIANGQI (Chinese Chess)



* Anyone who tries all of the above games will be entered in a lottery for a chance at more souvenirs.

2. SPECIAL GAMES FOR CONTRACT BRIDGE BEGINNERS

Sponsored by the JCBL Public Relations Department, these games are aimed at letting prospective bridge players experience the fun and excitement of this great game. This program has received praise from beginners and bridge teachers alike. This year, nine pairs have been invited by lottery.

February 10-11 from 13:00 to 16:30 in Room 503

Three one-session games for beginners will be held each day:

- 1) Debutante Cup: for those with no previous bridge experience
- 2) Beginners Cup: for those with under 5 MasterPoints
- 3) Beginners Cup: for those with under 20 MasterPoints



The 7th Asia Pacific Bridge Federation Congress FUKUOKA, JAPAN, 2012



August 25th - September 2nd, 2012



APBF Team Championships (Open / Women / Senior / Youth)
APBF Open Pairs

The Japan Contract Bridge League would like to welcome our bridge friends from all over the world to participate in the 7th APBF Congress, now an OPEN event similar to the European Open Championships, which will be held in Fukuoka, Japan, from August 25th to September 2nd, 2012.

Fukuoka, a historical city located in the Kyushu island, has developed as the Asian Gateway, connected with direct flights from/to various Asian cities and with ferries from/to Busan, Korea. The venue of the 2012 Congress will be the Hilton Fukuoka Sea Hawk, the hotel well known as the largest convention and resort hotel in West Japan. We believe that all our friend players, coaches, and officials would love the relaxing atmosphere of the venue and the warmest welcome from the people of Fukuoka.

We look forward to seeing you all and share wonderful moments of bridge and friendship at the 2012 APBF Congress!

Japan Contract Bridge League
2012 APBF Congress Organizing Committee

Venue : Hilton Fukuoka Sea Hawk

The Hilton Fukuoka Sea Hawk is located in the city of Fukuoka, on Hakata bay, just 20 minutes drive from Fukuoka International Airport or downtown Fukuoka.

"2012 APBF" website
<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/apbf2012/>



Accommodation ... Reserve at **SPECIAL ROOM RATES** via 2012 APBF website !

- ◆ **Hilton Fukuoka Sea Hawk** - *Stay at the APBF venue!* <http://www.fukuokaseahawk.hilton.com/>
- ◆ **Hyatt Residential Suites Fukuoka** - *With kitchen and laundry/dryer machine!* <http://www.hyatt-rsf.co.jp/>

* All Youth team players participating in the APBF Championships, will be subsidized 2,000 yen per player per night (excluding NPC/coach) by the JCBL.

CONTACT: Japan Contract Bridge League, 2012 APBF Congress Organizing Committee
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Provisional Program

*The precise time schedule will be determined based on the final number of participating teams in each series.

APBF Congress Championships			Side-Games	
DATE	TIME	EVENT	TIME	EVENT
8/24 (Fri)	19:00-20:00	APBF Delegates' Meeting (1)		
8/25 (Sat)	10:00-11:00	Captains' Meeting		
	11:00-12:00	APBF Delegates' Meeting (2)		
	12:30-14:00	Opening Ceremony & Welcome Reception		
	14:30-22:00	APBF Open Pairs (Q1/Q2)		
8/26 (Sun)	10:00-17:30	APBF Open Pairs (F1/F2)		
	10:00-17:30	Open Pairs (Consolation)		
8/27 (Mon)	10:00-19:50	APBF Teams Qualifying (RR)		To be announced
8/28 (Tue)	10:00-19:50	APBF Teams Qualifying (RR)		To be announced
8/29 (Wed)	10:00-19:50	APBF Teams Qualifying (RR)		To be announced
8/30 (Thu)	10:00-19:50	APBF Teams Qualifying (RR)	10:00-17:30	Open Teams (Q1/Q2)
			10:00-17:30	△1000MP Teams (Q1/Q2)
8/31 (Fri)	10:00-19:50	APBF Teams Qualifying (RR)	10:00-17:30	Open Teams (F1/F2)
			10:00-17:30	△1000MP Teams (F1/F2)
			10:00-17:30	Stratified Pairs
9/ 1 (Sat)	10:00-19:50	APBF Teams Semi-Finals (KO)	10:00-17:30	Fukuoka Mayor's Cup (Q1/Q2) [Open Teams]
9/ 2 (Sun)	10:00-17:30	APBF Teams Final (KO)	10:00-17:30	Fukuoka Mayor's Cup (F1/F2) [Open Teams]
	18:30-21:30	Victory Banquet & Awards Ceremony	10:00-17:30	TV Nishinippon Cup [Open Pairs]



NEC Quarter-finals (1st half): China Geely Auto vs Down Under

by Barry Rigal

The matches started with the reverse of a bang (maybe a snore?). Louk Verhees had overslept so NEDUK had given their opponents 5 imps. We'll include that in the running total (and remember that the higher placed finisher had .5 imp to avoid ties).

Bd: 1
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ AK
 ♥ 862
 ♦ Q108
 ♣ K9432

West
 ♠ 86
 ♥ Q95
 ♦ AK65
 ♣ A1087

East
 ♠ 97542
 ♥ A43
 ♦ 9743
 ♣ 5

South
 ♠ QJ103
 ♥ KJ107
 ♦ J2
 ♣ QJ6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	3NT

All Pass

The match started with a defensive problem that looks easy, but at the table these things are never as simple as you might think.

Against 2NT Zejun led a low spade. Newell won and played a club to the jack, ducked, which turns out to be potentially critical. (You can see how easy it is to take nine tricks if he does not.) Declarer pressed on with the ♣Q and East pitched the ♠7, discouraging. The defenders cleared diamonds and now declarer unblocked spades and had to guess hearts to make even eight tricks. When he led a heart to the king he could cash the spades and then finesse in clubs for ten tricks.

In the other room the defense started exactly the same way. Declarer cashed *both* spades before playing a club up, perhaps making the position easier to defend. Nunn ducked the ♣Q as well and cleared diamonds when he won the ace later. When declarer

won the ♦Q and played a heart Hans climbed up with the ace and cashed out for down one. 6-0, Down Under.

Both Wests in ONI-TAKA vs China Women 2 defended 1NT and took the ♣A at their first turn, thus letting through 150 without any chance for recovery. All the other matches made 1NT with between one and three overtricks.

The second deal saw both pairs bid unopposed to 3NT and wrap up 11 tricks in textbook fashion by tackling ♦AKJ facing ♦10754 by cashing the ♦A and dropping the singleton queen. There was no excitement anywhere on the deal.

Bd: 3
 Dir: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ AJ104
 ♥ A654
 ♦ AK82
 ♣ Q

West

♠ 75
 ♥ KQ
 ♦ 10964
 ♣ J10642

East

♠ KQ32
 ♥ J9873
 ♦ J7
 ♣ A8

South

♠ 986
 ♥ 102
 ♦ Q53
 ♣ K9753

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1♣	Dbf(♥+♠)	Rdbl(4-6)
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

When Newell opened 1♣ (strong) East's double showed the majors and Newell was unprepared to gamble out 1♣xx — and probably wisely so. In 1NT on a heart lead to the queen Zhang immediately shifted to a spade without unblocking hearts. Zhuang won the spade and reverted to hearts but declarer ducked again. Now when a spade came back and Zhuang cleared hearts declarer won and cashed his two spade winners, putting Zhang in an awkward position. He played his partner to be 4-5-3-1 with the

singleton ♣Q and pitched a diamond to keep three clubs. Declarer now had four diamond tricks and his contract.

In the other room West won the first heart, unblocked the suit, then played spades. East won cheaply and cleared hearts. West had a club discard he could spare and declarer could do little but knock out the ♣A. Hans won and did not cash the last heart (Clever Hans!). Instead he played back a club and now declarer decided simply to rely on the diamond break or spades coming in. Had East cashed his last heart West would have been caught in a diamond-club squeeze.

Hirata did expose his partner to a squeeze by cashing out the hearts, to let Wu make 1NT for China Women 2. But in the other room Ino opened the North hand 1♦ and got his side to 2♦ (N/S could have defended 2♣ instead). The defenders led hearts and shifted to spades but declarer could pitch one heart loser on the ♣K and ruff one in dummy to neutralize West's trump trick and emerge with +90 and a flat board.

No other N/S went plus. One table played spades, one diamonds, unsuccessfully in each match.

The next deal was a marginal slam with 15 HCP facing 9. You need to negotiate the trump queen missing four and the ♠Q. Both tables played game without looking for higher things and Down Under gained an overtrick by finding both cards. It was 11-0 now to Down Under

Bd: 5 North
 Dir: North ♠ A1064
 Vul: N/S ♥ J763
 ♦ AQ10
 ♣ K8

West
 ♠ QJ
 ♥ K109
 ♦ 32
 ♣ QJ10532

East
 ♠ K83
 ♥ 5
 ♦ KJ9764
 ♣ 976

South
 ♠ 9752
 ♥ AQ842
 ♦ 85
 ♣ A4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
	1NT	Pass	2♦(1)
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			
(1) Forcing Stayman			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
	1NT	Pass	2♦(♥)
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Our Editors are torn as to what to lead here. We both know we plan to let through the contract whatever we select. But should we go active or passive? In my view the second auction argues for passivity (bad trump breaks around), the first one is unclear. Zhuang led a diamond into the tenace; Hans led a passive club. (We'd say it was "Hans Down" the winner except our parole officer has been limiting us to one bad pun a set. Still, maybe there is no such thing as a bad pun.)

Everyone else beat the game. After five deals the total number of imps scored in the other three matches combined was six.

Bd: 6 North
 Dir: East ♠ AQ1082
 Vul: E/W ♥ K10
 ♦ K3
 ♣ Q1074

West
 ♠ KJ93
 ♥ A4
 ♦ J95
 ♣ A952

East
 ♠ 75
 ♥ QJ9632
 ♦ Q2
 ♣ KJ3

South
 ♠ 64
 ♥ 875
 ♦ A108764
 ♣ 86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
		Pass	Pass
1NT	2♣(1)	2♥	Pass
Pass	2♠	3♥	All Pass
(1) One suiter			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
		Pass	Pass
1♣	1♠	2♥	Pass
Pass	2♠	DbI	All Pass

In 3♥ the defenders had four top tricks in the side-suits and set about trying to get a trump promotion. Newell accurately won the spade at trick one and played king and another diamond to his partner's ace. Back came a second, then a third, spade. Declarer ruffed high and led a heart to the ace and a

small heart from dummy and now had enough trump spots to escape for down one.

In the Closed Room Hans' double of 2♠ looks extremely aggressive facing a known minimum. One certainly can't blame West for passing, can one? The defenders led clubs and shifted to hearts, and now declarer had three red-suit winners and a club ruff, and when the club honors appeared he could finesse the ♠Q, cash the ♠A, then give up two trumps and claim +470. Geely had 9 imps to trail 23-9.

An initial heart lead and continuation makes declarer's task far harder but the ♠8 is just big enough a trump spot for declarer to avoid trump promotions down the line. And the club intermediates are quite significant in some variations.

To prove the point, both tables in China Women 2-ONI-TAKA went down in 2♠ on the lead of a red queen. All Stars got on the board by making 2NT as West (on a club lead) and beating 3♥, while NEDUK made 2♥ and went one down in 2♠ for a 2-imp pickup.

Bd: 7	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 32		
Vul: Both	♥ A10		
	♦ QJ964		
	♣ A1094		
	West	East	
	♠ AK6	♠ 5	
	♥ 954	♥ J832	
	♦ A52	♦ K107	
	♣ Q832	♣ KJ765	
	South		
	♠ QJ109874		
	♥ KQ76		
	♦ 83		
	♣ ---		

Open and Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
			4♠

All Pass

Both tables elected to open 4♠. I'm not sure whether the fact that your side suit is the unbid major is critical or not. As we shall see, not everybody felt the same way. You could certainly argue that with 4♠ good or at least playable on a non-trump/diamond lead you don't mind being there, especially since at the four tables I have play records for nobody beat 4♠ on the go, despite leading out the top trumps. After East suggested a club shift declarer could pitch a diamond on the ♣A but still had a heart loser when

the finesse for the ten failed. No swing in Down Under-Geely.

For China Women Ping opened 3♠ and went +170. Ben Thompson played 4♠x after the defense of two rounds of spades and a low heart shift. He won and ran all but one of his trumps. East pitched hearts to keep parity length with dummy's minors, so the ♥7 scored trick 13 and Oz Players led 13-7.

Bd: 8	North		
Dlr: West	♠ KJ64		
Vul: None	♥ AK		
	♦ 4		
	♣ J109842		
	West	East	
	♠ A105	♠ 872	
	♥ Q103	♥ J97	
	♦ QJ10876	♦ A95	
	♣ 6	♣ KQ73	
	South		
	♠ Q93		
	♥ 86542		
	♦ K32		
	♣ A5		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
Pass	1♥(♠)	Pass	2♥(1)
Pass	3♣	Pass	Pass
3♦	All Pass		

(1) Three-card spade raise

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦(R)
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

In the Closed Room South's invitational-plus relay persuaded Nunn to stay out of the auction. Hans led the ♠8, ducked to the jack, and at trick two declarer led the ♣J, smoothly ducked by Hans. Nicely defended. Declarer innocently went up with the ace and played a second club, West pitching the ♦Q, and Nunn won his ♣Q and played the ace and a second diamond. Declarer took the ♦K, pitching a club, ruffed a diamond, cashed the ♥AK and tried to ruff a club in dummy with the ♠Q, over-ruffed with the ace. The ♠KJ were declarer's contract-going tricks.

Newell's 3♣ bid was non-forcing and canape, making it easy for South to pass. 3♦ could have been set a couple of tricks, but after a top club lead to the queen and ace Newell tried to give his partner a club ruff and declarer got a major-suit loser away. So Geely gained 2 imps and trailed 23-11.

Both E/W pairs in China Women 2-ONA-TAKI played diamonds. Liping bought the hand with a 2♦ overcall; Yamada played 3♦. Both made eight tricks. (When Yamada played the hand on the defense of the ♥AK and a shift to the ♣J he ducked in dummy. South overtook to give her partner the ruff but now North tried to give her partner a club ruff so the spade loser went away.) China Women 2 led 11-0 now.

Bd: 9 North
 Dir: North ♠ Q5
 Vul: E/W ♥ Q108643
 ♦ 108
 ♣ J64

West
 ♠ K83
 ♥ 2
 ♦ AQ96
 ♣ AQ752

East
 ♠ J9642
 ♥ KJ
 ♦ KJ5
 ♣ K93

South
 ♠ A107
 ♥ A975
 ♦ 7432
 ♣ 108

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
	2♥	Pass	4♥
Dbf	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
	2♦	Pass	3♥
Dbf	Pass	4♠	5♥
Dbf	All Pass		

That North hand does not look like a weak-two to me. Open it 3♥ if you want to preempt. It did not matter today, of course, since West has just enough to come in over any heart preempt. 4♠ appears to be cold on the lie of the cards whatever you do, but how should you play trumps to hold your spade losers to two? The Editors are torn between leading low from dummy, which caters to a stiff honor in North, and running the jack, which might lose to a stiff queen but covers the other bases well enough. Zhuang decided to play to the king. That worked today, but we are not convinced.

Against 5♥x Nunn led a trump and the defenders carefully avoided touching spades. If there is a way to avoid losing 800 now Yang did not find it. So the net result was a small pick-up for Down Under, leading 28-11.

Of course there are other things that might go wrong in 4♠. Hirata played that contact on a low diamond

lead. He won in hand and played a spade to the king but then erred by playing a second trump. North won and led a low heart...and Hirata went up with the king. Ping took her two aces and cashed the long heart for down one. That was 12 imps to the Women, leading 23-0.

Bd: 10 North
 Dir: East ♠ A8542
 Vul: Both ♥ A10963
 ♦ J4
 ♣ 5

West
 ♠ J1076
 ♥ KQJ
 ♦ AK2
 ♣ K84

East
 ♠ Q
 ♥ 872
 ♦ Q973
 ♣ QJ1073

South
 ♠ K93
 ♥ 54
 ♦ 10865
 ♣ A962

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid

1♣	1♦(1)	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Dbf	1♠
1NT	All Pass	Dbf	Pass

(1) Majors/Minors

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang

		Pass	Pass
1NT	2♣(♥+♠)	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

With 2♠ looking relatively comfortable for N/S the issue was which if either of Newell and Reid might have found another call. Since North could easily have been 5-4, even at this vulnerability, it is hard for South to act again. Should North have acted again, maybe even raising 1♠ to 2♠ immediately? The defenders led a spade to the queen and king and the ♠9 came back, covered and ducked. (Note that with the heart suit slightly different—KJ over AQ—South might have to return the ♠3, not the ♠9). The defense took their four spades and two aces but declarer had +90.

Tony Nunn played 3♣ and Dai found the incisive lead of ace and a second heart. Nunn won and played a trump to dummy, ducked, and a second trump to hand. When North discarded he played a third trump to South who played a spade to his partner for the heart ruff. This was the ending:

♠ 85	♠ ---
♥ 109	♥ ---
♦ J4	♦ Q973
♣ --	♣ J3
♠ J107	
♥ ---	
♦ AK2	
♣ ---	
♠ K9	
♥ ---	
♦ 10865	
♣ ---	

Nunn read the position perfectly when he won the diamond in dummy and cashed one more trump. South was subjected to a trump squeeze and pitched a spade, so declarer came to a diamond and ruffed out the ♠K, with a diamond entry left in hand. Had South pitched a diamond that suit would have run. 1 hard-earned imp for Down Under.

Finally a board created a swing in more than one of the other matches. After strong club auctions the E/W pairs of the Women and Stamatov played 3NT down 200, giving their opponents a 7-imp pick-up, while Oz Players bought the hand in 2♠ in one room, and pushed their opponents to 3♠ in the other.

Bd: 11 North
 Dir: South ♠ AKQ8
 Vul: None ♥ 932
 ♦ K976
 ♣ 103

West	East
♠ 42	♠ J10973
♥ AK1087	♥ Q
♦ QJ1043	♦ A82
♣ J	♣ 9642

South
 ♠ 65
 ♥ J654
 ♦ 5
 ♣ AKQ875

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
			1♦(♥)
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♣
2♦	Pass	Pass	3♣

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
			2♣
2♥	Dbf	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The defense to 3NT was a chapter of accidents.

Instead of leading a top diamond Nunn started with a low heart — good news and bad there. Hans won and played the ♠J to the queen. Declarer carefully led the ♣10 to the ace and jack. Now if he believed this card he could cash out the spades and finesse in clubs for nine tricks. Instead, he tried to find out more about the hand by playing a diamond to the king. He found out more than he might want to know when Hans won the ace and returned the suit; down 100 in a cooler.

To make up for that, Reid found an equally ingenious way to go down in 3♣ on the defense of a top diamond lead followed by a top heart shift and then a spade play. But one must have sympathy with him. Knowing West had at most two clubs and very probably one, wasn't his decision to run the ♣10 reasonable? I think so, and of course given the fact that his teammate had just made the bulletin by playing a 3♣ contract so nicely it was incumbent on him to go one better. *Pas ce soir*, Josephine, but still 2 imps to Down Under, now leading 31-11.

The Souths for Oz Players and Stamatov were not imaginative enough to find a way to go down in 3♣, but N/S for NEDUK defended 2♦x, making 180. It was 16-14 now for Stamatov.

Bd: 12 North
 Dir: West ♠ A10
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q7
 ♦ K9542
 ♣ AQ63

West	East
♠ KJ64	♠ Q
♥ 9854	♥ AK1062
♦ J3	♦ A87
♣ 854	♣ KJ107

South
 ♠ 987532
 ♥ J3
 ♦ Q106
 ♣ 92

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
Pass	1♣(STR)	1♥	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
Pass	1NT	Dbf	2♥
Pass	2♠	Dbf(1)	All Pass

Over Newell's strong (13+) 1♣ the opponents barreled into a 4♥ contract that on accurate defense needs trumps to be 2-2 and a bit more, given the

entry problems to dummy. After a club lead and continuation declarer finessed, and when it held and trumps split he had +450.

Sartaj Hans is nothing if not resilient, and he was happy to double 2♠ for take-out for a second time this set, and again for it to be passed out. He led his singleton trump and declarer won and thoughtfully led a low heart from hand. When Hans won and shifted to clubs the defenders had lost their club trick and needed the diamond ruff to set 2♠ even 200. On best play the defense can never collect 500. That was 6imps back to Geely, down 31-17.

All Stars and ONI-TAKA each picked up a small swing here to come back closer to their opponents, making 450 in one room and conceding 200 and 170, respectively, in the other. The scores in those two matches were 14-23 and 15-25.

Bd: 13 North
 Dlr: North ♠ J10632
 Vul: Both ♥ A
 ♦ 3
 ♣ AQJ754

West
 ♠ AQ74
 ♥ K543
 ♦ 108
 ♣ K32

East
 ♠ 95
 ♥ 1098
 ♦ AKJ9742
 ♣ 9

South
 ♠ K8
 ♥ QJ762
 ♦ Q65
 ♣ 1086

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
Pass	1♥(♠)	3♦	Pass
Pass	4♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
Rdbl	2♣	2♦	Dbl
Dbl	4♠	Pass	5♣
	All Pass		

I'm beginning to like this Newell-Reid strong club system. Newell got both his suits in efficiently and Reid, who knew his partner was limited in high cards, let it go. In the other room when Yang doubled 2♦ (negative) Dai felt he had enough to take a shot at game, despite Nunn's redouble. Nunn informed him to the contrary, and although the defense could not get anything going other than their three top tricks after Hans switched to a heart at trick two, it was still worth 8imps.

In the Open Room 4♣ on a top diamond lead and trump shift was somewhat more awkward. Newell won the club in hand (9, 10, K, A), played a spade to the king and ace, won the next trump in dummy, led a spade to the jack, ruffed a spade and conceded a spade. Had West ducked the first trump, then won his club honor to play the ♣K, he would have defeated the contract — unless declarer's first play in trumps was low away from the king or low to the eight. If you play a spade to the king and ace West returns the ♣K and keeps you out of dummy for the spade play. It was 39-17 now for Down Under.

China Women 2 went plus in both rooms, making 4♣ when Wu as North competed to 4♣ on her own (duplicating Newell's sequence) while her teammates were making 3♦ in comfort. There was no swing elsewhere.

Bd: 14 North
 Dlr: East ♠ Q107653
 Vul: None ♥ 98762
 ♦ J
 ♣ J

West
 ♠ AJ82
 ♥ KJ10
 ♦ 75
 ♣ 10543

East
 ♠ 4
 ♥ AQ4
 ♦ Q10432
 ♣ Q862

South
 ♠ K9
 ♥ 53
 ♦ AK986
 ♣ AK97

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
Pass	1♦(WK)	Pass	1♣(STR)
Pass	2♥(♠)	Pass	1NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	3NT
All Pass			4♠

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
Pass	1♦(WK)	Pass	1♣(STR)
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠	All Pass	2♦

Dai followed an invitational sequence to 2♠ facing a balanced 16-18, Newell a game-forcing sequence. The defenders shifted to trumps early enough to prevent a heart ruff in both rooms and declarer collected eight tricks in each case. 5imps to Geely, down 37-22.

The All-Stars and the Women both got too high as well, giving 5 imps to their opponents.

Bd: 15 North
 Dlr: South ♠ AJ432
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q98
 ♦ A
 ♣ AQ102

West
 ♠ K86
 ♥ 53
 ♦ 983
 ♣ K9865

East
 ♠ 10975
 ♥ A1076
 ♦ QJ10
 ♣ J7

South
 ♠ Q
 ♥ KJ42
 ♦ K76542
 ♣ 43

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
Pass	1♥(R)	Pass	1♦(♥)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2♥

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
Pass	1♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The benefits of the relay system showed up big-time here, when Zhuang led a spade against 3NT to the queen and king, ducked. West returned his ♠8 and declarer ducked again. East overtook and shifted to the ♦Q but Newell won and cashed two spades, the ♥Q (ducked), his last spade, then led a heart to dummy on which West came down to three clubs and two diamonds. Now a club to the ten and jack left East on play. After cashing the ♥A, if he returned a club it would give dummy an entry and if he played back a club declarer would have the last three tricks. (Had West pitched a diamond in the five-card ending declarer would have cashed the ♦K and exited with a diamond to endplay East to lead clubs at the end.)

Hans led an intelligent heart against 3NT, trying to kill declarer's entries to the diamonds. Declarer won in hand, unblocked the ♦A, then ducked a spade. West won and returned his heart to Dai's queen, ducked by Hans. (A club shift might have worked better.) Now declarer cleared spades and Hans took his ♠10, ♥A, and had reached this ending.

♠ 4
 ♥ ---
 ♦ ---
 ♣ AQ102

♠ ---
 ♥ ---
 ♦ 9
 ♣ K985

♠ ---
 ♥ 10
 ♦ J10
 ♣ J7

♠ ---
 ♥ K
 ♦ K7
 ♣ 43

Hans exited with the ♣J to the three five and queen. Reading the position perfectly Dai cashed his ♠4 and got out with the ♣2. No swing, though, still 39-22 for Down Under.

In two of the three matches 3NT came home at one table and was defeated at the other. Kovachev as South played 3NT on a club lead and continuation, won in North. He advanced the ♥Q and East won and returned the suit. Reading the position nicely declarer ran the lead to dummy's nine, then played a spade to his queen and West's king. Since West could not disrupt communications by leading a heart declarer could now set up spades, unblock the diamonds, then come back to his hand with hearts to cash the ♦K.

Bd: 16 North
 Dlr: West ♠ A9765
 Vul: E/W ♥ ---
 ♦ 743
 ♣ QJ1065

West
 ♠ Q8
 ♥ AQ983
 ♦ K5
 ♣ 7432

East
 ♠ J432
 ♥ 754
 ♦ 10862
 ♣ AK

South
 ♠ K10
 ♥ KJ1062
 ♦ AQJ9
 ♣ 98

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Newell	Zhuang	Reid
1♥	2♥	3♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nunn	Dai	Hans	Yang
1♥	2♥	3♥	Dbl
All Pass			

Both E/W pairs got into trouble here but Reid was not prepared to lower the boom on his opponents,

perhaps a function of an aggressive overcalling style. Nunn won the club lead in dummy and led a spade to the queen and ace. When a club came back he ducked a spade. Yang won and played the ace and another diamond, and had to come to three trump tricks since he could over-ruff dummy in clubs and get off play in diamonds.

In the other room the defenders followed a similar start but North did not play back a second club. This gave Zhang outside chances of escaping for down one but in the end when he led a trump to the queen he too went down 200. Still, the double meant Geely had 7 imps and trailed by only 10 imps at the half, 39-29.

Ino-Teramoto collected the same 500 against the Women to take the lead 42-31 for ONI-TAKA, while Oz Players went plus against 3♥ and 3NT to lead 34-26 at the break. NEDUK-All Stars was 17-14.



“What, you were expecting Yogi Bear, maybe?”

NEC Quarter-finals (2nd half): NEDUK vs Stamatov

by Rich Colker

With just 3 imps separating the two teams at the half, this was the closest of the four semi-final matches. We pick up the action with Stamatov leading 17-14.

Bd: 17
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ AJ1076
 ♥ AKJ5
 ♦ A8
 ♣ J2

West
 ♠ Q9
 ♥ 86
 ♦ QJ6532
 ♣ Q104

East
 ♠ 842
 ♥ Q2
 ♦ 1097
 ♣ A8763

South
 ♠ K53
 ♥ 109743
 ♦ K4
 ♣ K95

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
	1♠	Pass	2♥(♠)
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
	1♣(STR)	Pass	1♥(♠)
Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

In the Open Room Bakhshi's 2♥ was artificial, presumably showing some sort of good spade raise, which explains Gold's 4♠ bid. Gold won Stefanov's ♦10 opening lead in dummy, then played king and a second spade. When the queen appeared that took care of one problem. He drew the last trump, played hearts from the top, and when that queen appeared as well he claimed 12 tricks; +480.

In the Closed Room Stamatov-Danailov bid game in their nine-card major fit rather than their eight-card fit — and who could blame them? Danailov won the ♦Q lead in hand, cashed the ♥AK dropping the queen, then played the ♠J and passed it, perhaps looking to protect his ♣K. Verhees won and deftly shifted to a club and the hand ended quickly with Stamatov claiming +450. 1 imp to NEDUK, Stamatov still leading 17-15.

There was no swing in any of our other matches.



“Do you have any sevens?”
 “Go fish.”

Bd: 18 North
 Dir: East ♠ AJ
 Vul: N/S ♥ J863
 ♦ AQ5
 ♣ A1042

West
 ♠ KQ109
 ♥ Q75
 ♦ J76
 ♣ J65

East
 ♠ 8654
 ♥ A42
 ♦ 9432
 ♣ K8

South
 ♠ 732
 ♥ K109
 ♦ K108
 ♣ Q973

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
Pass	2NT(2)	All Pass	2♠(1)

(1) Size inquiry?
 (2) Minimum

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Danailov</i>
1♠	1NT	2♠	Dbl
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

Against Gold's 2NT Stefanov led the ♠6 (second highest from a weak suit) which went to the queen and ace. Gold played a low heart to the nine and queen and the defense cashed their spades, Gold pitching two clubs from hand and one from dummy. Mihov led a heart to Stefanov's ace and a third heart left declarer in dummy with the king. After a club to the ace and the ♥J Gold claimed down one, -100.

The E/W interference in the Closed Room drove Stamatov-Danailov to the three level in their second-best fit, hearts, and while they might have survived a 3♣ contract 3♥ presented more of a problem. Again a spade was led to the queen and ace and a heart played back to the nine and queen. Declarer ruffed the third spade and set about tackling clubs, playing low to the queen when van Prooijen ducked. When a club to the ace brought down the king Stamatov quickly cashed three diamonds, then exited with a third club as van Prooijen threw his last spade. Verhees exited with a trump and van Prooijen now made the key play of ducking the trick, dummy winning, and now Stamatov was finished. If he played another heart van Prooijen would win and cash a diamond while if he played a club Verhees could score his low trump separately from the ace. Nicely done. A push at down one; 17-15 Stamatov.

While the All Stars and Oz Players both played 1NT making 90, every other pair climbed too high. In fact, China Women gained 3imps for getting out for down one in 3NT. They trailed 43-34.

Bd: 19 North
 Dir: South ♠ K653
 Vul: E/W ♥ J532
 ♦ A84
 ♣ Q5

West
 ♠ QJ1074
 ♥ Q87
 ♦ Q109
 ♣ 83

East
 ♠ ---
 ♥ AK64
 ♦ KJ632
 ♣ AK104

South
 ♠ A982
 ♥ 109
 ♦ 75
 ♣ J9762

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Dbl	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Danailov</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣(STR)	Pass
1♦(NEG)	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Louk Verhees must have been wondering what he had done to deserve such a present: the opponents were playing doubled in his (by far) best suit. If only they had gotten a bit higher. On the other side of the screen Stamatov must have been wondering whether he had pushed the envelope just a bit too far this time with his 2♠ raise. Verhees led the ♣8 to the king and van Prooijen switched to the ♥K, then to the ♦K, which held. A second diamond went to the queen and ace and Stamatov got out with the ♣J to the ace. A third diamond was ruffed in dummy and now Stamatov got out with a heart to Verhees' queen. Time to get the puppies off the street. Verhees played the ♠Q, taken in dummy by the ace, and Verhees pitched when the ♣J was cashed, he and Stamatov both pitching hearts. When another club was led Verhees could ruff with the ♠7 to force the king but Stamatov could now ruff the ♥J with a spot from dummy and be guaranteed another trump trick. A not-so-bad down two, -300.

In the Closed Room Mihov and Stefanov conducted

an unopposed auction to 3NT which was both cold and easy, a good thing when you are the declarer. Stefanov won the club in hand, drove out the $\diamond A$, won the club return, and cashed his nine winners for +600. 7 imps to Stamatov, who led by 9 at 24-15.

The China Women took the lead when they bought the hand in $1\spadesuit x$ — how did they get so high? — down one, and collected +620 in $4\heartsuit$ on a diamond lead. That gave them 11 imps.

Bd: 20 North
 Dlr: West \spadesuit 1083
 Vul: Both \heartsuit KJ65
 \diamond Q1052
 \clubsuit Q6

West
 \spadesuit AQ9762
 \heartsuit 93
 \diamond KJ7
 \clubsuit 102

East
 \spadesuit K4
 \heartsuit A742
 \diamond 98
 \clubsuit KJ985

South
 \spadesuit J5
 \heartsuit Q108
 \diamond A643
 \clubsuit A743

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
$1\spadesuit$	Pass	1NT	Pass
$2\spadesuit$	Pass	$4\spadesuit$	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
$2\spadesuit$	Pass	$3\spadesuit$	All Pass

Does the West hand look like a vulnerable one-bid or two-bid to you? (For the record, your Editors agree it's a one-bid.) The answer may depend more on your confidence (or lack thereof) in your declarer play but in either case you had better catch the right dummy and have your guessing shoes on. $4\spadesuit$ needs 3-2 trumps, one or both of the missing honors in each minor to be onside, and for you to guess which one is right if they're split. Ready, go. Against $4\spadesuit$ in the Open Room Gold led a trump (a heart would have been better — for reasons we'll soon see — but that must have looked too dangerous), providing no information about the minor-suit honors. Mihov won in hand, placed the $\clubsuit 10$ on the table, and let it ride when Gold followed low. Bakhshi ducked in tempo. Mihov continued with a second club to the queen, king and ace, and Bakhshi now played a third club, which would have promoted the setting (trump) trick for Gold had the defense been able to cash a heart first. Mihov accurately pitched a heart as Gold ruffed, played a diamond to Bakhshi's ace, who then led a

fourth club. But Mihov was able to ruff with the $\spadesuit A$, draw the remaining trump with a spade to the king, and pitch his losing diamond on the fifth club; +620.

Against $3\spadesuit$ in the Closed Room Stamatov also got off to a trump lead. Danailov won the ace (he might have done better to duck, just on general principles, though he was trying to beat $3\spadesuit$ and not $4\spadesuit$) and switched to the $\heartsuit 10$, ducked around, followed by a second heart to the ace. Verhees now unblocked the $\spadesuit K$, ruffed a heart to hand, drew the last trump, and played a second club, claiming the rest when the queen appeared; +200. That was 9 more imps to Stamatov, whose lead was now 33-15.

Note that a heart is the only lead to legitimately beat $4\spadesuit$ since it both destroys the loser-on-loser play Mihov found, as well as removes a critical late entry to dummy's clubs. But in practice $4\spadesuit$ was defeated twice on a diamond lead when declarer misguessed clubs. That meant a small swing to China Women and Down Under instead of a big one the other way.

Bd: 21 North
 Dlr: North \spadesuit 9
 Vul: N/S \heartsuit AQJ86
 \diamond K3
 \clubsuit KJ1052

West
 \spadesuit KJ87
 \heartsuit K95
 \diamond J108
 \clubsuit 743

East
 \spadesuit A106432
 \heartsuit 73
 \diamond 74
 \clubsuit Q86

South
 \spadesuit Q5
 \heartsuit 1042
 \diamond AQ9652
 \clubsuit A9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
	$1\heartsuit$	$2\spadesuit$	2NT(\heartsuit)
$3\spadesuit$	$4\clubsuit$	Pass	$4\diamond$
Pass	$4\heartsuit$	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
	$1\heartsuit$	$2\spadesuit$	$4\heartsuit$
$4\spadesuit$	$5\heartsuit$	All Pass	

Bakhshi's 2NT bid showed a limit raise or better in hearts, which explains Gold's $4\clubsuit$ bid, a slam-compliant action made just in case Bakhshi's hand had been a lot better than it actually was. Bakhshi's $4\diamond$ bid was similarly slam-compliant since Gold, with his $4\clubsuit$ bid, could have been the one interested in slam. (He was close; had Bakhshi held an opening

bid with, say, the ♥K, ♦A, and ♣A, slam would have been a viable option.) In any case only a player with slam interest is authorized to bid beyond game in this type of auction, so Gold signed off in 4♥ and Bakhshi acquiesced with his wasted ♠Q and a partner who had not promised a spade control. Stefanov led ace and a second spade. Gold ruffed, crossed to the ♣A, took the heart finesse, drew trumps, and claimed 12 tricks when the diamonds split 3-2; +680.

The Dutch in the Closed Room pushed Stamatov-Danailov to the five level, which could have proved costly for them had Stamatov taken his partner's 4♥ bid seriously (though with possible slam interest Danailov might have taken a stronger action over 2♠, such as cue-bidding). The defense began the same as in the Open Room but at trick three Stamatov simply led the ♥Q from his hand and settled for 11 tricks. Plus 650 sent 1 imp back to NEDUK, who now trailed 33-16.

Everyone made game here comfortably enough; no swing anywhere.

That 1 imp was an omen of things to come. NEDUK was about to go on a scoring spree that would leave little doubt as to the final outcome of the match.

Bd: 22	North		
Dlr: East	♠ K8653		
Vul: E/W	♥ Q9		
	♦ K6532		
	♣ 3		
West		East	
♠ AQJ72		♠ 4	
♥ A108		♥ 2	
♦ AQ10		♦ J9874	
♣ KJ		♣ AQ9742	
	South		
	♠ 109		
	♥ KJ76543		
	♦ ---		
	♣ 10865		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
		Pass	3♥
Pass/Dbf	Pass	4NT	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
		2NT(♣+♦)	Pass
6♦	Pass	Pass	6♥
Dbf	All Pass		

Looking at the West hand and the auction it is

difficult to imagine passing 3♥. 3♠, Dbf, and 3NT are all viable actions but pass is not. Perhaps BBO got this one wrong and West doubled? In any event, Stefanov's 4NT bid seems a bit of a stretch, especially vulnerable vs not and opposite a passed partner, given that 3NT would have sent the same message. In any case, what is certain is that E/W played in 6♦ against the lead of the ♥Q. Mihov won and tried the ♦A, finding the trumps 5-0. Next he tried clubs, hoping to get his two hearts away, find the ♠K onside perhaps doubleton, and scramble seven black-suit tricks to reduce dummy to all trumps and lose just the ♦K. But this was not a day for miracles. Gold ruffed the second club and switched back to hearts. Mihov ruffed in dummy and took the spade finesse. Gold won and returned a spade. Mihov won, played the ♦Q, ducked, then ruffed a spade and ruffed a club. Gold overruffed and was endplayed either to lead a trump to dummy, which was good, or a spade from the ♠86 into declarer's ♠J7. Down two, -200.

The auction in the Closed Room looks a bit more normal, though 6♦ seems rather conservative since opposite many typical 2NT openings for the minors at this vulnerability West's hand might easily produce a play for seven. Still, when you've played opposite van Prooijen enough you know he never has extras.

Nevertheless, Danailov's 6♥ bid turned a potential push into a costly loss. Verhees's choice of the ♦A lead was not exactly his best, but Danailov tried to return the favor by playing a spade at trick two. Verhees rose with the ace and...played the ♥8. When dummy's nine held Danailov pitched on the ♦K, then exited with a club. Verhees won, cashed the ♥A and his other high club, and Danailov claimed eight tricks for down four, -800. That was 14 imps to NEDUK, trailing now by only 3 at 33-30.

This board produced blood all over the carpet. It was virtually a push in ONI-TAKA-China Women at 200 for N/S from 5♦x versus 100 from 6♦ down one. Those ladies sure bid'em up and play'em up. But Hristov-Iliev and Newell-Reid hit the jackpot when they bid to 6♣ here. Of course they declared from the East side to avoid the ruff — no point in falling at the final hurdle. That meant a 13-imp pick up for the All Stars and a 17-imp gain for Down Under. The former had now gone in front 43-35, the latter were leading 63-32.

A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. Your Editors have a work station on their desks.

Bd: 23
 Dir: South
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ Q7
 ♥ 8653
 ♦ J9753
 ♣ 75

West
 ♠ 8642
 ♥ J42
 ♦ K108
 ♣ KQ9

East
 ♠ AJ1095
 ♥ K
 ♦ AQ4
 ♣ AJ63

South
 ♠ K3
 ♥ AQ1097
 ♦ 62
 ♣ 10842

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>

Pass	Pass	1♣(STR)	1♥
Dbl	2♥	2♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Danailov</i>

Pass	Pass	1♣(STR)	Dbl(♥)
1♥	3♥	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

With spades sitting as they do there was nothing to the play in 4♠, both declarers (and indeed every declarer in all four matches) taking the requisite 11 tricks for a push at +450. Still 33-30, Stamatov.

Bd: 24
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ 103
 ♥ AJ98762
 ♦ Q6
 ♣ J7

West
 ♠ J85
 ♥ K104
 ♦ A1095
 ♣ A94

East
 ♠ A642
 ♥ 3
 ♦ 832
 ♣ K10853

South
 ♠ KQ97
 ♥ Q5
 ♦ KJ74
 ♣ Q62

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1♦	1♥	Dbl	Rdbl
1NT	2♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Danailov</i>
1♦	3♥	All Pass	

In the Open Room Stefanov led a diamond against 2♥, ducked to Gold's queen. Gold played a spade to the king, then called for the ♥Q, K, A. He cashed the ♥J and led a diamond to the king and ace and the defense cashed out to hold him to eight tricks, +110. When similar play in the Closed Room produced the same number of tricks for the defense, 3♥ ended down one, -50, and NEDUK had 4 more imps and the lead at 34-33.

Zhang for Geely was the only other North to go plus; he brought home 3♥ to reduce the margin in his match to 27. At the halfway point in the set All Stars led Oz Players by 43-35 and China Women were up 55-43.

Bd: 25
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ 96
 ♥ 1097
 ♦ Q10754
 ♣ K75

West
 ♠ AK107
 ♥ AQ
 ♦ 832
 ♣ Q632

East
 ♠ J832
 ♥ J62
 ♦ KJ9
 ♣ A94

South
 ♠ Q54
 ♥ K8543
 ♦ A6
 ♣ J108

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1NT	2♥	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Danailov</i>
Dbl	2♥	Dbl	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Mihov's 1NT overcall of 1♥ in the Open Room led his side to the notrump game while Verhees' double led to a spade game. If nine tricks are easier than ten, as they say, then Mihov would pick up a swing for his team. But "they" were wrong — at least this time. Against 3NT Gold led the ♥10 to the queen and Mihov misguessed diamonds, playing low to the king and ace because he needed South to have the ♣K

and ♠Q if he was going to make his game. Back came a heart and Mihov cashed one top spade before leading a second diamond. Gold rose with the queen and the defense cashed three hearts before Bakhshi exited with a spade, trying to talk Mihov out of the finesse. It didn't work and Mihov claimed the rest for down one, -100.

In the Closed Room 4♠ also received the lead of the ♥10. Verhees won cheaply, cashed one top spade, crossed to the ♣A, played a low spade to the ten, drew the last trump, and guessed diamonds well by playing low to the nine and ace. The defense could cash two clubs but that was the end as Verhees finished with ten tricks for +620. 12 more imps for NEDUK, who led now 46-33. Here declarer's play in diamonds was based on the idea that if the ♣K was right he did not mind losing two diamonds, if it was wrong then this play in the diamond suit was the one most likely to hold his losers to one.

The All Stars stayed low in one room and beat 3NT in the other to pick up another 7 imps. Everyone else made a small plus score with the E/W cards.

Bd: 26 North
 Dlr: East ♠ 108
 Vul: Both ♥ 10
 ♦ KQ9876
 ♣ QJ84

West	East
♠ AJ3	♠ K965
♥ 65432	♥ AJ9
♦ 52	♦ A1043
♣ A52	♣ 109

South
 ♠ Q742
 ♥ KQ87
 ♦ J
 ♣ K763

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
		1♦(1)	Dbl
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
Pass	2♦	All Pass	
(1) Could be short			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
		1♦(1)	Dbl
Rdbl(♥)	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥	3♦	All Pass	
(1) Could be short			

Against 2♦ in the Open Room Stefanov led the ♣10. Gold dropped the jack under Mihov's ace, won the

club return in dummy, led the ♦J, which held, then exited with the ♥K. Stefanov won the ace and switched to a low spade to the jack. Mihov cashed the ♠A and played back a club for Stefanov to ruff, but the defense could only come to one more trick for down one, -100.

In the Closed Room Stamatov was playing one level higher and received the same ♣10 lead to the ace. He won the club return in hand, played a diamond to the jack, which won, then a low spade to the ten and king. Van Prooijen led a spade to the queen and ace and Verhees led back a club, ruffed, then a spade to the jack, ruffed. Stamatov exited with the ♦K to the ace whereupon the defense could only cash the ♥A and surrender. Down two, -200, was 3 more imps to NEDUK, increasing their lead to 49-33.

At the other three tables one pair in each match handled the deal well and went plus in both rooms. The All Stars declared 1NT as E/W and 2♣ as N/S and made them both. China Women made 1NT as N/S and 2♥ as E/W, and finally Geely made 2♥ as E/W and defeated East in 1NT. Each team picked up 5 imps for their pains.

Bd: 27 North
 Dlr: South ♠ AK754
 Vul: None ♥ Q
 ♦ AQJ7
 ♣ K86

West	East
♠ 3	♠ QJ1082
♥ AK9632	♥ 1087
♦ 109	♦ 2
♣ 10432	♣ QJ75

South
 ♠ 96
 ♥ J54
 ♦ K86543
 ♣ A9

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
		3♥(3)	Pass
2♦(1)	Dbl	Pass	4♦
Pass	3♠	All Pass	
Pass	5♦		
(1) Multi			
(2) Good hand			
(3) Pass-or-correct			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
			Pass
3♥	Dbl	4♥	5♦
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

There was nothing to the play of either diamond contract and Stamatov picked up a useful 11 imps for +920 vs -420. That made the score 49-44, NEDUK. The Multi worked so well here because South could never show values at his first turn, since he might have been facing a balanced 13-15 without support for diamonds. Could (or should?) North bid 4♥ over 4♦? We think so.

All Stars seemed to have sown up their match against Oz Players by picking up the slam swing. But Geely closed the margin to 9 imps by generating the same pick-up. Both tables missed slam in China Women against ONI-TAKA. The latter trailed by 17 imps now with five deals to go.

Bd: 28 North
 Dir: West ♠ J1084
 Vul: N/S ♥ A64
 ♦ 3
 ♣ KJ863

West
 ♠ ---
 ♥ KQ5
 ♦ KJ1065
 ♣ AQ1072

East
 ♠ AK9765
 ♥ 97
 ♦ AQ987
 ♣ ---

South
 ♠ Q32
 ♥ J10832
 ♦ 42
 ♣ 954

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥(1)	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5NT	Pass	7♦	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Rdbl	All Pass

(1) Artificial game force (3♣ was non-forcing)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
1♦	Pass	2♥(♠)	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6♦	All Pass

“...not tho’ the soldier knew,
 Some one had blunder’d.”
 — Alfred Lord Tennyson,
 The Charge of the Light Brigade

The wheels seem to have come off the Bulgarians’ wagon in the Open Room. It appears that 5NT was

intended to show two key cards (♣A, ♦K) plus a “useful” void and that Stefanov did not consider a spade void useful (since he had bid the suit) and so interpreted it as showing a heart void. *C’est la vie*. The redouble might have been to rub the Brits’ noses in it or to scare them into a costly save. It did neither. Gold led the ♥A and a few seconds later Mihov was claiming down one, -200.

The Dutch in the Closed Room sailed into 6♦ (if one can characterize a five-round auction as sailing), Stamatov led a spade, and Verhees played it very nicely to take all the tricks. He ruffed the spade in hand, led a low diamond to dummy, ruffed a second spade, led another low diamond to dummy, and claimed (taking four spade tricks in dummy, five diamonds, two spade ruffs in hand, the ♣A, and a heart ruff in hand once the hearts have gone away on the good spades). Plus 940 was worth 15 imps, NEDUK back in the driver’s seat at 64-44.

All the other tables played the small slam (surprise!) with only an overtrick changing hands.

And the hits just keep on coming.

Bd: 29 North
 Dir: North ♠ A10
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ3
 ♦ 1092
 ♣ 109532

West
 ♠ 72
 ♥ J42
 ♦ A543
 ♣ AJ74

East
 ♠ KQ64
 ♥ 85
 ♦ KJ86
 ♣ KQ8

South
 ♠ J9853
 ♥ A10976
 ♦ Q7
 ♣ 6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
3NT	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
Pass	Pass	1♦	2♥(♥+♠)
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

The Bulgarians in the Open Room had a short, unimpeded auction to 3NT, but the result was anything but sweet. Bakhshi led the ♥10, which held, and continued with a low heart. After five rounds of hearts and a spade to Gold’s ace the contract was

two down, -200.

In the Closed Room Danailov showed his distribution if not his substance and when Stamatov couldn't take a joke he found himself in game. Verhees (who hadn't doubled) led a trump. Danailov won in hand and played a spade to the ace and a spade. Van Prooijen won the queen and returned a second trump and now, with no quick hand entry to stop the defense from leading another trump, declarer was destined for down two and conceded it immediately; -200. That was another 9imps to NEDUK, running away from the Bulgarians at 73-44.

The same swing (sort of) saw ONI-TAKA gain 7imps by defeating 3♥ and 2NT for 7imps. The margin was down to 10 at 61-51 for the ladies. And Down Under also picked up 7imps when a quirk of notrump ranges saw them play 1NT making and setting 3NT. The lead was back up to 16 now.

Bd: 30 North
 Dlr: East ♠ A65
 Vul: None ♥ 107
 ♦ J109765
 ♣ QJ

West
 ♠ K9732
 ♥ 853
 ♦ 83
 ♣ A72

East
 ♠ J84
 ♥ KJ942
 ♦ K
 ♣ 10965

South
 ♠ Q10
 ♥ AQ6
 ♦ AQ42
 ♣ K843

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1♠	2♠	Pass	1♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Danailov</i>
1♠	2♦	Pass	1♣(STR)
Pass	3♠	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Both tables reached 5♦, albeit from different sides, and both defenses led a spade. Both declarers guessed the spade position and had no trouble taking 12 tricks. A push at +420. Still 73-44.

No one generated more than an overtrick here; let's move on to more dramatic events.

Bd: 31 North
 Dlr: South ♠ A107
 Vul: N/S ♥ AQ8754
 ♦ 3
 ♣ A106

West
 ♠ Q86
 ♥ K1062
 ♦ KQ107
 ♣ K7

East
 ♠ 92
 ♥ 93
 ♦ A9865
 ♣ J842

South
 ♠ KJ543
 ♥ J
 ♦ J42
 ♣ Q953

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Mihov</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1♦	2♥	All Pass	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Stamatov</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Danailov</i>
1♦(1)	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♥	All Pass	
(1) Could be short			

In the Open Room Gold-Bakhshi's methods allowed them to stop at the two-level and with nothing more to guide him Stefanov got off to a spade lead, finding the queen for declarer when he easily could have guessed it on his own. Gold got out with a heart to the jack and king and Mihov switched to the ♦Q, then continued the suit. Gold ruffed, cashed his two top hearts and gave up a heart, then claimed 10 tricks; +170.

In the Closed Room van Prooijen led a club, Stamatov winning with the ten when Verhees ducked. A heart to the jack and king was followed by a spade shift. Stamatov rose with the ace to draw trumps lest he fall prey to a ruff if he won the trick in dummy. He drove out the ♥10, ruffed the second round when Verhees played the ♦K and a second diamond, then lost the spade finesse to score up +140. Another imp to NEDUK, now 74-44.

The heart partscore was enough for both tables in Geely-Down Under. But while the China Women went down in 3♥ (on the lead of the ♠9, yet) Tadashi Teramoto as South got himself to 4♠. If the defense goes passive by simply leading diamonds, what is declarer to do? Answer: he must ruff and lead a low

heart from dummy to his jack and West's king. (Yes West can duck but declarer can still come home with careful card-reading.) If West wins and a third diamond is played, South can ruff in dummy, unblock the trump ace, ruff a heart to hand and play two more rounds of trump. Teramoto brought home the game and now ONI-TAKA had moved in front by 3imps. Oz Players picked up the same game swing but it was too little, too late for them. They were 16 down with one deal to go.

And so to our denouement:

Bd: 32 North
 Dlr: West ♠ Q107
 Vul: E/W ♥ A98
 ♦ AKQ42
 ♣ 62

West
 ♠ 6542
 ♥ J654
 ♦ J6
 ♣ A84

East
 ♠ AJ83
 ♥ Q10732
 ♦ 8
 ♣ J107

South
 ♠ K9
 ♥ K
 ♦ 109753
 ♣ KQ953

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
Mihov	Gold	Stefanov	Bakhshi
Verhees	Stamatov	v Prooijen	Danailov
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Both tables reached 3NT by North and both received the ♥3 lead. With five diamonds and two hearts in the bag you need two more tricks. How should you set about obtaining them? One way is to play for the ♣A outside, another to play for the ♠J outside, and a third way is to play for the ♣J10 outside. As soon as you lose the lead you know a heart will come back and you will be unable to knock out another ace without the defense cashing at least three hearts to go with their two aces (and possibly the ♠J). Well, how would you play it? (No fair looking at the E/W hands — I know, too late!)

In the Open Room Bakhshi won the heart, crossed to a high diamond, and played a spade to the king. When that held he led the ♣K to the ace, won the heart return, and claimed nine tricks. Note that even if Mihov, plays back a spade after winning the ♣A the defense can only cash three of them to go with their ♣A. (Of course the spades could have been 5-3 but then either East might not have led a heart if he had five spades or the suit would be blocked if West had five.) Also note that if the ♠K loses to the ace and a heart comes back you still have a chance if the ♠J is onside. Only the ♠A with West and the ♠J with East beats the hand on this line of play.

In the Closed Room Stamatov made the same spade play (after cashing three top diamonds) and a heart came back. Now BBO says North claimed 10 tricks for +430 but there had to be more to the play for declarer to take 10 tricks. Perhaps when declarer cashed the last two diamonds East thought he was squeezed and pitched the ♠AJ, playing his partner for the queen. We may never know, but what we do know is that Stamatov gained 1 imp, making the final score 74-45.

While Hans-Nunn bid the hand unopposed to 5♦ (1♦-2♦; 2NT-3♥(SPL); 5♦) as did both tables in All Stars-Oz Players, Geely played 3NT on the heart lead and declarer attacked clubs; down one and a win for Down Under by 27.

So who if anyone would pick up a swing in ONI-TAKA China Women? Both tables played 3NT by North on a heart lead. Both won, crossed to the ♦K and led a black suit: one led a spade, one led a club. Ino got it right, Wu got it wrong, and ONI-TAKA had 10imps to win by 13. Never in doubt, as they say.



“Yes, but you see there’s no way that +110 and +170 equal 400.”

2013 Yeh Bros Cup to follow the 2013 NEC Cup in Yokohma?

Negotiations are going on between the Yeh Bros Cup (represented by Patrick Huang) and the JCBL (represented by Nakatani Tadayoshi) to hold the 2013 Yeh Bros Cup right after the 2013 NEC Cup in Yokohama. There are many logistics to overcome (such as the venue booking, hotel room rates, etc.). The final decision will be made at the JCBL Board meeting on 23rd March. If the parties can come to an agreement the expected schedule would be the 2013 NEC Cup from 6th to 11th February followed by the Yeh Bros Cup from either 12th to 16th or 13th to 17th at the Pacifico Yokohama.

NEC Semi-finals (1st half): NEDUK vs Bulgarian All Stars

by Barry Rigal

Our first deal out features a tough competitive decision and a potential lead problem — but it's only about overtricks.

Bd: 1
Dlr: North
Vul: None

North
♠ 9
♥ AKQ104
♦ 65
♣ KQ975

West
♠ J105
♥ 7
♦ QJ1087
♣ AJ62

East
♠ KQ7632
♥ J9
♦ K42
♣ 83

South
♠ A84
♥ 86532
♦ A93
♣ 104

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
	1♥	2♠	4♥
4♠	5♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	1♥	2♠	2NT(♥)
4♠	5♣	Pass	5♦
Pass	5♥	All Pass	

Both Norths competed to 5♥. Isporski, buoyed by his limited status because of no strong club competed to 5♣. Gold had to bid 5♥ since he was unlimited. Both Easts led a spade. Declarer played a club to hand, then drew trumps and gave up a club to ensure making five. In six you would presumably have to run the ♣10 at trick two or cross to a third trump in dummy to lead a club towards your hand.

In Down Under-ONI-TAKA Newell-Reid stopped in 4♥ after a "strong" (13+) 1♣ while Ino-Teramoto climbed to 5♥ over 4♠. Down Under broke on top with an overtrick.



"There, it moved again. Did you see it?"

Bd: 2
Dlr: East
Vul: N/S

North
♠ Q87643
♥ 9
♦ 1073
♣ AQ8

West
♠ J52
♥ AQJ87
♦ ---
♣ 106432

East
♠ AK109
♥ 104
♦ Q86542
♣ 9

South
♠ ---
♥ K6532
♦ AKJ9
♣ KJ75

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
		Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	2♦	Pass
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		1♠	Dbl
2♦(♥)	Pass	2♥	All Pass

Everybody did their best to play in somebody else's suit. It is rare for both sides to try and play the same pair of suits, but the symmetry of the two auctions here is both elegant and striking, don't you think?

Against 2♥ the defenders led a trump and declarer won in dummy to play a spade to the ten, ruffed. The defenders shifted to a club to the ace for a diamond back to force dummy. Declarer ended up with his five heart tricks in dummy and a club ruff in hand but nothing else. In the other room the defenders led a diamond against 2♠ and West ruffed and returned a club, later ruffing a second diamond to give his partner a club ruff. Six trump losers and the heart ace meant two down and a 7-1 lead for All Stars.

Newell played 2♠ down two from the North seat (again after a strong 1♣ opening, with a 1NT overcall to show the odd suits). Teramoto at least got to a suit where his side had the majority of cards when as South he overcalled 1♦ with 1♥ and rebid 2♣ over his partner's 1♠ advance. Not that it did him any good. Nunn led a trump and declarer played a heart to the king and ace, got a trump back which he won in dummy, took a diamond finesse, and ran into a ruff and a third trump back. He scored his six minor-suit winners and that was it. Down two and no swing.

Bd: 3
Dir: South
Vul: E/W

North
♠ 3
♥ AQJ98762
♦ AQJ98762
♣ 9

West
♠ A1098542
♥ 7
♦ K53
♣ K6

East
♠ K6
♥ KQ82
♦ 4
♣ QJ8743

South
♠ QJ7
♥ J9654
♦ 10
♣ A1052

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♠	5♦	Dbl	All Pass

East has an interesting lead problem against 5♦x. In fact, anyone who tells you they know what to do here is either lying or has seen the board. Hristov led a top heart and collected 100; van Prooijen led a trump (an interesting choice) but everything except a top heart was surely going to get 300. 7-6 for All Stars.

Both tables reached 5♦x in our second match (and after Reid had opened the South cards 1♦ to show 8-12 with hearts he had the delight of playing it). West led a singleton heart and had 300 without breaking a sweat. The other way up Hans led the ♠K in a suit that had been bid and rebid. When Nunn followed with the ♥10 Hans read this as suit preference and shifted to a low heart. Down one only and 5 imps to ONI-TAKA. Serious players reading this would do well to discuss with their partners where they think the blame for this accident should lie. ONI-TAKA now led 5-1.

Bd: 4
Dir: West
Vul: Both

North
♠ K10764
♥ J2
♦ K94
♣ 954

West
♠ J53
♥ A9864
♦ Q2
♣ J82

East
♠ 92
♥ KQ103
♦ AJ10
♣ Q1073

South
♠ AQ8
♥ 75
♦ 87653
♣ AK6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	2♥	Dbl
Pass	2♠	3♥	Pass
Pass	3♠	All Pass	

The dilemma posed by the South cards on this deal is obvious: if you pass over 1♦ and 2♥ you get to defend 2♠ — it is not reasonable to expect North to balance. But if you double 2♥ at your second turn can you blame North for competing to 3♠? This was not a big IMP decision. 3♠ went down 200 when the defenders led clubs early enough to set up their trick in that suit before declarer could get the diamonds going. 2♥ made +140 when the diamond finesse succeeded. NEDUK had 2 imps to lead 8-7.

In our second match Newell with the North cards passed initially (0-8 or balanced) so Reid did not overcall 1♦. But when the opponents stopped in 2♥ Newell balanced into 2♠ (he had a maximum after all). That gained him 3 imps for -100, since in the other room Ino as North had come into a live auction with a 1♠ overcall at his second turn. (Alfredo Versace would be so proud of him.) His partner took him seriously and pushed him to 3♠; -200. It was 5-4 now, ONI-TAKA.

Bd: 5
Dir: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ A532
♥ QJ2
♦ KJ
♣ K1042

West
♠ J9
♥ 109854
♦ 109865
♣ 6

East
♠ K1064
♥ K6
♦ AQ432
♣ J9

South
♠ Q87
♥ A73
♦ 7
♣ AQ8753

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
5♦	1♣	1♦	2♦
All Pass	Dbl	Pass	6♣

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	1♣	1NT(1)	Dbl
5♦	Pass	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

When both tables bid a no-play slam on a combined 26 hcp you are entitled to assume that something has gone seriously wrong. I'm less inclined to blame Kovachev than I am to blame Bakhshi, but it turns out that the real culprits in the Open Room were the Italians. Their partnership style is to use a double as action (wanting partner to bid if he has a proper excuse) if they are in a forcing auction, but the Brits here did not agree about whether this auction was forcing. Now they do have that agreement, but at the time Bakhshi thought the double showed extras and Gold thought it was regressive. An extra undertrick on a passive lead by Hristov gave All Stars back the lead at 10-8.

Well done to Ino-Teramoto here. Teramoto as South jumped to 3♦ over the 1♦ overall showing his splinter. Now he could pass out 5♦x doubled happily and collect 300...to lose 8imps. In the other room a weakish notrump from North shut East out and South blasted 3NT making a painless +660 after a diamond lead (when East covered the ♥K and got endplayed later on). 12-5 to Down Under.

Bd: 6
Dlr: East
Vul: E/W

North	♠ 1064
	♥ AK53
	♦ AJ5
	♣ AK7

West	♠ 83
	♥ 1098
	♦ 8742
	♣ 10985

East	♠ AQ9
	♥ Q64
	♦ KQ1093
	♣ Q6

South	♠ KJ752
	♥ J72
	♦ 6
	♣ J432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		1NT	All Pass

Both tables played 1NT with the East cards on a low spade to the ten and queen. Van Prooijen played the ♦K, ducked all around, then the ♦Q to North's ace as South pitched a club. A spade return to the nine and ace left South unsure who had the remaining spades. He played a heart to his partner's king for a

third spade and van Prooijen won and cleared the diamonds as South pitched another club. That was fatal. The defenders could only score North's three winners now for down one.

Gold varied the script by winning the first diamond and playing a second spade. Hristov did not know diamonds were not breaking and so he hopped up with the ♠A to try to cash out. But that simplified the defenders' task enormously. When South pitched a heart and a club on the diamonds it was easy for Gold to win the ♦J and play back a spade, then discard his hearts on the run of the spades. With the ♣Q falling, the defenders had +400 and 7imps to give NEDUK a 15-10 lead.

In our second match Hans opened the East cards 1♦ and Tony Nunn passed rather than psych a response. Ino balanced with 2NT, strong and natural, and Teramoto transferred to 4♠. Well bid for +420 — lose another 8imps. In the other room Hirata had opened a strong notrump, doubled by North for penalties. East escaped to 2♦, Reid doubled for takeout, and Newell sat for it (it wasn't game after all). Reid guessed well to lead a club, and after the ♣K, ♣A and a third club West pitched a heart. South won, played back a heart to the king and the defenders cashed out. When declarer somewhat culpably misguessed trumps he had lost six plain tricks and two trumps for -800. 20-5, Down Under.

Bd: 7
Dlr: South
Vul: Both

North	♠ KQJ108
	♥ 86
	♦ Q1085
	♣ 92

West	♠ 92
	♥ AJ9
	♦ K64
	♣ AJ1087

East	♠ A764
	♥ 542
	♦ A932
	♣ Q5

South	♠ 53
	♥ KQ1073
	♦ J7
	♣ K643

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
			Pass
1♦	1♠	1NT	Dbl (t/o)
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
			Pass
1♦	1♠	Dbl	2♦(♥)
Pass	2♥	All Pass	

The run of failing contracts continued in our featured match. 2♠ was no fun at all on the lead of the ♣Q. Gold scored four spades, one heart and only one diamond, since at an early point in the hand he led a diamond to the jack and ace. But 2♥ was even less enjoyable. Here too the ♣Q lead (yes a trump might have been even better) saw West cash two clubs and play a third (knowing declarer had no useful discard). North pitched a diamond and East ruffed and played back a trump to the king and ace for a fourth club. North scored his ♥8 and three trumps in dummy plus one spade, but that was it. Down 300; 18-10 for NEDUK.

In our other match the declarers played the same two strains, doing one trick better in each case than in the other room. That meant ONI-TAKA had 3 imps and the running score was 8-20.

Bd: 8
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ QJ
 ♥ A63
 ♦ A108
 ♣ KQJ76

West
 ♠ A9432
 ♥ QJ94
 ♦ 54
 ♣ A8

East
 ♠ K10876
 ♥ 52
 ♦ 732
 ♣ 543

South
 ♠ 5
 ♥ K1087
 ♦ KQJ96
 ♣ 1092

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1♠	Dbl	3♠	4♥

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♥	1NT	Pass	2♠(1)
Dbl	3♣	3♠	4♣

All Pass

(1) Range?

One of the movies of Little Dorrit was entitled "Nobody's fault." Here the disparate systems in play made it easy for Kovachev to avoid hearts and impossible for Bakhshi to play anywhere else. With 11 tricks on top in diamonds or clubs, both games are good but might go down to a bad split in a side-suit. *Cui culpa* for 4♥ down three? I say nobody.

All Stars had 7 imps as a reward for missing game and trailed 17-18.

In our other match the penalty for missing game was to lose 7 imps. Here the issue was what action to take after West's 1♠ opening. Ino bid 2♣ and was raised to 5♣ after a preemptive spade raise from East. That was a painless +400. Newell doubled 1♠ and when his partner doubled 3♠ (cards?) passed it out. The defenders had +100 but the match margin was down to Down Under by 5 imps.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ 86
 ♥ AJ63
 ♦ AK4
 ♣ AKQ5

West
 ♠ 10743
 ♥ K94
 ♦ Q985
 ♣ 96

East
 ♠ AQJ92
 ♥ Q10875
 ♦ 107
 ♣ 3

South
 ♠ K5
 ♥ 2
 ♦ J632
 ♣ J108742

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
	2NT	Pass	3♠ (♣+♦?)
Pass	4♣	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	2NT	Pass	3♠ (minors?)
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

N/S were surely getting the most painful of workouts — and in public, too. An uninspired South might have blasted 3NT over 2NT and earned 10 imps while scoring low marks for star quality, style or artistic presentation. Both our Souths wanted to win their talent show so opted for the more elegant route with their cards. That got them to slam, though you could say that it would have required great restraint for Gold to pass 5♣ (even facing a non-slam try raise) and superhuman restraint for Isporski to assume his partner had no aces and a 5-count. No swing; still 18-17 NEDUK.

Both tables in our other match reached 3NT, Newell after a strong club and an overcall, Ino after Teramoto raised a 2NT opening to 3NT. 2 imps worth of overtricks made the match margin 20-17.

Bd: 10 North
 Dir: East ♠ 8654
 Vul: Both ♥ A654
 ♦ AQ94
 ♣ Q

West
 ♠ Q10
 ♥ QJ8
 ♦ 52
 ♣ K87653

East
 ♠ AJ92
 ♥ K9
 ♦ K8763
 ♣ A4

South
 ♠ K73
 ♥ 10732
 ♦ J10
 ♣ J1092

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♠(♣)	Pass	3♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♥
Dbl	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Van Prooijen gave 3NT the old college try. On Kovachev's spade lead (an interesting choice and considerably better in practice than a top club) declarer won the ♠Q and led a heart from dummy. Suspecting trickery North pounced with his ace, declarer unblocking the king, and shifted to diamonds. A low diamond went to the ten and when the jack came back Isporski won and reverted to spades. Van Prooijen finessed and was now up to eight tricks: three spades, two hearts, one diamond and two clubs. The ninth trick obstinately failed to materialize, so he was down one.

In the Open Room Gold's reopening double has a lot to recommend it — if not on this deal. Bakhshi could have passed and conceded -670 but he tried to find a better spot and Iliev had enough to try to punish him. The defenders led the ♠Q and set up a diamond in due course for down 500. The 12 imps for All Stars gave them a 29-17 lead.

In our other match both Wests invited 3NT and both Easts accepted. It came down to undertricks. Hans escaped for -200 on a top club lead, Hirata went for -300 on a heart lead to the ace and king and a heart continuation. Declarer tested clubs, then tried the spade finesse and Reid ducked once, persuading declarer to cash the ♥Q before repeating the finesse. 23-17 now for Down Under.

Bd: 11 North
 Dir: South ♠ 10
 Vul: None ♥ 97
 ♦ K876
 ♣ AKQ1053

West
 ♠ KJ964
 ♥ J65
 ♦ AJ4
 ♣ 42

East
 ♠ AQ752
 ♥ A2
 ♦ 1032
 ♣ J87

South
 ♠ 83
 ♥ KQ10843
 ♦ Q95
 ♣ 96

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
			2♦(Multi)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
			2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Both N/S pairs blew their opponents (cold for all of 2♠) out of the water. Not exactly a triumph. Verhees led a small club against 4♥. Declarer won and played a spade, letting van Prooijen produce the textbook defense of a low trump shift to retain control. Declarer finessed and Verhees won the jack and returned a club. Eventually the defenders scored just their red aces for down one. That was worth 3 imps when 3NT lost five spades and the two red aces. All Stars led 32-17.

Both N/S pairs went plus in our other match. The New Zealanders defended 4♠ down 50, whereas on a Multi auction Ino played 2♥ from the North seat on the helpful lead of the ♥A. That was +200 for Japan, down 23-21 now.



"So why'd they bench you?"

Bd: 12 North
 Dir: West ♠ K962
 Vul: N/S ♥ J105
 ♦ Q6
 ♣ 7543

West
 ♠ A10753
 ♥ KQ98
 ♦ ---
 ♣ Q982

East
 ♠ QJ8
 ♥ 7432
 ♦ KJ532
 ♣ J

South
 ♠ 4
 ♥ A6
 ♦ A109874
 ♣ AK106

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
1♠	Pass	2♠	3♦
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dbf

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♥	Pass	2♥	3♦
3♥	Pass	Pass	4♣

All Pass

The canape major style employed by Verhees-van Prooijen had worked very badly earlier in the set. Here it was indirectly responsible for a similar pick-up. One might attribute some element of the gain to that insouciant jump to game by Iliev, of course, were one so inclined. 4♠x on the lead of the ♦Q saw Iliev ruff. A club to the jack and king allowed Bakhshi to play a trump to Gold's king for a trump back. Iliev now needed the ♥A doubleton onside or he would have been in deep trouble. As it was, when Iliev played a heart from dummy Bakhshi hopped up with his ace and played back the suit and now declarer could make the rest except for the club loser he could not ruff in dummy. Had Gold returned his diamond after winning the ♠K he would have collected at least 300.

4♣ in the other room on a top heart lead had some sort of play. Declarer returned the suit and van Prooijen won, cashed the ♠A and led another spade. Now declarer took one high trump to find the bad news and then played the ♦A. West ruffed and exited in spades, and the defense had a trump and a diamond still to come for down two. 32-25 now for the All Stars.

Nunn-Hans started like the Bulgarians, but here Nunn bid only 3♠ over 3♦. When Teramoto balanced with 4♣ Ino took him seriously and bid 5♣. Nunn

doubled this and led the ♥K. Declarer won in hand and played the ♦A. Nunn ruffed, cashed his major-suit tricks, and sat back for his trump trick and partner's diamond winner. Since Newell-Reid had sold out to 3♠ for -140 (the play duplicating Iliev's line) Down Under had 12 imps and led 35-21.

Bd: 13 North
 Dir: North ♠ 106
 Vul: Both ♥ AK98
 ♦ KJ5
 ♣ KJ103

West
 ♠ KQ732
 ♥ J2
 ♦ 107
 ♣ Q752

East
 ♠ J
 ♥ Q653
 ♦ Q432
 ♣ A964

South
 ♠ A9854
 ♥ 1074
 ♦ A986
 ♣ 8

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	3NT		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠(INV.)

All Pass

Is that South hand worth a drive to game facing a strong(ish) notrump? If your range is 15-17 you might chance it. That was what Bakhshi thought, and left Gold to play game on a low heart lead. Gold led the ♠10 and ducked East's jack, letting Hristov shift to a club to the queen and king. A spade to dummy brought the bad news, and when the diamond finesse lost things did not seem to be going declarer's way. But East could do no better than play back a diamond and declarer could cash the diamonds and duck a club to East, taking three tricks in each red suit, a spade, and eventually two clubs. A spade lead might make your task impossible — but who would do that? 35-32, NEDUK.

Down Under bid game (South driving there after a strong club and a "strong" notrump rebid by Newell) while Teramoto invited game and Ino rejected the invite. Nunn found the singleton spade lead, ducked all around, but then shifted to a club and declarer was back to nine tricks. Where it mattered more, Hirata led a heart. Newell won, ducked a spade and

Hirata shifted to clubs, producing the same nine tricks as those Gold had taken. It was suddenly 45-21 for Down Under.

Bd: 14 North
 Dlr: East ♠ Q764
 Vul: None ♥ AK
 ♦ K10
 ♣ A10542

West
 ♠ AKJ108
 ♥ 104
 ♦ Q832
 ♣ K3

East
 ♠ 9
 ♥ QJ53
 ♦ A9754
 ♣ 976

South
 ♠ 532
 ♥ 98762
 ♦ J6
 ♣ QJ8

Open Room

West <i>Iliev</i>	North <i>Gold</i>	East <i>Hristov</i>	South <i>Bakhshi</i>
1♠	1NT	Pass	Pass
All Pass			

Closed Room

West <i>Verhees</i>	North <i>Isporski</i>	East <i>v Prooijen</i>	South <i>Kovachev</i>
1♦	1NT	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	All Pass

The canape struck again. It was hard for N/S to do anything but sit back and watch Verhees play 3♦. The defenders cashed two hearts and played a low club. Declarer drew trumps and claimed nine tricks.

1NT was no bargain on a diamond lead. Gold won his ♦K and played ace and another club. When Iliev won this he decided he needed to set up spades. He led out the ♠J and Gold put up the queen and had eight tricks when it held — easy game, bridge. That made the score 41-32 for NEDUK.

Both Souths transferred into hearts after they heard their partner overcall 1♠ with 1NT. Each East led a spade for want of anything better to do and collected a ruff with a trump trick. That meant +110 for North and no swing. Still 45-21 for Down Under.



“Psyching is thirsty work.”

Bd: 15 North
 Dlr: South ♠ A42
 Vul: N/S ♥ QJ983
 ♦ ---
 ♣ J9832

West
 ♠ K8
 ♥ AK10
 ♦ AQ108763
 ♣ 7

East
 ♠ J9753
 ♥ 62
 ♦ KJ42
 ♣ A4

South
 ♠ Q106
 ♥ 754
 ♦ 95
 ♣ KQ1065

Open Room

West <i>Iliev</i>	North <i>Gold</i>	East <i>Hristov</i>	South <i>Bakhshi</i>
1♣	1♥	1♠	2♣
2♦	4♣	4♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

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

Slam is quite playable (unlike some of the contracts we’ve seen) but today the cards did not cooperate. Still a flat board. I guess you can only count yourself unlucky when the ace is wrong for you and right for your opponents.

In our second match Hirata produced a fit-jump in spades as East after a 1♥ overcall. Nothing would keep Takayama out of slam now. But Hans simply bid 1♠ over 1♥ and though he showed extras at his second turn he denied slam interest at his third, and Nunn had no choice but to stop in 5♦. A not unfortunate 10 imps; Down Under led 55-21.

Bd: 16 North
 Dlr: West ♠ A108
 Vul: E/W ♥ KQJ
 ♦ 974
 ♣ Q987

West
 ♠ Q764
 ♥ 432
 ♦ KQ5
 ♣ J42

East
 ♠ K53
 ♥ 10985
 ♦ AJ8
 ♣ K63

South
 ♠ J92
 ♥ A76
 ♦ 10632
 ♣ A105

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Bakhshi</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1NT

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Both tables led hearts against 1NT; both declarers passed the ♣9 to the ♣J but Bakhshi later played safe for his partscore while Isporski played for the overtrick and got it. It was 40-33 at set end. ONI-TAKA picked up the same imp but trailed 55-22 with 16 to go.



"And now I shall reveal the *real* man behind the mask."

17th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Saturday (Feb. 11)	10:00-12:15	NEC Cup Final (1)	416, 417
	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 Teams	501, 502
Sunday (Feb. 12)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup (Open Pairs)	501, 502
	18:00-20:00	Closing Ceremony	503

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

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

NEC Cup Final: four 16-board segments

