

NEC Bridge Festival

Sunday, February 12, 2012
Bulletin Number 7

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

Julian Stefanov – Vladimir Mihov Win Asuka Cup Shintaro Sugio – Takashi Hirai Win JCBL Cup



Asuka Cup Winners



JCBL Cup Winners

Top Finishers in Asuka Cup and JCBL Cup

Rank	Asuka Cup		JCBL Cup	
	Pair	Score	Pair	Score
1	Julian Stefanov–Vladimir Mihov	2544.64	Shintaro Sugio–Takashi Hirai	61.67
2	Bill Jacobs–Ben Thompson	2532.87	Akio Ijuin–Takako Ijuin	57.00
3	Chen Dawei–Takahiko Hirata	2522.72	Yasuhiro Okoshi–Kozo Omine	52.50
4	Gui Shengyue–Dai Jianming	2519.99		
5	Paul Hackett–Takako Fujimoto	2517.99		
6	Fiona Brown–Tom Hanlon	2481.69		
7	Masayuki Ino–Kyoko Toyofuku	2459.34		
8	Jiang Yi–Zhao Jinlong	2440.62		
9	Yukiko Hoshi–Tomoyuki Harada	2437.84		
10	Harumi Shibano–Yoshiyuki Nakamura	2396.58		

NEC Cup Bridge Festival 2012

Domo Arigato

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

As always Yokohama, and especially the Pacifico, are wonderful places for this event. Each year we marvel at the changes and development in the area, and this year is no exception. The Convention Center is a terrific playing venue, as was the Exhibition Hall for many years previously. The weather this year was pleasant and Japan is a welcome relief for those of us who will return home to bitter cold winter snow, or blazing heat. As always, everyone has been warm and friendly and it is our continuing great pleasure to return each year to reunite with our many good friends to share the happy times and the fun and excitement of this tournament. Your kindness and generosity warm our hearts. And as today is Valentine's Day, we would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a day of love and joy — not just for today, but for every day in the year.

The significant prizes and broad participation continue to make the **NEC Bridge Festival** an important event on the bridge calendar, and one which continues to grow in prestige. This year's field of 46 teams in the NEC Cup included many world-class teams as well as many improving Japanese teams. We were especially pleased at the increased attendance by Chinese teams, two of whom made it to the NEC Cup knockout. We hope our role here has in some small way contributed to the tournament's and JCBL's continued success.

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



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

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.

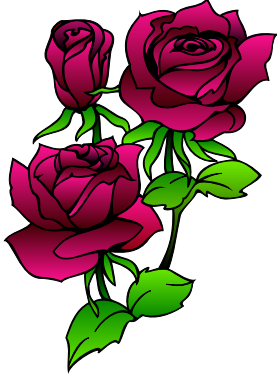
CONTACT: Japan Contract Bridge League, 2012 APBF Congress Organizing Committee
Phone: 81-3-3357-3741 Fax: 81-3-3357-7444 E-mail: apbf2012@jcbl.or.jp

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]





A Very Special Thank You

To the treasured patrons of the **2012 NEC Bridge Festival**

NEC Corporation

Pacifico Yokohama

NYK Cruises

Yokohama Grand Intercontinental Hotel



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

NEC Final (4th Quarter): Bulgarian All Stars vs Down Under

by Barry Rigal

With Down Under leading by 24 with 16 deals to play the set started with a moment of farce. Nobody was hurt but a number of the eight players emerged with scrambled egg all over their faces.

Bd: 49
Dlr: North
Vul: None

North
♠ AJ853
♥ 53
♦ QJ10
♣ 875

West
♠ K74
♥ KQJ74
♦ K72
♣ A6

East
♠ 1096
♥ A
♦ A98543
♣ KQ2

South
♠ Q2
♥ 109862
♦ 6
♣ J10943

Open Room

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

(1) Relays, GF

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
	2♠	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦	All Pass		

3NT by either East or West has the attraction of nine top tricks while 6♦ or 6NT by West is a sporting contract. I wish we could say the same for either 4♦ or 6♦ when played by East. We believe East showed a single suiter, then short hearts, 6331, five controls, and then no spade control.

But if you played 6♦ on a top club lead you'd count yourself unlucky to go down, since you need only 2-2 trumps or the hand with three diamonds to have at least three hearts. By my calculation that's about an eighty percent chance.

Of course to add insult to injury, when Nunn led a spade against 4♦, Hristov having passed a forcing call for some reason, the defenders took two spades, a ruff and a trump trick. Down one and no swing.

Bd: 50
Dlr: East
Vul: N/S

North
♠ Q107
♥ A987
♦ Q94
♣ QJ7

West
♠ K9654
♥ K6
♦ KJ75
♣ 82

East
♠ A8
♥ J10432
♦ 632
♣ 963

South
♠ J32
♥ Q5
♦ A108
♣ AK1054

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
		Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠(1)	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) Range ask

Deals like this one are what make the game fascinating to me. There is a bluff and double-bluff element that leaves me wondering whether anyone will ever really master the game.

The unsuccessful declarer, Tony Nunn, saw his LHO lead a fourth-highest spade to the ace and East return the eight. He false-carded with the jack and West ducked, playing the six. Now declarer did not know if spades were 4-3 or 5-2 but he played a heart to his queen, hoping that the king was onside. Simple — but unsuccessful.

Valio Kovachev followed with the ♠2 and ♠3, deliberately revealing the position to West, who won his king and exited with a middle spade. Declarer won and ran five clubs, West pitching his small heart, then two diamonds. Now declarer played for West to have started life with one of the red kings. He led to the ♥A and had the king not fallen would have had the choice of trying to drop the ♦K, pin the ♦J, or endplay East in hearts to lead away from the ♦K. All of this was moot when the ♥K put in an appearance. 12 imps to the All Stars, down 12 now.

To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.

Bd: 51
 Dlr: South
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ Q4
 ♥ Q1032
 ♦ 87542
 ♣ K8

West
 ♠ AK873
 ♥ 74
 ♦ AK103
 ♣ 53

East
 ♠ 6
 ♥ K96
 ♦ J6
 ♣ AJ109762

South
 ♠ J10952
 ♥ AJ85
 ♦ Q9
 ♣ Q4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♣	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦(1)	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♣	All Pass

West relayed after his strong(ish) club received a GF natural club response. He found short spades, then a 7321 type and gambled out 5♣ — alas, getting it played the wrong way up. On a heart lead the defense had three tricks, but on any other lead the entries are good enough to allow declarer to make an avoidance play in trumps, then play diamonds for the second discard he needs. Plus 100 went well with +150 from 3♣ on a spade lead. Declarer “forgot” to unblock the ♦J but the fall of the ♦Q made that irrelevant. The lead was down to 6 imps now.

Bd: 52
 Dlr: West
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ 964
 ♥ K1087
 ♦ A
 ♣ K9632

West
 ♠ K102
 ♥ Q9
 ♦ QJ8543
 ♣ J5

East
 ♠ AQ7
 ♥ J543
 ♦ K10962
 ♣ Q

South
 ♠ J853
 ♥ A62
 ♦ 7
 ♣ A10874

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦(♥)	Pass
2♣(♦)	Pass	3♦	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	Pass
3♦	All Pass		

The Bulgarians had a simple auction, the New Zealanders a complex one, but both achieved their aim of shutting out the opponents. It was a moral victory only this time, 3♣ is the limit on the N/S cards, but I ask you: which of these two sequences would you rather defend against? Give me the second one every time; you know the opponent’s hand-types far more clearly and both North and South get the chance to “balance.” The play in 3♦ was brief and uneventful at both tables. Plus 110 for both E/Ws and we could move on.

Bd: 53
 Dlr: North
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ 93
 ♥ 94
 ♦ AKJ
 ♣ 1098763

West
 ♠ K72
 ♥ KQJ5
 ♦ 10984
 ♣ AJ

East
 ♠ A106
 ♥ 102
 ♦ Q765
 ♣ KQ52

South
 ♠ QJ854
 ♥ A8763
 ♦ 32
 ♣ 4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	Pass	1NT	2♣
Dbl	Pass(♣)	Pass	Rdbl
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
All Pass			

Closed Room

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

How would 2♥x have fared on East’s trump lead (here the ♥10 works far better than the low one)? Declarer might as well duck, win the second heart, then cross to a top diamond and lead a spade up. If West wins and draws trump, then leads ♣A, ♣J declarer must discard from dummy to escape for –500. As it was, 3NT by East was extremely comfortable. South led a club. Declarer unblocked that suit, then went after hearts and had nine winners without breaking a sweat.

Sartaj Hans’ spade lead made life very awkward for

West. He won in hand, cashed the ♣A, then played a heart to the ten. Nunn ducked this and the next heart, but won the third and got off play with a diamond. Hans won that to play a spade. Nunn was allowed to win this trick and exit in spades, but declarer could take the ace, cross to his ♣J, take the ♥J and lead a diamond up to dummy to win two of the last three tricks. No swing; Down Under still led 96-90.

Bd: 54 North
 Dir: East ♠ Q74
 Vul: E/W ♥ 102
 ♦ AQ63
 ♣ AQ73

West
 ♠ AJ
 ♥ KQJ9753
 ♦ J2
 ♣ K10

East
 ♠ 852
 ♥ A64
 ♦ 75
 ♣ J9854

South
 ♠ K10963
 ♥ 8
 ♦ K10984
 ♣ 62

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♣(STR)	Pass	1♦(WK)	1♠
2♥	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
1♥	Dbf	2♥	4♠

A 4♥ opening by West would probably not have worked here; the aggressive Norths in this match would surely have doubled (and yes, a case for passing can be made) but even if they did not, South might have balanced with 4♠. As it was, both Souths did well to construct auctions to 4♠, though in the Open Room North did a lot and in the Closed Room it was South who took a somewhat aggressive position.

Against 4♠ the South players ruffed the second heart and led a trump up, later taking the club finesse to bring home +450. Problem? What problem? No swing again.



"I drive him to drink?"

Bd: 55 North
 Dir: South ♠ KJ83
 Vul: Both ♥ K752
 ♦ 97532
 ♣ ---

West
 ♠ Q1076
 ♥ 98
 ♦ KQ104
 ♣ 987

East
 ♠ 42
 ♥ QJ64
 ♦ AJ
 ♣ A10543

South
 ♠ A95
 ♥ A103
 ♦ 86
 ♣ KQJ62

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Of course there is a time and a place for unbridled aggression (when it works). The Editors, working as Monday-morning quarterbacks with 20-20 hindsight are, to a man, result-merchants. On this deal both Souths treated their hand as a strong notrump and both Norths took an aggressive position. Isporski drove to game, showing a three-suiter, Hans invited game with a relay, and could not go back to 2♥ when he got the wrong response.

In 3NT Reid led a top diamond. Newell overtook and cashed the ♦J, then exited with a low spade to the queen and king. Desperate for entries to hand Kovachev led a low spade to his nine. Reid won and cashed his diamonds, with the ♣A to come at the end.

4♥ was hopeless but on the lead of the ♣A declarer had a few tricks in the bank. He led a cunning ♦9 from hand and when East won the ♦J the suit was blocked. Back came a club. Hans ruffed and played ♥K, ♥A and a third heart. East had his three red-suit winners but declarer had the rest. Down one was an unexpected 3 imps for Down Under, up 99-90.



"I dropped it somewhere around here."

Bd: 56
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ K106
 ♥ 109742
 ♦ 10752
 ♣ 2

West
 ♠ QJ98
 ♥ A83
 ♦ 94
 ♣ A1086

East
 ♠ 75
 ♥ KQ6
 ♦ KQJ86
 ♣ QJ7

South
 ♠ A432
 ♥ J5
 ♦ A3
 ♣ K9543

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

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

Isporski led a top heart against 3NT. Declarer led a diamond to dummy and passed the ♣Q, ducked all around, then led the ♣J, covered all around. A second diamond lost to South, who shifted to a spade: queen, ace. When the ♠10 came back declarer conceded a trick to the ♠K and claimed 430.

Hristov in 3NT won the club lead cheaply in hand and repeated the club finesse, then drove out the ♦A. Nunn exited in clubs and declarer tried for 11 tricks by playing to drop the ♦10. When it failed to fall he had nine tricks only. An imp to Down Under, leading 100-90 half way through the set.

Bd: 57
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ A8
 ♥ AKQ74
 ♦ Q9
 ♣ A652

West
 ♠ J974
 ♥ 102
 ♦ AJ753
 ♣ 94

East
 ♠ K65
 ♥ 965
 ♦ 84
 ♣ KQ1073

South
 ♠ Q1032
 ♥ J83
 ♦ K1062
 ♣ J8

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♥
	4♥	All Pass	

Both Easts led a top club against 4♥. Isporski ducked, won the next top club, ran the ♦Q, ducked, then took the diamond finesse to lose to the jack. West exited with a spade, a trump looking more effective. Declarer took the ace and played a spade up, Newell winning the king to lead a third club. Declarer ruffed high (West pitching a spade), cashed the ♠Q and claimed.

Hans lived more dangerously, in a sense. He won the first club and advanced the ♦Q. Iliev won and returned a club. Hristov won and played a second diamond. Declarer now led a spade to the ace and a second spade and Hristov elected to win the king and play a top club. Declarer ruffed high in dummy and reverted to Isporski's winning line. On an initial trump lead declarer would surely have needed to guess spades to make. Even as the play went, the defenders had chances if declarer did not get the spades right.

Still Down Under by 10; seven deals to play.

Bd: 58
 Dir: East
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ K983
 ♥ K8
 ♦ 105
 ♣ 108532

West
 ♠ AQ542
 ♥ 762
 ♦ AK98
 ♣ 4

East
 ♠ 6
 ♥ AQ9
 ♦ QJ4
 ♣ AQJ976

South
 ♠ J107
 ♥ J10543
 ♦ 7632
 ♣ K

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♥(♠)	Pass	1♣(STR)	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♦(1)	Pass	3NT	All Pass
(1) 5-3-4-1			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
1♥	Pass	1♣(STR)	Pass
2♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
		3NT	All Pass

Both Easts found out their partner's values and approximate shape and played 3NT. On a low heart lead both declarers won in hand and paid appropriate homage to Leonard Helman (who visited this tournament a few years ago and set up a foundation to assist junior bridge) by following the Rabbi's Rule. The ♣K is always singleton (and generally offside, since where would be the fun of dropping that card onside?). When the ♣A brought down the house

Newell took the club finesse for overtricks, finishing with +630. Hristov played on clubs, and because hearts were 5-2 he could not be prevented from taking 11 tricks. The margin was down to 9 imps with six deals to go.

Bd: 59 North
 Dlr: South ♠ J632
 Vul: None ♥ Q9873
 ♦ K32
 ♣ J

West
 ♠ K84
 ♥ AK64
 ♦ 764
 ♣ A107

East
 ♠ Q1075
 ♥ 105
 ♦ 9
 ♣ KQ6532

South
 ♠ A9
 ♥ J2
 ♦ AQJ1085
 ♣ 984

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	1♥	2♣	1♦
Dbl	Pass	2♠	2♦
Pass	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	3♦	4♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
	1♥	1♠	1♦
Dbl	3♦	3♥	2♦
2♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
3NT	Pass		All Pass

Even members of MAFIA (the majors-first brigade) might cavil at that 1♠ response (in competition you will have to bid your suits uneconomically and in the wrong sequence of length). When Iliev found a most unwise raise of spades — maybe it was his extra shape that persuaded him — Iliev trustingly drove his partner to game. The defenders led a heart. Declarer won in dummy and had to come to hand with a club to play a spade up. South ducked, won the next spade, and went after diamonds. Declarer discarded clubs twice to retain control and now a club ruff meant two down. No disgrace, but no triumph either.

It was not entirely surprising that the 6-3 fit played better than the 4-3 fit. On a trump lead declarer needed a friendly spade position for his overtrick, and found it. 6 imps made it 106-91 for Down Under.



Not your average mouse!

Bd: 60 North
 Dlr: West ♠ 2
 Vul: N/S ♥ AQ9852
 ♦ KQJ108
 ♣ J

West
 ♠ J8654
 ♥ K
 ♦ 5
 ♣ K98432

East
 ♠ KQ1097
 ♥ 10764
 ♦ 632
 ♣ A

South
 ♠ A3
 ♥ J3
 ♦ A974
 ♣ Q10765

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
2♦(♠+m)	2♥	4♣	Dbl
Pass	5♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
2♠	4♦(♦+♥)	4♣	5♦
Pass	Pass	5♠	Dbl
All Pass			

With the heart finesse succeeding (not that one would expect it to work) 6♦ cannot be defeated. So 6♠ is par, costing 500. The Bulgarians exceeded par, the Antipodeans fell a little short. On a matter of theory, should a direct 5♦ by South be a better (or worse if you prefer) hand for partner than a direct bid of five of a red suit? And if South passed 5♠, as I think he should, would North's extra card in his two suits make up for the lack of aces? I don't think so.

5♦ was easy to play for 12 tricks; declarer could draw trumps ending in South and set up hearts thanks to his spot cards. In 5♠x declarer lost the red aces, then North played a spade to South's ace for a second trump. Declarer had seven spades and two clubs but that was it. 8 imps for All Stars; 7 imps down and five deals to play.

Bd: 61 North
 Dlr: North ♠ AJ53
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ952
 ♦ QJ
 ♣ 65

West
 ♠ Q107
 ♥ A1043
 ♦ 9872
 ♣ J8

East
 ♠ K864
 ♥ J7
 ♦ AK6
 ♣ KQ109

South
 ♠ 92
 ♥ 86
 ♦ 10543
 ♣ A7432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
	1♥	Dbl	Pass
1NT	Pass	2NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
	1♥	Dbl	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	All Pass

In a curious echo of Board 59 the Bulgarians found a seven-card spade fit, boosted themselves higher than they needed to, and again regretted it. The defenders led a top diamond against 2♠ and declarer won and led a trump. South won to shift to a heart to North's queen and a second diamond went to dummy's king. Now declarer tried to cash the clubs to pitch his diamonds. North ruffed the third and led a low heart back to dummy's jack. Locked in dummy, declarer led a fourth club to pitch his last diamond. North ruffed again and led a third heart, the ♠9 promoting the sixth trick for the defenders.

2NT by Reid on a low heart lead was easy enough. Declarer won cheaply in hand and knocked out the ♣A, then won the ♥A and set up a spade for his eighth winner. 6 imps for Down Under, and a little extra breathing space with a 13-imp lead.

Bd: 62	North
Dlr: East	♠ KQJ7
Vul: None	♥ 8
	♦ 983
	♣ Q9642

West
♠ 6
♥ AKJ542
♦ 5
♣ AKJ75

East
♠ A102
♥ 1096
♦ QJ742
♣ 103

South
♠ 98543
♥ Q73
♦ AK106
♣ 8

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♣(STR)	Pass	1♦(WK)	Dbl
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♣(STR)	1♠	Dbl	4♠
4NT	Pass	5♦	Pass
5♥	All Pass		

We remarked earlier that the All Stars' worst results had come when Kovachev-Isporski did not bid

enough. This had not happened very often this match but here maybe it should have. Hans' flier scored a goal when Nunn could save in 4♠ and drive his opponents to the five level. The play in 5♥ was not of great interest. Declarer needed clubs not to be unusually hostile so he cashed the ♣AK early and was more hurt than surprised when South ruffed. Now there were two more tricks to lose whatever declarer did.

That was good news in a sense, since Reid now might have trouble making ten tricks in hearts. On the spade lead declarer won in dummy, then led a heart to his hand and a diamond to the jack. When South shifted to a club Reid won his ace and ducked a club, and now whether North took his ♣Q or South ruffed he could arrange another club ruff in dummy and hold his losers to one more trump trick. Well done; 11 imps, making the lead 24, and the match almost safe for Down Under.

Bd: 63	North
Dlr: South	♠ 10
Vul: N/S	♥ J65
	♦ AQJ2
	♣ AK753

West
♠ K96
♥ Q973
♦ K864
♣ J8

East
♠ Q432
♥ K
♦ 1097
♣ Q10962

South
♠ AJ875
♥ A10842
♦ 53
♣ 4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
			Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥(1)
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
			1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Both tables played 4♥. Nunn won the club lead and cashed a second club, then played ♠A, spade ruff, ♦A, diamond ruff, spade ruff. Now he ruffed a diamond and led a fourth spade. West ruffed high with the ♥Q and the ♦Q and ♠Q also put in an appearance to make a very estrogen-driven trick. Iliev played back a heart and declarer could give up a trick to the ♥9 and claim +650.

In the other room Kovachev played a similar cross-

ruff except that at one point he tried to ruff a club. Now West could over-ruff and return a trump to hold declarer to +620. The lead was 25 imps; never a bad number with one deal to go.

Bd: 64
 Dlr: West
 Vul: E/W

North
 ♠ J83
 ♥ AQ875
 ♦ A32
 ♣ J5

West
 ♠ Q10754
 ♥ ---
 ♦ K964
 ♣ K732

East
 ♠ 96
 ♥ 4
 ♦ QJ10875
 ♣ AQ96

South
 ♠ AK2
 ♥ KJ109632
 ♦ ---
 ♣ 1084

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
1♥(♠)	Pass	2♣(♦)	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Hans</i>	<i>Hristov</i>	<i>Nunn</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

There was nothing to the play, with the spade loser going on the ♦A. E/W had a save at unfavorable vulnerability, of course, but North would have bid on if they had tried for that coup. The match margin of 25 (with 223 imps scored in 64 deals) indicates that it was not only a close match but also one played with commendable accuracy — in the context of the fact that all four pairs played “pressure” bridge — bidding to the maximum in competitive auctions. This style inspires forced errors, and that fact that the imp total is rather on the low side for an encounter of this sort suggests the players played well. It was certainly entertaining.



Narita Bus Schedule

From the Intercontinental
 (120 minutes)
 ¥3,500

From the YCAT
 (100 min)
 ¥3,500

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

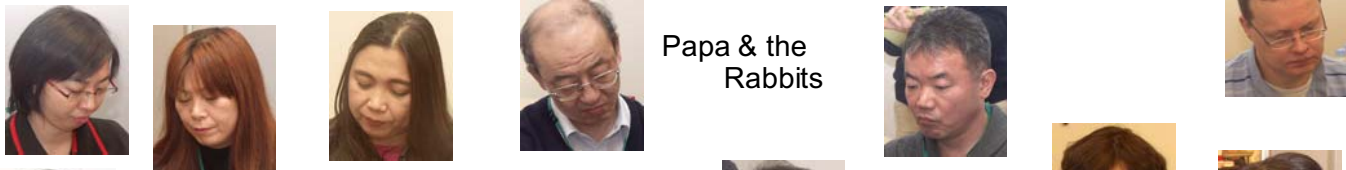
Every 15-20 minutes from
 05:15 to 19:30

Visitors to a small planet



Aka Maru

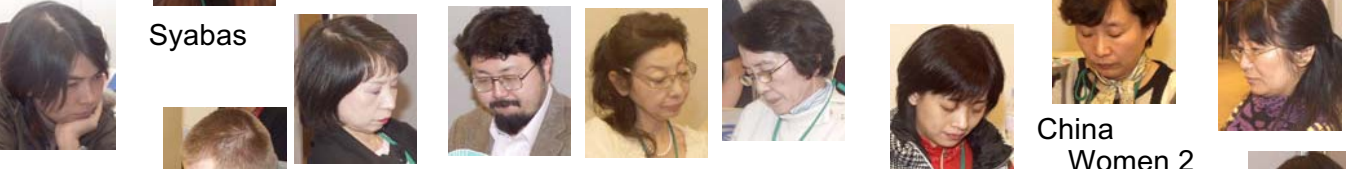
NEDUK



Syabas

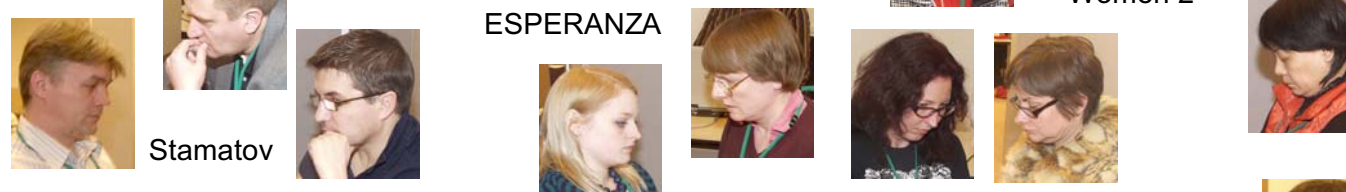
Papa & the Rabbits

China Women 2

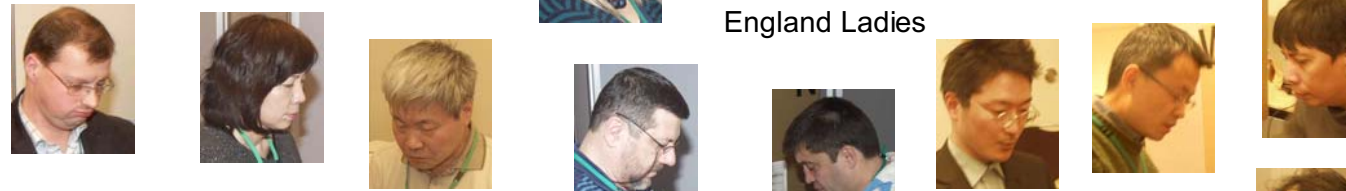


Stamatov

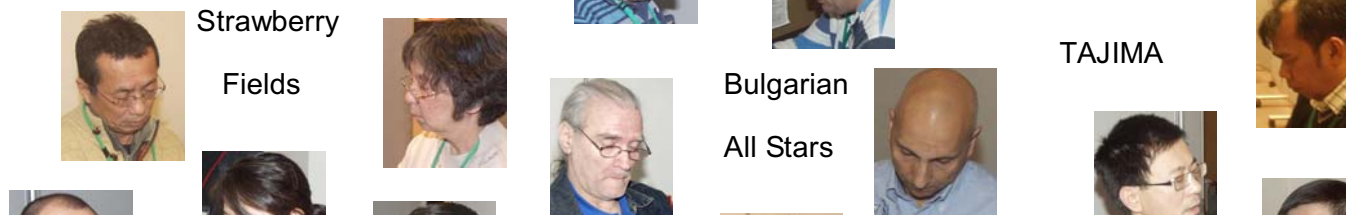
ESPERANZA



England Ladies

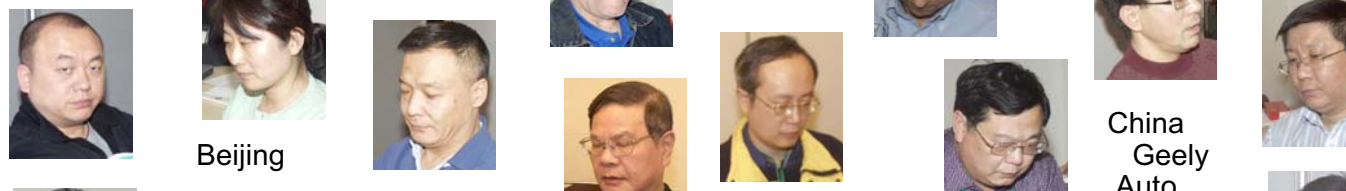


Strawberry Fields



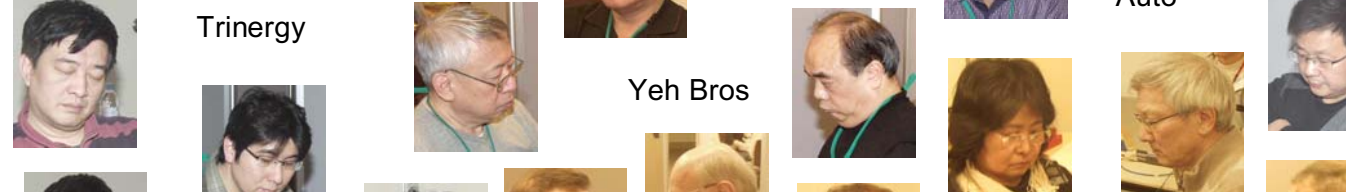
Bulgarian All Stars

TAJIMA



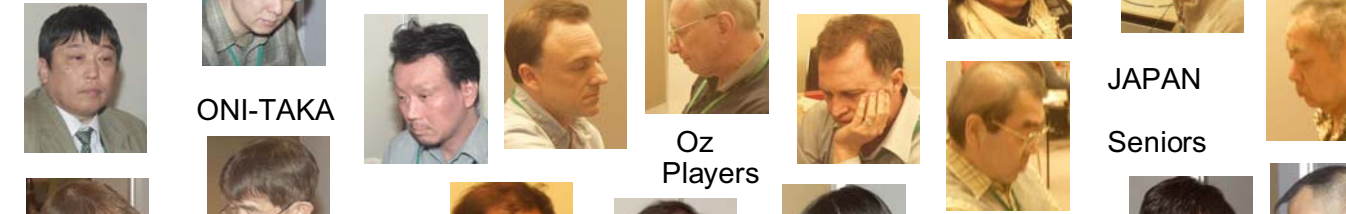
Beijing

China Geely Auto



Trinergy

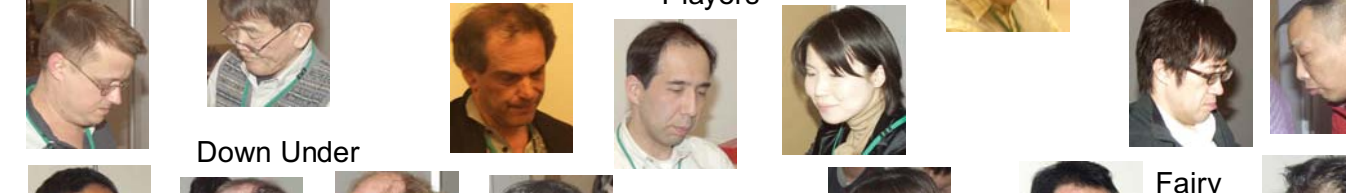
Yeh Bros



ONI-TAKA

Oz Players

JAPAN Seniors



Down Under

SHIROGANE

Fairy Tale

