



NEC Bridge Festival

Wednesday, February 10, 2015
Bulletin Number 2

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

Day One of the 2015 NEC Cup

At the end of Day One, the top qualifiers are led by Hackett (Jason Hackett, Brian Senior, John Holland, Gunner Hallberg) with 65.71 VPs, followed by Singapore (Poon Hua, Loo Choon Chou, Kelvin Ng, Lam Cheng Yen) with 60.33 VPs. Sitting third is Soul (Oh Hyemin, Kim Hyeyoung, Kazuo Furuta, Hiroki Yokoi, Yasuhiro Shimizu) with 55.24 VPs followed closely by Russia (Andrey Gromov, Evgeny Gladyshev, Alexander Dubinin, Mikhail Krasnoselskii, Sebastiaan Drijver, Sjoert Brink) with 54.81 VPs. The next four teams, all within 2 VPs of one another, are Australia (53.81), Japan Senior (53.02), YBM (52.84) and SARA (51.45). Since Day One scores have rarely been great predictors of the eventual qualifiers in this event, we'll spare you any predictions. The complete Day One rankings are shown below; the individual results for Matches 1-4 are on page 6.

NEC Cup: Standings After Day One (Four Matches)

Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs	Rank	Team	VPs
1	Hackett.	65.71	17	SANDEN.	45.88	33	7 Heart.	33.21
2	Singapore.	60.33	18	Daisy.	43.65	34	Scity.	33.13
3	Soul.	55.24	19	England Hinden.	43.10	35	Katsumata.	31.77
4	Russia.	54.81	20	Morimura.	42.08	36	KinKi.	30.75
5	Australia.	53.81	21	Edelweiss.	41.88	37	Jenny-Chang.	27.65
6	Japan Senior.	53.02	22	Beijing Trinergy.	39.98	38	NAITO.	27.54
7	YBM.	52.84	23	England/Ned.	39.77	39	Gardenia.	27.24
8	SARA.	51.45	24	Five Star.	39.68	40	HOSHI.	25.04
9	Sweden.	51.39	25	Japan Youth.	39.67	41	Air-TRK.	24.66
10	BlueLights.	50.11	26	Sacrum.	39.57	42	NANIWADA.	23.49
11	INDIA.	49.27	27	Akarui.	38.88	43	HNES.	22.74
12	ZhiHaoLe.	48.72	28	Tom and Jerry.	38.35	44	Friends.	21.97
13	LAS FLORES.	48.47	29	Sakurai.	36.80	45	JA-panda.	20.43
14	Beijing Lawyers.	48.12	30	Kitty-chan.	36.64	46	River Side.	18.85
15	KORTAI.	47.16	31	PYON.	35.87			
16	Down Under.	46.72	32	Great God.	34.74			

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 20th NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/home/English/nec/tabid/1043/Default.aspx>

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

Today's 1st VuGraph Matches will feature Sweden (9) vs BlueLights (31)
and Australia (4) vs Japan Senior (23)

NEC Cup 2015: 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: New WBF 14-board scale (20-point scale, continuous and given to two decimal places).

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, the latest version of WBF 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 the latest version of WBF 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 any one 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 and the upload of the results of all matches in progress on the web.

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 fact of the delayed 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, iPads and the like) 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. In KO rounds, mobile phones in the playing area are prohibited during game time. Players with mobile phones should surrender their phones to the staff at the service desk and receive a number tag which is used to collect the phone after the game. 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.

WBF VP scale (14 boards)

IMPs	VPs - Won	VPs - Lost	IMPs	VPs - Won	VPs - Lost
0	10.00	10.00	29	16.88	3.12
1	10.33	9.67	30	17.04	2.96
2	10.66	9.34	31	17.19	2.81
3	10.97	9.03	32	17.34	2.66
4	11.28	8.72	33	17.49	2.51
5	11.58	8.42	34	17.63	2.37
6	11.87	8.13	35	17.77	2.23
7	12.16	7.84	36	17.91	2.09
8	12.44	7.56	37	18.04	1.96
9	12.71	7.29	38	18.17	1.83
10	12.97	7.03	39	18.29	1.71
11	13.23	6.77	40	18.41	1.59
12	13.48	6.52	41	18.53	1.47
13	13.72	6.28	42	18.65	1.35
14	13.96	6.04	43	18.76	1.24
15	14.19	5.81	44	18.87	1.13
16	14.42	5.58	45	18.98	1.02
17	14.64	5.36	46	19.08	0.92
18	14.85	5.15	47	19.18	0.82
19	15.06	4.94	48	19.28	0.72
20	15.26	4.74	49	19.38	0.62
21	15.46	4.54	50	19.47	0.53
22	15.66	4.34	51	19.56	0.44
23	15.85	4.15	52	19.65	0.35
24	16.03	3.97	53	19.74	0.26
25	16.21	3.79	54	19.83	0.17
26	16.38	3.62	55	19.91	0.09
27	16.55	3.45	56	19.99	0.01
28	16.72	3.28	57	20.00	0.00

Team Rosters: 20th NEC Cup

#	Team Name	Members
1	Russia:	Andrey Gromov, Evgeny Gladyshev, Alexander Dubinin, Mikhail Krasnoselskii, Sebastiaan Drijver, Sjoert Brink
2	England/Netherlands:	David Bakhshi, David Gold, Ricco van Prooijen, Louk Verhees
3	Down Under:	Sartaj Hans, Peter Gill, Martin Reid, Peter Newell
4	Australia:	Michael Wilkinson, Griff Ware, Terry Brown, Avi Kanetkar
5	England Hinden:	Frances Hinden, Graham Osbourne, Alex Hydes, Mike Bell
6	INDIA:	Subhash Gupta, Gopal Venkatesh, Sridharan Padmanabhan, Sunderram Srinivasan, Swarnendu Banerji, Keyzad Anklesaria
7	Hackett:	Jason Hackett, Brian Senior, John Holland, Gunner Hallberg
8	Singapore:	Poon Hua, Loo Choon Chou, Kelvin Ng, Lam Cheng Yen
9	Sweden:	Peter Fredin, Gary Gottlieb, David Probert, Thomas Andersson
10	YBM:	Ming Sun, Chen Yeh, Yalan Zhang, Juei-Yu Shih, Ping Wang, Dawei Chen
11	KORTAL:	Kyunghae Sung, Sungae Yang, Patrick Huang, Cheng-Jui Huang
12	ZhiHaoLe:	Zhao Haibo, Zhao Yuqiao, Sun YanHui, Li Jie, Fu Zhong
13	SANDEN:	Hu Mao Yuan, Yang Li Xin, Dai Jian Ming, Jin Ke, Wang Wei Min, Liu Yi Qian
14	Beijing Trinergy:	Dong Lu, Chuancheng Ju, Zhengjun Shi, Lidang Dong, Haitao Liu, Yanhong Wang
15	Daisy:	Choi Anhee, Park Sunhee, Lee Soohyun, Kim Sunyoung, Lee Hansang
16	7 Heart:	Chung Ilsub, Hwang Iynryung, Choi Jungjin, Jang Jungbai
17	Scity:	Park Jungyoon, Kim Yoonkyung, Im Hyun, Kwon Sooja
18	Soul:	Oh Hyemin, Kim Hyeyoung, Kazuo Furuta, Hiroki Yokoi, Yasuhiro Shimizu
19	Morimura:	Tadashi Yoshida, Hiroya Abe, Shunsuke Morimura, Sue Picus
20	Jenny-Chang:	Kyoko Shimamura, Makiko Sato, Jenny Kim, Chang Mirye
21	Great God:	Natsuko Nishida, Masayasu Oga, Yoko Shimominami, Lee Bokhee
22	Beijing Lawyers:	Yoshie Kikuchi, Xue Xiaoli, Wang Fei, Qi YouGuang, Tao Jianhua
23	Japan Senior:	Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Masayuki Ino, Kazuhiko Yamada
24	SARA:	Tadashi Teramoto, Kumiko Sasahira, Hiroshi Kaku, Masaaki Takayama, Takeshi Niekawa, Shugo Tanaka
25	PYON:	Yuki Fukuyoshi, Takeshi Hanayama, Terumi Kubo, Tadashi Imakura
26	Edelweiss:	Haruko Koshi, Hideyuki Sango, Nobuko Matsubara, Fumiko Kimura, Hiroaki Miura, Yoko Oosako
27	NAITO:	Ryoga Tanaka, Sakiko Naito, Ayako Miyakuni, Kenji Miyakuni
28	Five Star:	Kazuko Takahashi, Katsumi Takahashi, Takako Fujimoto, Sumiko Sugino, Kazuko Kawashima, Akiko Kawabata
29	Akarui:	Robert Geller, Setsuko Ogiwara, Mutsue Kokubo, Noriko Akira, Noriyuki Okamoto
30	Kitty-chan:	Yoko Nenohi, Kyoko Toyofuku, Kumiko Matsuo, Toshiko Kaho, Hiroko Sekiyama, Mieko Nakanishi
31	BlueLights:	Osami Kimura, Hiroko Kobayashi, Chizuko Tsukamoto, Harue Iemori, Chisato Kiriya, Yasuyoshi Toriumi
32	Katsumata:	Atsuko Katsumata, Yasuyo Iida, Misae Kato, Kimiko Kamakari, Takako Nakatani, Sachiho Ueda
33	JA-panda:	Megumi Takasaki, Yuko Noda, Masayuki Hayasaka, Hidenori Narita, Hiroyuki Noda
34	Tom and Jerry:	Chieko Ichikawa, Yoshiko Murata, Kei Nemoto, Kuniko Saito, Junko Den, Aiko Banno
35	Japan Youth:	Yuki Harada, Takumi Seshimo, Mizuki Ishibashi, Takahiro Honda, Tomoaki Nakanishi, Tadahiro Kikuchi
36	LAS FLORES:	Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura, Michiko Shida, Kotomi Asakoshi, Yoko Komuro, Shimako Yaji
37	Sakurai:	Tsuneo Sakurai, Atsushi Kikuchi, Kenichi Asaoka, Takehiko Tada
38	HOSHI:	Masako Sakurai, Yukiko Hoshi, Junko Tsubaki, Megumi Takasaka
39	NANIWADA:	Toshiro Nose, Masaru Naniwada, Hisami Kataoka, Hideo Togawa, Junzo Kobayashi
40	River Side:	Yumiko Kawakami, Masakatsu Sugino, Ryoichi Yasuhara, Hiroko Tanaka, Noriko Yagi, Toshiharu Hirose
41	Air-TRK:	Yoko Fukuyama, Takashi Sumita, Mark LaForge, Timothy Curtis, Kazuo Takano, Hisako Kondo
42	HNES:	Hisayo Goto, Hiroko Ishino, Emi Sakata, Sae Ohashi, Kazumi Nitta, Yumiko Nagato
43	Friends:	Yoko Saito, Mamiko Odaira, Sayori Harasawa, Mayumi Tanaka, Eiko Sakamoto, Setsuko Minami
44	Sacrum:	Hiroko Sentsui, Naoto Matsumoto, Hu Wenhui, Shintaro Sentsui
45	KinKi:	Sonoko Namba, Chizuko Sugiura, Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka, Yukinao Homma, Chie Fujita
46	Gardenia:	Makoto Nomura, Masako Otsuka, Naoko Hishikawa, Takashi Hatakeyama, Mitsuko Suyama, Yumiko Kichise

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Wondering how your favorite team is doing RIGHT NOW? Surf to:

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Qualifying Lineups@ <http://jcbl.willnet.ad.jp/Lineup/tsdbtr2ed032m95qzpl2/Top>

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

Tuesday's Match Results

Team #	Match 1				Match 2				Match 3				Match 4			
	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP	Vs	imps	VP	C-VP
1	35	48	17.77	17.77	16	43	15.26	33.03	12	33	17.04	50.07	7	24	4.74	54.81
2	26	7	5.58	5.58	27	29	14.42	20	44	33	13.96	33.96	3	19	5.81	39.77
3	28	38	15.66	15.66	37	34	7.84	23.5	14	26	9.03	32.53	2	34	14.19	46.72
4	31	31	12.44	12.44	21	48	17.63	30.07	11	34	11.58	41.65	9	38	12.16	53.81
5	24	17	3.97	3.97	17	29	14.19	18.16	25	44	17.91	36.07	36	30	7.03	43.1
6	30	34	12.44	12.44	40	42	17.04	29.48	8	15	5.15	34.63	14	45	14.64	49.27
7	33	55	18.04	18.04	14	31	14.64	32.68	24	36	17.77	50.45	1	44	15.26	65.71
8	27	32	14.42	14.42	26	44	14.85	29.27	6	33	14.85	44.12	22	51	16.21	60.33
9	40	31	8.42	8.42	45	62	19.47	27.89	37	49	15.66	43.55	4	31	7.84	51.39
10	37	13	4.54	4.54	28	39	16.72	21.26	43	80	20	41.26	11	31	11.58	52.84
11	42	42	15.06	15.06	19	29	15.26	30.32	4	29	8.42	38.74	10	26	8.42	47.16
12	23	44	16.55	16.55	20	36	17.63	34.18	1	3	2.96	37.14	13	30	11.58	48.72
13	38	39	14.19	14.19	29	24	8.42	22.61	16	33	14.85	37.46	12	25	8.42	45.88
14	39	45	18.29	18.29	7	14	5.36	23.65	3	29	10.97	34.62	6	28	5.36	39.98
15	29	5	5.81	5.81	38	54	18.98	24.79	22	7	0.82	25.61	20	53	18.04	43.65
16	41	34	17.04	17.04	1	23	4.74	21.78	13	15	5.15	26.93	44	19	6.28	33.21
17	44	12	4.34	4.34	5	14	5.81	10.15	42	26	8.13	18.28	39	25	14.85	33.13
18	32	43	12.44	12.44	22	19	7.29	19.73	26	44	17.34	37.07	29	48	18.17	55.24
19	43	43	15.26	15.26	11	9	4.74	20	36	3	4.74	24.74	27	54	17.34	42.08
20	34	40	16.03	16.03	12	2	2.37	18.4	32	23	7.29	25.69	15	16	1.96	27.65
21	36	47	13.72	13.72	4	14	2.37	16.09	23	12	0	16.09	40	59	18.65	34.74
22	25	32	12.44	12.44	18	28	12.71	25.15	15	54	19.18	44.33	8	26	3.79	48.12
23	12	17	3.45	3.45	34	22	11.28	14.73	21	70	20	34.73	30	50	18.29	53.02
24	5	41	16.03	16.03	44	37	15.85	31.88	7	1	2.23	34.11	37	35	17.34	51.45
25	22	24	7.56	7.56	32	8	9.03	16.59	5	8	2.09	18.68	42	40	17.19	35.87
26	2	23	14.42	14.42	8	26	5.15	19.57	18	12	2.66	22.23	43	67	19.65	41.88
27	8	16	5.58	5.58	2	13	5.58	11.16	45	31	13.72	24.88	19	22	2.66	27.54
28	3	16	4.34	4.34	10	11	3.28	7.62	38	34	16.21	23.83	46	42	15.85	39.68
29	15	20	14.19	14.19	13	29	11.58	25.77	30	24	11.28	37.05	18	10	1.83	38.88
30	6	26	7.56	7.56	46	55	18.65	26.21	29	20	8.72	34.93	23	11	1.71	36.64
31	4	23	7.56	7.56	36	11	6.04	13.6	40	38	17.04	30.64	32	54	19.47	50.11
32	18	35	7.56	7.56	25	11	10.97	18.53	20	32	12.71	31.24	31	4	0.53	31.77
33	7	18	1.96	1.96	39	41	10.66	12.62	35	15	2.23	14.85	38	23	5.58	20.43
34	20	16	3.97	3.97	23	18	8.72	12.69	41	41	15.66	28.35	35	26	10	38.35
35	1	13	2.23	2.23	41	40	9.67	11.9	33	50	17.77	29.67	34	26	10	39.67
36	21	34	6.28	6.28	31	25	13.96	20.24	19	23	15.26	35.5	5	40	12.97	48.47
37	10	34	15.46	15.46	3	41	12.16	27.62	9	27	6.52	34.14	24	3	2.66	36.8
38	13	24	5.81	5.81	15	9	1.02	6.83	28	9	3.79	10.62	33	39	14.42	25.04
39	14	6	1.71	1.71	33	39	9.34	11.05	46	30	7.29	18.34	17	7	5.15	23.49
40	9	36	11.58	11.58	6	12	2.96	14.54	31	8	2.96	17.5	21	17	1.35	18.85
41	16	4	2.96	2.96	35	41	10.33	13.29	34	19	4.34	17.63	45	21	7.03	24.66
42	11	23	4.94	4.94	43	11	3.12	8.06	17	32	11.87	19.93	25	9	2.81	22.74
43	19	23	4.74	4.74	42	40	16.88	21.62	10	21	0	21.62	26	15	0.35	21.97
44	17	34	15.66	15.66	24	14	4.15	19.81	2	19	6.04	25.85	16	32	13.72	39.57
45	46	19	10.97	10.97	9	12	0.53	11.5	27	18	6.28	17.78	41	31	12.97	30.75
46	45	16	9.03	9.03	30	13	1.35	10.38	39	39	12.71	23.09	28	19	4.15	27.24

C-VP=Cumulative VPs

Match One: YBM vs SAKURAI

by Barry Rigal



Asaoka



Yeh



Tada



Shih



Sakurai



Zhang



Kikuchi



Wang

For the first match of the day, and of the tournament, we will follow Chen Yeh's team (YBM), seeded 10th, playing against the 37th seed, Sakurai. It is always a pleasure to see Mr. Yeh bring a team here, this year including Dawei Chen from the home country and a mix of Chinese and Chinese Taipei internationalists.

Bd: 1
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ Q987
 ♥ 852
 ♦ A94
 ♣ 1043

West
 ♠ K65
 ♥ 93
 ♦ Q107
 ♣ AKQ92

East
 ♠ AJ2
 ♥ KQ1074
 ♦ K63
 ♣ 65

South
 ♠ 1043
 ♥ AJ6
 ♦ J852
 ♣ J87

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

In the match between YBM and Sakurai, the Japanese team immediately served notice that they were not to be taken lightly. Both tables declared 3NT, with the ♦J and ♠Q located favorably so that

only overtricks would be at stake. Yalan Zhang kicked off with the ♠10. Declarer won in hand and led a low heart at once. Zhang ducked, as who would not? She was hurt and surprised in equal doses to see the ♥9 hold the trick and declarer clear the suit and give up only the two aces. In the other room Atsuki Kikushi as South saw his partner lead a low spade, ducked to declarer's king. In this room Juei-Yu Shih passed the ♥9 at trick two, and Kikuchi ducked. This was a nice play, trying to cut declarer's communications. As it happened, declarer could give up a trick to the ♥J and after the diamond return to the ten and ace set up hearts to make ten tricks. But the Yeh Brothers team had been duly warned that no quarter would be given or asked. Sakurai led 1-0.

Just for the record, only one pair managed to avoid making ten or eleven tricks in notrump. One pair from last year's losing finalists elected to play a club partscore. But we won't reveal who forgot the system (the usual terms and conditions gentlemen, cash on demand).

Bd: 2
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ Q54
 ♥ KQ5
 ♦ K6
 ♣ AKJ52

West
 ♠ K76
 ♥ J963
 ♦ 92
 ♣ Q964

East
 ♠ A3
 ♥ A874
 ♦ AQJ1087
 ♣ 3

South
 ♠ J10982
 ♥ 102
 ♦ 543
 ♣ 1087

Open Room
 West North East South
 Asaoka Yeh Tada Zhang
 1♥ 2♣ 1♦ Pass
 4♥ All Pass

Closed Room
 West North East South
 Shih Sakurai Wang Kikuchi
 1♦ Pass 2♦ Pass
 2NT Pass 3♦ All Pass

The strong club in the Closed Room did not work well since the heart suit got lost even without the opponents' intervention. With the trump king inside it was only a question of the overtricks available in 3♦ and Ping Wang finished with +130.

But the stakes were higher in the other room, where Takehiko Tada had found only a small stretch to make a splinter raise of hearts. And who could blame him since slam might be cold opposite the right eight-count (♥KQxxx and the ♦K)? Asaoka was treated to a top club lead and spade shift. He won in hand and played on diamonds at once, then tried the ace and another heart (no intra-finesses here since game would be cold if trumps split) and wrapped up +420. Sakurai had 7 imps to lead 8-0.

Six pairs defeated a heart contract by West; perhaps on a top club lead and continuation declarer ruffs in dummy. Now the loss of control makes the play very difficult. It is easy to see that there are lies of the cards where ruffing in dummy would be necessary, but the top club lead by North makes it far less likely to be necessary here. If the defenders play the ♣A-K you'd expect declarer to be able to make ten tricks, unless as Jason Hackett did you assume trumps to be 4-1 and play on the side-suits without ever touching trumps. An unfortunate and intellectual way to lose imps.

Pride of place for E/W goes to Yasuhara-Tanaka, who defeated a Swedish venture to 4♣ to the tune of 800. But there were a few 590s and 500s also for E/W, and one unfortunate South put his fingers on the ♥10 against 5♦x.



"It's too high to jump; I guess we'll have to compare."

Bd: 3 North
 Dir: South ♠ 105
 Vul: E/W ♥ KJ9
 ♦ 43
 ♣ QJ10973

West East
 ♠ 76 ♠ KQ984
 ♥ Q108654 ♥ 72
 ♦ Q1082 ♦ J
 ♣ 8 ♣ AK652

South
 ♠ AJ32
 ♥ A3
 ♦ AK9765
 ♣ 4

Open Room
 West North East South
 Asaoka Yeh Tada Zhang
 Pass 1NT Dbl 3NT
 All Pass

Closed Room
 West North East South
 Shih Sakurai Wang Kikuchi
 Pass 1NT 2♠ Pass
 Pass 3♣ Pass 3♦
 All Pass

I can't say I am a huge fan of the auction in the Open Room (an understatement, but the vitriol is not flowing so well in my pen at this hour of the morning). The double by East looks highly dangerous, and might have proved so if West had been allowed to compete to 3♥. But you can also understand why Zhang wanted to get to 3NT without letting West tip her partner off to the right lead. Curiously, a spade was best for the defense but West did not know that. After a top spade lead won in dummy for a low diamond play, West won the ♦Q and shifted to hearts rather than continue spades. Declarer knocked out the remaining diamond honor and the defenders cashed out for down one.

3♦ looks an equally inelegant contract, but Kikuchi was in with a chance after a spade lead to the queen and ace. He ducked a club, won the trump shift, then led a spade to the ten and king. Back came a low club, ruffed low and over-ruffed. He won the trump return to play a third diamond and the heart shift went to the nine, two and ace. Declarer now needed only to finesse in hearts to dispose of the spade loser. When he ran the trumps in the three-card ending East had to reduce to two spades and the ♣A, and thus had to pitch what by the powers of arithmetic had to be his thirteenth card, a small heart. (He was known to be 5=2=1=5 already). Kikuchi

missed the point and played to have squeezed East down to the bare ♠Q. Down one meant no swing; still 8-0 for Sakurai.

While one pair collected 500 against 2♠x, eight pairs found a way to be allowed to make 3NT with the N/S cards. After a top club lead by East produced an encouraging eight from West the defenders continued the suit to lose a trick and a tempo (to quote My Fair Lady: "Poor Eliza, how simply frightful. How humiliating, how delightful!"). A low spade lead by East was equally ineffective.

On the next deal Yeh got on the scoreboard when an IMP defense saw the Japanese defenders try to unblock a suit but set up a winner for declarer in the process. It was 8-1 now.

Bd: 5	North		
Dir: North	♠ 742		
Vul: N/S	♥ 96		
	♦ Q109654		
	♣ KQ		
West		East	
♠ KQ965		♠ 1083	
♥ AQ105		♥ KJ3	
♦ 3		♦ K87	
♣ J86		♣ 9542	
	South		
	♠ AJ		
	♥ 8742		
	♦ AJ2		
	♣ A1073		

Open/Closed Rooms			
West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♠	Pass	2♠	All Pass

The fate of 2♠ appears to rest on whether the defenders can promote a trump trick. Had North held either the ♠9 or ♠8, the play would have been far more interesting since there are threats of a promotion. Even as it is, the defenders can prevail by force (lead the ♣K-Q, shift to a heart and North wins the first or second spade to cash the ♣A and let North pitch the second heart to obtain the ruff). Both defenders were in with a shout. Sakurai led out the two top clubs and shifted to the ♦Q. Shih covered, letting South win and play his remaining top club. But when North discarded a low diamond the defense was dead.

In the other room the defenders started very well: ♥9 to the jack, then Zhang won the trump to play a low club. Yeh unblocked his clubs, then shifted to the

♦10. When Zhang let this run, the wrong defender was on lead and the ruff had got away. No swing; still 8-1, Sakurai.

The majority of N/S pairs did go plus here, many against spade partscores. But pride of place goes to Brink and Drijver for Russia, who bid to 3NT from the South seat on their combined 21-count. Had the diamond finesse lost this would have been five down; when it held that was eleven tricks. Don't waste your good fortune early, gentlemen.

YBM equalized the match on the next deal, but it was a case of significantly missed opportunities for both teams.

Bd: 6	North		
Dir: East	♠ K6		
Vul: E/W	♥ K865		
	♦ A6		
	♣ AJ865		
	West		East
	♠ AQ54		♠ 9873
	♥ AJ943		♥ Q10
	♦ J95		♦ K872
	♣ 10		♣ 932
		South	
		♠ J102	
		♥ 72	
		♦ Q1043	
		♣ KQ74	

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
1♥	2♣	Pass	Pass
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♣
		All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
1♥	1NT	Pass	Pass
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♣
All Pass		Pass	2NT

Personally you'd have to pry the ♥Q from my cold dead hand to stop me from leading it in the Open Room, but Tada was made of sterner stuff than to lead his partner's suit. The ♠9 went to the jack, queen and king and Yeh now needed to guess diamonds. When he led low from his hand, Tada ducked stoically and declarer misguessed, inserting the ten, hoping to find a way to two diamond tricks, one winner in each major plus his five clubs. West won the ♦J and now fell from grace by setting up dummy's spade winner in a position where a low heart was surely called for (declarer couldn't possibly

have the ♠KQ...could he?). That was Yeh's ninth trick. This was good for a 7-imp gain when the cautious 2NT contract came in for +120 on a heart lead, after declarer played on spades for his eighth trick.

Hiroki Yokoi and Kazuo Furuta collected 800 here against 3♥x, which was an easier way to make a living than playing 3NT, for sure.

Bd: 7 North
 Dir: South ♠ 1092
 Vul: Both ♥ AJ8
 ♦ AQ63
 ♣ 654

West
 ♠ KQ653
 ♥ 1052
 ♦ 954
 ♣ AK

East
 ♠ A7
 ♥ 96
 ♦ K107
 ♣ 1098732

South
 ♠ J84
 ♥ KQ743
 ♦ J82
 ♣ QJ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
1♠	All Pass		Pass

Kikuchi took the low road against 2♠ after Wang's somewhat surprising pass of 1♠ with what looks like a prime seven-count. Even in Precision partner could have ♠KQJxx and ♦AQxxx — not to mention a side Kx, couldn't he?

2♠ appears to have eight winners (five spades, two clubs and the ♦K) and that was what it ended with. (Declarer was allowed to negotiate a heart ruff in dummy, but in return the defenders maneuvered a trump promotion.) Meanwhile in 1♠, where Kikuchi discreetly refused to balance, Shih was able to set up the clubs and use the ♦K as the entry to the club suit after drawing trumps. That meant an imp to YBM, giving them the lead by that number.

So far the boards had not offered much opportunity for swings, but good (or bad) luck was just about to create a huge turnaround for the local team.

Bd: 8 North
 Dir: West ♠ 6
 Vul: None ♥ AJ64
 ♦ J1085
 ♣ 9872

West
 ♠ AQ72
 ♥ 8
 ♦ KQ9762
 ♣ KQ

East
 ♠ K1053
 ♥ 10532
 ♦ A3
 ♣ AJ6

South
 ♠ J984
 ♥ KQ97
 ♦ 4
 ♣ 10543

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
1♣(STR)	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠(1)	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♥(♠Q?)	Pass
6♣	Pass	6♠	All Pass

(1) Extras, no diamond fit

The strong club auction saw East force to game, then show extra controls, and once the spade fit was established E/W were off to the races. The spade slam needs little more than North holding two or more spades (admittedly, you might not be able to survive a bad break in both spades and diamonds) but today the hostile spade break was too much for Wang, particularly after South was dealt a natural heart lead. Of course after a club lead declarer has 12 tricks.

In the other room the 1♥ response may have discouraged West, but that 3NT jump looks distorted (what is wrong with repeating the diamonds, after which the spade fit comes to life at a convenient level?). Slam by West might well have come home.

Anyway, Sakurai had 11 imps when on a different day those imps would have come to rest in YBM's pocket. No fewer than 20 tables went down in 6♠ or 6♦ here (no one played the grand slam, somewhat to my surprise). Three Wests (and one East, shame!) brought home 6♠ when the defenders missed the heart lead. Eleven Norths found the ♥A lead, thereby supporting the theory of what one should lead

against small slams.

Both N/S pairs then boosted themselves to 3♠, with 9 HCP facing 12, needing a finesse plus some careful play to bring home nine tricks. Then Sakurai added to their lead.

Bd: 10 North
 Dlr: East ♠ K62
 Vul: Both ♥ AJ9
 ♦ Q1087
 ♣ J106

West
 ♠ 984
 ♥ 10754
 ♦ KJ5
 ♣ 872

East
 ♠ AJ1053
 ♥ Q8
 ♦ A
 ♣ AQ954

South
 ♠ Q7
 ♥ K632
 ♦ 96432
 ♣ K3

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
		1♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
		1♣(STR)	Pass
1♦(WK)	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

In the Closed Room Wang obviously expected a slightly more constructive hand from West for the simple raise as opposed to a delayed sequence. Wang gave the apparently hopeless game the good old college try. After a diamond lead Wang led a low spade from her hand. Kkiuchi obliged by winning the ♠Q and continuing diamonds. Declarer won the ♦K, pitching a heart (good), passed the ♠8 successfully (better!) and led a low club from dummy to her queen and the king (rats!). Down one, and a loss of 7 imps since in the other room South tried an early shift to the ♣K to try to defeat 1♠ and a heart winner got away later. Sakurai led 26-9.

Well done Megumi Takasaka, who succeeded in threading the needle and guessing everything (with a little help) to make +620 in 4♠ for HOSHI.

The next board caused fits around the room. And yet 4♥ is not impossible to bring home, even if you do not receive an enormously helpful defense.

Bd: 11 North
 Dlr: South ♠ AK64
 Vul: None ♥ Q109632
 ♦ 6
 ♣ K10

West
 ♠ 108
 ♥ AJ874
 ♦ 8
 ♣ 98542

East
 ♠ Q975
 ♥ ---
 ♦ K9543
 ♣ Q763

South
 ♠ J32
 ♥ K5
 ♦ AQJ1072
 ♣ AJ

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	4♦(♥)	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

In the Open Room Zhang won the club lead in dummy and played a heart to the king and ace. The defenders shifted to diamonds, not a bad idea to cut declarer's communications. Zhang won cheaply and cashed the ♦A; Asaoka defended well by pitching a spade, as did dummy. Now the way home should have been straightforward: finesse in hearts, cash the ♠A, cross to the ♣A and lead a second spade up. If West ruffs in he scores just one further trump trick, so he discards and dummy's ♠K wins, letting him exit with a losing spade for the defenders' second trick. In the four-card ending dummy is down to ♥Q1063 with West holding ♥J84 and a club. Whether East leads a spade, a diamond or a club, North gets to ruff low and exit with a small trump to endplay West at trick 12. Zhang erred by making the second spade play from dummy, letting West ruff a winner and not a loser. That meant the defense had both a spade and a heart trick to come for down one.

In the other room Kikuchi followed a different tack. He won the club lead and immediately played a diamond to the ace, then advanced the ♦Q, letting Shih pitch a spade. Declarer ruffed and later tried to cash the ♠AK, letting West ruff in. Now the defense had two spades and three trump tricks for down two.

A somewhat surprising 2 imps to YBM, trailing 26-11.

Three tables made 3NT here, five tables made 4♥ by North on a spade lead, two made it by South on a diamond lead, and four N/S pairs deserve credit for making 4♠ on unhelpful club leads or a diamond through the South hand. Those declarers were Cheng-Jui Huang, Jenny Kim and Kei Nemoto (against one another's teams) and Junko Nishimura. But the easiest and most lucrative way to go plus was demonstrated by Hans-Gill for Down Under. After a strong club from Hans West bid 1♦ to show spades and diamonds or hearts and clubs. Gill bid 1♠ to show hearts and East assumed he was facing spades and diamonds and jumped to 4♠. Hans guessed correctly to play for penalties and declarer emerged with three tricks for -2000.

Bd: 12 North
 Dir: West ♠ 9432
 Vul: N/S ♥ 109
 ♦ K98
 ♣ K873

West
 ♠ QJ6
 ♥ A754
 ♦ 72
 ♣ A962

East
 ♠ 107
 ♥ KQ32
 ♦ Q1065
 ♣ QJ4

South
 ♠ AK85
 ♥ J86
 ♦ AJ43
 ♣ 105

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥
Dbl	Pass	1♥	Pass
Pass	2♦	Pass	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
1♦(2+)	Pass	1♥	Dbl
2♥	2♠	3♥	All Pass

Both E/W pairs got to hearts but in the Open Room N/S lost their spades, quite understandable. Maybe North has to reopen with a double at his third turn. 2♠ would have handled comfortably enough for eight tricks, even if the defenders can play three rounds of trumps, so the E/W decision in the Closed Room to bid on to 3♥ did not cost. With the ♣K wrong, it did not help East to try to set up a discard for the club on the spades and Sakurai had another 4 imps to lead 30-9.

Bd: 13 North
 Dir: North ♠ Q73
 Vul: Both ♥ A10854
 ♦ 842
 ♣ K7

West
 ♠ A8
 ♥ 2
 ♦ Q10953
 ♣ A10983

East
 ♠ KJ62
 ♥ 93
 ♦ KJ76
 ♣ 642

South
 ♠ 10954
 ♥ KQJ76
 ♦ A
 ♣ QJ5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
2NT	4♥	5♦	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♥
2NT	4♥	All Pass	

Yeh judged well to compete to 4♥ and then double 5♦. The defenders were handily placed to cash a top heart, then sit back and wait for their trump ace and two club tricks. (East cannot work the endplay on the second round of clubs since the 3-1 trump break seems to prevent stripping the hand of the majors.) Plus 500 was good, but not enough.

Shih started with a trump against 4♥ rather than a diamond and declarer drew trumps in two rounds ending in dummy (East playing ♥9-3), then led the ♣K. West won, and...shifted to diamonds. Declarer could then pitch a spade on the top clubs and claim 10 tricks.

In a parallel position Sartaj Hans played 4♥ on a diamond lead to the king and ace. He won and drew trumps to lead a club to the queen and ace. Now it was harder for West to shift to spades, but can you ever beat the game if partner doesn't have the ♠K? Even if declarer has no ♠J, he will either guess who to play for that card or he will be reduced to playing you for the doubleton ♠A. So you should shift to the ace and a second spade to let partner play diamonds if he doesn't have another spade winner to cash.

About half the field defended correctly: there were 19 pairs defeating 4♥ while 18 pairs made +620. The rest played partscore or bid on in diamonds.

It was 33-11 now for Sakurai, who had one further chance to create a swing from nowhere.

Bd: 14
 Dlr: East
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ 843
 ♥ KQ86
 ♦ J752
 ♣ Q2

West
 ♠ 965
 ♥ J32
 ♦ 986
 ♣ K953

East
 ♠ AKJ10
 ♥ A75
 ♦ Q3
 ♣ J1084

South
 ♠ Q72
 ♥ 1094
 ♦ AK104
 ♣ A76

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Asaoka</i>	<i>Yeh</i>	<i>Tada</i>	<i>Zhang</i>
		1NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Shih</i>	<i>Sakurai</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Kikuchi</i>
		1NT(1)	Dbf

All Pass
 (1) 13-15

Kikuchi must have lived right to find the West and North hands arranged as they were and not the other way around. Defending 1NT he led a top diamond, asking for attitude, and his partner's ♦7 convinced him to underlead the ♦K next. Wang breathed her first sigh of relief, then guessed to lead the ♣J to the king and then take a spade finesse. When it lost she had six tricks but no more. She pitched clubs on the diamonds. South took the ♣A, crashing his partner's queen, and exited in spades leaving East to lead hearts and concede two more tricks at the death.

In the other room, where 1NT was not doubled, the defenders took the obvious four diamond tricks, two clubs, two hearts and one spade for down three. A sweaty 2 imps for YBM, who escaped with a 33-13 loss.

Images of Our Game



"Did anyone see my partner come by here? We still have three boards to go!"



"I can't believe I fell for that old ploy!"



"Someone told me today was graduation day."



"You had *four* chances to get it right!"



"No, I'm sure you can't eat that at the table."



The NEC Appeals Committee

Match Two: Russia vs 7 Heart

by Rich Colker



Jungbai



Gromov



Jungjin



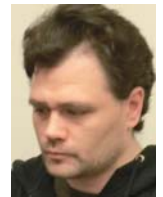
Krasnoselskii



lynryung



Isub



Gladys



Dubinin

Our first look at Russia, the 2014 NEC Cup winners, has them playing a dangerous Korean team, 7 Heart.

Bd: 17 North
 Dlr: North ♠ K873
 Vul: None ♥ J8
 ♦ KQ4
 ♣ J985

West
 ♠ J10
 ♥ A1072
 ♦ A95
 ♣ Q1062

East
 ♠ AQ654
 ♥ Q95
 ♦ J10
 ♣ AK4

South
 ♠ 92
 ♥ K643
 ♦ 87632
 ♣ 73

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT(F)	Pass	2♣	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladys</i>	<i>Isub</i>
	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

N/S's chances for beating 3NT ranged from slim to none. In the Open Room Gromov led the ♦K (right suit, but giving up a second stopper to E/W). Now declarer simply took the spade finesse, crossed in clubs, and had nine tricks after conceding a spade to North. Gromov won the fourth spade and continued diamonds, setting up Jungbai's tenth trick (inevitable on any continuation by Gromov); +430 to E/W.

In the Closed Room the contract was played from the other side and Isub led the ♦8, ducked to the queen. lynryung switched to the ♠3, which declarer ran around to the ten. Gladys repeated the spade finesse, crossed to hand in clubs, and advanced the ♥Q, which was ducked around. A second heart was ducked to the jack and back came the ♣9, giving declarer an eleventh trick. He won the ♣10, crossed to the ♣K, cashed the ♠A and finessed the ♥K for +460; 1 imp to Russia, who broke on top 1-0.

That imp tied the biggest pick-up on the deal around the room. Our senior editor was already despairing of ever seeing an exciting deal. Calm yourself, Rich, still six days to go.

Bd: 18 North
 Dlr: East ♠ A6
 Vul: N/S ♥ AQJ
 ♦ 10875
 ♣ K875

West	East
♠ 2	♠ QJ1084
♥ 543	♥ 92
♦ A964	♦ QJ32
♣ AJ1093	♣ Q2

South
 ♠ K9753
 ♥ K10876
 ♦ K
 ♣ 64

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1♦	1♠	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>lsub</i>
		2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

Both tables played heart contracts, the Russians in game, the Koreans in partscore. In the Open Room Dubinin got a spade lead, which looked suspiciously like a singleton. He won the ace and tried a diamond to the king. Jungbai won the ace and switched to the ♣A-J. Dubinin won, ducked a spade to prevent his king from being ruffed away, and now Jungbai switched to a belated trump to dummy's jack. Dubinin ruffed a diamond, then a spade, then called for a club from dummy, over-ruffing Jungjin's nine with the ten. He could now ruff a second spade, ruff a club to hand, cash the ♥K and lose the last trick (the good ♠K) to Jungbai's ♥5 for down one, -100.

In the Closed Room Krasnoselskii also got the clearly singleton ♠2 lead, but here lsub ducked this to the king in order to play a club up. When West ducked he won the king and tried a diamond, the king losing to the ace. Back came a second diamond, ruffed. Now lsub gave up his spade ruff early and back came a trump to dummy's jack. But when lsub gave up a second club (he could have simply cross-ruffed diamonds and spades for nine tricks) Gladysh won and tabled a second trump and now lsub could only score one spade ruff in dummy, to finish down one for a push when he might have gained 3imps for +110. Still 1-0, Russia.

Nine tables brought home 4♠ for +620, three tables adding sugar frosting to the doughnut by being doubled there for +790.

Bd: 19 North
 Dlr: South ♠ AK2
 Vul: E/W ♥ A1092

West
 ♠ QJ10
 ♥ J43
 ♦ 102
 ♣ 109764

South
 ♠ 943
 ♥ Q85
 ♦ AKQJ54
 ♣ 3

East
 ♠ 8765
 ♥ K76
 ♦ 97
 ♣ AQ52

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♣(♦)
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>lsub</i>
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The auctions in the two rooms began the same way (Dubinin's 2♣ rebid showing a 2♦ rebid) but Gromov started cue-bidding, got news of secondary heart support, and now there was no stopping him. He won the opening ♠7 lead in hand, crossed in diamonds, and floated the ♥Q. Jungjin won the king, cashed the ♣A, and switched back to spades. Gromov won in dummy, cashed the ♣K, and ran the diamonds to catch West in a major-suit show-up squeeze (the ♠9 being a threat) to finish down one, -50.

The Closed Room auction was much shorter — and safer. Gladysh led the ♣2 to the nine and jack. lynryung crossed in diamonds and passed the ♥Q to the king. Back came a spade and now declarer could repeat the heart finesse and take twelve tricks for +490 and an 11-imp gain. 7 Heart led now 11-1.

The Russians were the only pair to attempt slam here (maybe not entirely surprising), with quite a few pairs recording only +400 in 3NT.

Bd: 20 North
 Dlr: West ♠ QJ
 Vul: Both ♥ 10

West
 ♠ 2
 ♥ J8654
 ♦ Q1072
 ♣ 1096

♦ AK953
 ♣ J8753

East
 ♠ K83
 ♥ AQ72
 ♦ 4
 ♣ AKQ42

South
 ♠ A1097654
 ♥ K93
 ♦ J86
 ♣ ---

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbl	1♠
Pass	1NT(♣)	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>lsub</i>
Pass	1♦	Dbl	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

The two auctions were equivalent up to the point where lynryung declined the invitation while Gromov carried on to game. North's lack of club values and spade concentration proved key to the game's success. Dubinin got a heart lead to the ace and a heart continuation. He ruffed in dummy, passed the ♠Q, ruffed a club to hand, cashed the ♠A, led a spade to the king, won the heart return, cashed one more spade and, given the diamond shortness implied by East's takeout double, led and passed the ♦J when West failed to cover; +650.

In the Closed Room lsub ruffed the club lead and played the ♦J. Here the play record initially indicated that he ducked when West covered with the queen but then went on to make 12 tricks — impossible! A later correction has it at 200, but regardless, that was 9imps back to Russia, who now trailed by 1 at 11-10.

Definitely pride of place here goes to Yoko Nenohi and Kumiko Matsuo, as E/W, who bid and made 4♥x on the lead of the ♦K. Yes, the defenders might have taken a ruff or two, but who's counting? The N/S tie for top goes to the pairs registering +990 in 4♠x. Step forward Megumi Takasaki and Hidenori Narita plus Toby Curtis and Mark LaForge.

Board 21 was a push in 4♠ down two when both South defenders led their singleton heart and declarer suffered two heart ruffs to go with his two losing aces and inescapable diamond loser. No swing. We'd been waiting almost 20 deals for a Fredin double (more of this anon) and here Peter found a penalty double to persuade his partner to play for ruffs and earn 300 the hard way. Nicely done, Peter.

Board 22 was also a push, this time in 4♥ down one. The game was a good one, basically depending on the position of the ♦A, which unluckily turned up offside at both tables (and indeed most of the other tables). This time, however, after leading a trump the defenders needed to defend accurately to set the game by continuing trumps rather than playing to try to cash out. Half the field managed to beat the game, half did not. Both our E/W pairs passed the test.

Board 23 became the third push in a row in a failing contract.

Bd: 23	North
Dlr: South	♠ K1032
Vul: Both	♥ A7
	♦ K32
	♣ AQ104

West	East
♠ A874	♠ QJ95
♥ J1098643	♥ 52
♦ ---	♦ A1085
♣ 53	♣ K97

South
♠ 6
♥ KQ
♦ QJ9764
♣ J862

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	Pass
3♥	3NT	All Pass	3♦

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladysh</i>	<i>lsub</i>
2♦(1)	2NT	Pass	Pass
All Pass			3NT

(1) Presumably a weak two-bid in a major (Multi)

West's intervention at both tables and the ensuing heart leads made 3NT not such a great contract. If one knew of the diamond split one could (in theory) hold the losses to five tricks (down just one) by winning the ♥A at trick one and playing on diamonds by finessing the nine immediately, thus allowing the suit to be run and the ♥K to provide the entry when East holds up the ace, declarer escaping with five diamond tricks, two hearts and the ♣A. Since neither declarer possessed such clairvoyance both finished down three. Again, no swing. Still 11-10, 7 Heart.

Here, as you would expect, several Wests around the room did not find a convenient way into the auction. When East led from his spade sequence declarer had a critical extra trick and when West continued the play on spades it let declarer win and play the ♦K. This left him in a position to come to nine tricks without pain.

Bd: 24	North
Dlr: West	♠ K4
Vul: None	♥ AJ753
	♦ 532
	♣ Q53

West	East
♠ 108762	♠ AJ93
♥ 4	♥ 1062
♦ 104	♦ J96
♣ AKJ72	♣ 1094

South
♠ Q5
♥ KQ98
♦ AKQ87
♣ 86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinjin</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣(1)
1♠	2♥	3♠	4♥

All Pass

(1) Strong, artificial

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>lIsub</i>
2♠(1)	Pass	3♠	Dbl
4♠	5♥	All Pass	

(1) 5-card major + an unspecified minor

Against Gromov's 4♥ contract Jungjin led the ♠A and when Jungbai discouraged, switched to the ♦9. Gromov won the ace, played three rounds of trumps ending in dummy (West pitching the ♣7, then the ♠2), and played diamonds from the top, claiming eleven tricks when the suit split; +450. One might have expected West to save in 4♠ after finding four-card spade support but that would have cost 300, so it would not exactly have been a bargain.

Against lynryung's 5♥ Gladysch too led the ♠A but with dummy's diamonds visible he easily found the club switch (West's minor). That resulted in a quick down one and another 11 imps to Russia, who had regained the lead at 21-11.

A total of six pairs bid too much as N/S and one pair employed the red card just a little too early, Yoko Nenohi and Kumiko Matsuo once again being the beneficiaries in the E/W seats when they recorded +470 in 2♠x.

Bd: 25	North
Dlr: North	♠ A65
Vul: E/W	♥ KQ1043
	♦ J63
	♣ 75

West	East
♠ K942	♠ QJ103
♥ 9852	♥ A6
♦ 1085	♦ A9
♣ A10	♣ 98643

South
♠ 87
♥ J7
♦ KQ742
♣ KQJ2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinjin</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♦
Dbl	1♥	1♠	Pass
2♠	3♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>lIsub</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Dbl	Pass
1♠	2♥	2♠	All Pass

Both contracts were cold for nine tricks so Russia picked up another useful 6 imps for the double partscore swing. Russia's lead was now 16 imps, 27-11. It is somewhat curious that getting your blow in first did not work more to 7 Heart's advantage, but maybe what mattered was the knowledge that South had five diamonds, rather than opening values.

No one made much of a splash here, except for Kokubo-Akira, who found themselves +670 in 2♠x. One can imagine worse places to be.

Bd: 26	North
Dlr: East	♠ KQ842
Vul: Both	♥ 83
	♦ 92
	♣ QJ85

West	East
♠ 1063	♠ AJ95
♥ 542	♥ AKJ7
♦ AJ5	♦ 10873
♣ A1064	♣ 3

South
♠ 7
♥ Q1096
♦ KQ64
♣ K972

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinjin</i>
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>lIsub</i>
		1♦	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Both tables received a low spade lead. In the Open Room Jungbai rose with the ace, played a diamond up, inserting the jack when South followed low, then tried a heart to the jack, losing to the queen. Back came a low club and the defense continued the suit. Jungbai won the third round (pitching diamonds from dummy), cashed the top two hearts, and when that suit failed to break led the ♦10 to the queen and ace. With little (actually no) hope left he exited with a low spade. Gromov, not expecting declarer to hold the ♠10 for his ♠A play at trick one, ducked, expecting declarer to put in the nine and lose to Dubinin's (presumed) ten. Whoa, Nellie! Jungbai called for the jack and when that held he had his seventh and contract-fulfilling trick; +90. Way to really irritate the opponents.

In the Closed Room Krasnoselskii ducked the lead to his ten and led the suit back, winning the ace when North split with the king (South pitching the ♣7) and exiting with a spade to the queen. Iynryung now switched to a low club, declarer winning the king with the ace. Next came a heart to the ace followed by a low diamond. Isub ducked, as had Dubinin at the other table, and declarer inserted the jack, cashed the ace and got out with a diamond, eventually scoring the ♥K for his eighth trick. Plus 120 was worth another imp to Russia, whose lead was now 17imps at 28-11.

The field made partscores as E/W here, the two exceptions being one pair down in 1NT after a spade lead, and one pair failing to make 2♥, for which there would be more excuse.

Bd: 27 North
 Dir: South ♠ J6
 Vul: None ♥ K9
 ♦ KQJ86
 ♣ K542

West
 ♠ K10972
 ♥ 2
 ♦ A4
 ♣ A10983

East
 ♠ A43
 ♥ Q10753
 ♦ 1053
 ♣ Q6

South
 ♠ Q85
 ♥ AJ864
 ♦ 972
 ♣ J7

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
1♠	2♦	2♠	Pass
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Iynryung</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>Isub</i>
1♠	2♦	2♠	Pass
3♠	All Pass		3♦

Against Gromov's 3♦ Jungjin led the ♠A, got the deuce from Jungbai, and found the good switch to a low trump. Jungbai won the ace...and switched to a low club. Gromov rose with the king and played back a second club, Jungbai overtaking the queen to (finally) play a second trump. But now Gromov was in control. He led the ♠J to Jungbai's king, setting up a club pitch (in case the ♥Q was offside). Jungbai led a third club and Jungjin ruffed with the ♦10 for down one, -50.

Against Krasnoselskii's 3♠ Iynryung led the ♦K, taken by the ace. Krasnoselskii exited with a low club as Iynryung rose with the king, cashed the ♦Q, then exited with a low club to dummy's queen. Declarer cashed the top two trumps, ending in hand, and claimed nine tricks for +140; 3 moreimps to Russia, whose lead was now 20imps at 31-11.

The field played partscore in spades, only a handful of pairs getting too high and attempting 4♠ without success.

Bd: 28 North
 Dir: West ♠ K62
 Vul: N/S ♥ 10976
 ♦ AK3
 ♣ K54

West
 ♠ 73
 ♥ AQ43
 ♦ 10942
 ♣ J82

East
 ♠ AJ84
 ♥ KJ52
 ♦ 86
 ♣ A73

South
 ♠ Q1095
 ♥ 8
 ♦ QJ75
 ♣ Q1096

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	1NT	2♦(1)	Pass
3♥	All Pass		

(1) Majors

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>Iynryung</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>	<i>Isub</i>
Pass	1♣	Dbl	1♠
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Had East been five-five in the majors, perhaps with as little as ♠AQxxx ♥Kxxxx, game for E/W would have been pushy but quite reasonable. As it was, East's hand must have been a big disappointment to Jungbai. With trumps four-one and the other suits all sitting poorly, 3♥ was doomed. Gromov led a trump to the queen and Jungbai tried a spade, the jack losing to the queen. Dubinin returned a diamond to the king and Gromov doggedly went back to trumps, Jungbai winning the ace followed by a spade to the ace, a spade ruff and a club to the ace. This was followed by a final spade ruff as Gromov over-ruffed but that was it for declarer (except for dummy's remaining two trumps), who finished down two, -100.

As poorly placed as the cards were for the above 3♥ contract, they were equally well placed for the 1NT contract here. Gladysch gave nothing away with a

passive $\diamond 8$ lead. lynryung won the ace in hand, led a spade to the ten, then a spade to the king and ace. The defense then cashed their four heart tricks as dummy pitched clubs, and now the defense could cash their $\clubsuit A$ but declarer had the rest. That was +90 for a push.

No one managed more than +200 in either column. Be still my beating heart. Two boards to go and the 'fireworks' were not over yet.

Bd: 29 North
 Dir: North $\spadesuit 8$
 Vul: Both $\heartsuit 86$
 $\diamond KQ873$
 $\clubsuit AKQ98$

West
 $\spadesuit 9653$
 $\heartsuit J102$
 $\diamond 65$
 $\clubsuit J643$

East
 $\spadesuit AKJ107$
 $\heartsuit KQ73$
 $\diamond 94$
 $\clubsuit 107$

South
 $\spadesuit Q42$
 $\heartsuit A954$
 $\diamond AJ102$
 $\clubsuit 52$

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
	1 \diamond	1 \spadesuit	Dbf
Pass	3 \clubsuit	Pass	4 \diamond
Pass	4 \spadesuit	Dbf	Pass
Pass	5 \clubsuit	Pass	6 \diamond
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladys</i>	<i>lsub</i>
	1 \diamond	1 \spadesuit	Dbf
2 \spadesuit	3 \clubsuit	3 \spadesuit	4 \diamond
Pass	5 \diamond	All Pass	

Finally some excitement! N/S can make 5 \diamond or 3NT (given the lie of the spade suit), but no more. 6 \diamond appears to need either serious misdefense (attempting to cash the $\spadesuit AK$) or 3-3 clubs and no vile diamond break. Not this afternoon, Josephine. lynryung-lsub had a good auction, judging well to reach the diamond game, while true to their aggressive nature Gromov-Dubinin reached the diamond slam. Eleven tricks were all she wrote and when the smoke had cleared Russia had sent 12imps back to 7 Heart, who trailed now by just 8imps at 31-23.

At precisely one table the defenders conspired to allow 6 \diamond to make; the beneficiaries were Hiroko and Shintaro Sensui.

One deal to go and the fireworks were *still* not over.

Bd: 30 North
 Dir: East $\spadesuit KQJ9876$
 Vul: None $\heartsuit K2$
 $\diamond K2$
 $\clubsuit 85$

West
 $\spadesuit 10$
 $\heartsuit A53$
 $\diamond Q108$
 $\clubsuit AK9763$

East
 $\spadesuit A32$
 $\heartsuit QJ97$
 $\diamond A64$
 $\clubsuit J102$

South
 $\spadesuit 54$
 $\heartsuit 10864$
 $\diamond J9753$
 $\clubsuit Q4$

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Jungbai</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Jungjin</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		1 \clubsuit	Pass
3 \spadesuit	4 \spadesuit	Pass	Pass
6 \clubsuit	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kras'skii</i>	<i>lynryung</i>	<i>Gladys</i>	<i>lsub</i>
		1 \clubsuit	Pass
2 \clubsuit	3 \spadesuit	Pass	Pass
Dbf	Pass	3NT	All Pass

In the Open Room Jungbai bid aggressively to 6 \clubsuit , perhaps influenced by his stellar club holding and his partner's ill-conceived pass of 4 \spadesuit (most top experts would likely play East's pass as constructive, a double being the regressive action, and 4 $\spadesuit x$ would have gone for at least 500, if not 800). The defense started a spade. Declarer won the ace and took an immediate heart finesse ($\heartsuit 10x$ with North being the most likely holding to allow the contract to make legitimately). Gromov won and returned a heart to the 9, 10 and A. Declarer played trumps by cashing the ace, unblocking the jack, then leading a diamond to dummy and calling for the $\clubsuit 10$, prepared to take the finesse. But the queen showed up solving that problem. But now declarer ran all his trumps and had to lose the last two tricks to North's $\diamond K$ and good spade; -100. If declarer holds onto one trump in the ending he can then test hearts and when that fails lead a diamond toward his Q-10 (he needs one of the diamond honors to be onside to hold the loss to down one). But once he leads his final trump only the hearts splitting three-three can attain that result.

In the Closed Room North got to bid his spades at the three level so E/W could stop in the more sensible 3NT. Declarer ducked the first two spades, won the third (pitching hearts from hand), led the $\clubsuit 2$

to the ace, a diamond to the ace, and called for the ♣J. When the queen appeared declarer had nine tricks, +600, for another 11 imps back to Russia, who won the match by 19 imps, 42-23, 15.06-4.94 in VPs.

While seven pairs went down with the E/W cards (and yes one pair played in 3♠ by responding that to

a 1♣ opening and playing there), we should certainly acknowledge the achievement of Ng-Yen, who played 3NTxx and racked up our first successful redoubled contract of the event, what's more with a not irrelevant overtrick to make it a cool 1000 in the in-column.

Match Three: Australia vs KORTAI

by Barry Rigal



Kanetkar



Cheng-Jui



Brown



Sung



Ware



Yang



Patrick



Wilkinson

Since N/S in the Open Room are father and son Cheng-Jui Huang and Patrick Huang, we shall refer to them by their first names throughout.

Bd: 1
 Dir: North
 Vul: None

North	♠ A9
	♥ AK1073
	♦ AQJ8
	♣ A2
West	
	♠ J62
	♥ 865
	♦ 742
	♣ 9753
East	
	♠ 10874
	♥ J2
	♦ 1063
	♣ QJ64
South	
	♠ KQ53
	♥ Q94
	♦ K95
	♣ K108

46. The correct answer (drum roll)...26. Three of the 20 who missed a grand played game, but no one played partscore or went down. That's a relief. What does this all prove? Answers on the back of a postcard, please.

Bd: 2
 Dir: East
 Vul: N/S

North	♠ 873
	♥ 83
	♦ AQ32
	♣ K1095
West	
	♠ KQ542
	♥ AK4
	♦ 96
	♣ A84
East	
	♠ A10
	♥ Q
	♦ KJ754
	♣ Q7632
South	
	♠ J96
	♥ J1097652
	♦ 108
	♣ J

Both N/S pairs started smoothly enough by bidding the grand slam. Something of a rarity though, both Souths used keycard and North had the pleasure of responding to show two (or five) without the trump queen. South then jumped to 7NT.

The editors had their first bet of the tournament: how many pairs would hit the mark here (awards would be given to those playing 7♥ or 7♦). The pessimist said one third of the field (16), the optimist 38 of the

	Open Room	West	North	East	South
		Kanetkar	Cheng-Jui	Brown	Patrick
				1♦	Pass
1♠		Pass	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥		Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT		All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
		1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	All Pass

Cui culpa in the closed Room? I put it mainly at West's door since most of this field would have opened a hand a queen lighter than East's. (Not the editors, of course, who put the Grapes of Wrath in Roth-Stone.) If slam is making or playable surely East can bid on over 3NT. 3NT wasn't exactly laydown after a heart lead. Avi Kanetkar won in dummy, played a club to the ace, ducked a club, then won the spade shift in hand to play another club up. Cheng-Jui Huang did his best by winning and exiting in clubs. Declarer ran dummy's winners and in the five-card ending where dummy remained with five diamonds he led the ♦K from the board and emerged with a somewhat unexpected tenth trick. Since 5♣ had three sure losers, Australia led 10-0.

One third of the field tried for more than 3NT and emerged with less.

Bd: 3 North
 Dir: South ♠ Q109
 Vul: E/W ♥ AQ43
 ♦ 102
 ♣ J542

West
 ♠ 87
 ♥ 109752
 ♦ AJ63
 ♣ 97

East
 ♠ AKJ543
 ♥ 86
 ♦ K87
 ♣ K6

South
 ♠ 62
 ♥ KJ
 ♦ Q954
 ♣ AQ1083

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
			1♣
Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass
Pass	2♣	2♠	3♣

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
			1♣(2+)
Pass	1♦(♥)	Pass	1NT
Pass	Pass	2♠	All Pass

The Junior Editor has gone into print with conviction on the merits of short club and transfer responses.

But he is equally vehemently against the idea of using the completion of the transfer with three trumps and bidding 1NT with two-card support, as opposed to using the 1NT call for a balanced 18-19. The combination of the loss of the club suit plus the inferior methods used by N/S in the Closed Room, coupled with East's deep position of passing at his first turn and then coming in later, led to the club suit being lost for good. 3♣ would have played easily enough on repeated spade leads, as Patrick Huang demonstrated. He ruffed in with the ♣Q, then crossed to a top heart to lead a low club towards his ♣A-10. The favorable break in clubs made nine tricks easy. Equally, 2♠ was in no jeopardy with the spade and diamond finesses working, and though declarer emerged with just +110 it was still a 6-imp pick-up for KORTAI, who closed the gap to 10-6.

As to the most unexpected result of the event so far, it might be that Dong Lu for Beijing Trinergy played 3NT from the North seat on a top spade lead...and was allowed to make it. Since a heart shift at trick two would not be sufficient to let it through, you may consult the guilty pair as to just how this result was achieved. One of the names rhymes with...no, that wouldn't be fair.

Bd: 4 North
 Dir: West ♠ J952
 Vul: Both ♥ KJ
 ♦ K7
 ♣ AQJ107

West
 ♠ A108
 ♥ A76
 ♦ QJ6
 ♣ K986

East
 ♠ KQ3
 ♥ Q10985
 ♦ 84
 ♣ 432

South
 ♠ 764
 ♥ 432
 ♦ A109532
 ♣ 5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
1♣	1NT	Pass	2NT
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
1♣	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Both Souths were faced with the decision as to whether to escape from 1NT. Wilkinson tried Stayman, planning to pass the response. He may not have been delighted to hear a 2♠ rebid, but the play

in 2♠ must have surpassed his expectations. A club lead went to the king and ace and declarer immediately played three more rounds of the suit. East ruffed low, overruffed in dummy, and a heart to the ace now saw West play ace and another spade, crashing his partner's trump trick. Now declarer lost just those three major-suit tricks, for +170. That went nicely with +300 from 2NT after a heart lead, where it looks as if N/S simply had a system accident. That made it 20-6 for Australia.

More contracts went down here than were brought home. The top score went to Xue Xiaoli and Tao Jianhua of Beijing Lawyers who defended 4♥x for +800. At that level you could get a nosebleed.

Bd: 5 North
 Dlr: North ♠ KQ10542
 Vul: N/S ♥ J6
 ♦ KJ10
 ♣ 53

West
 ♠ 93
 ♥ AK107
 ♦ Q75
 ♣ J1092

East
 ♠ A87
 ♥ Q52
 ♦ 863
 ♣ AK84

South
 ♠ J6
 ♥ 9843
 ♦ A942
 ♣ Q76

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♥	1♠	Dbl(SUPP)Pass	
2♣	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
	2♠	All Pass	

Whatever you feel about the heavy 2♠ opening at this vulnerability, it is certainly a reasonable choice and turned out to be a very successful one. With the best will in the world the editors cannot bring themselves to criticize the E/W pair in the Closed Room who passed out 2♠. Yes, their reward will be in heaven rather than on earth. (Even if the meek are indeed supposed to inherit the earth they have to seek the approval of the other half before putting in their claim — and the rest don't seem anxious to relinquish their grip on it.)

The defenders took their hearts, but shifted to a diamond when in with the ♠A and a club loser got away. So that was +140, which went along with +110

in 2♣. Brown received a spade lead, ducked, and a shift to hearts. He cashed the top clubs before ruffing a spade, then ran hearts to dispose of a diamond loser as South ruffed in. I guess passing that North hand didn't work so well. Imagine my surprise.

With Australia leading 26-6, the two Easts had an opportunity to exercise their judgment. One will rarely see such a huge disparity between the ideas of what a hand is worth as occurred on the next deal.

Bd: 6 North
 Dlr: East ♠ J85
 Vul: E/W ♥ J765
 ♦ Q6
 ♣ A942

West
 ♠ A42
 ♥ Q94
 ♦ AKJ
 ♣ QJ87

East
 ♠ K96
 ♥ A832
 ♦ 1075432
 ♣ ---

South
 ♠ Q1073
 ♥ K10
 ♦ 98
 ♣ K10653

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
		Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
		Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Whichever camp you fall into here (and there aren't many ways to invite game after this start) you can't deny Sungae Yang bought a very good hand opposite. Yes, 3NT might be a better spot but after Griff Ware's heart lead Kyunghae Sung could draw trumps and ruff the fourth heart for 11 tricks without breaking a sweat. That was worth 10 imps when Brown's discreet pass of 2♦ did not bring a smile to the cheery countenance of Avi Kanetkar. It was 26-16 now, each side scoring in units of 10 or 6 imps.

The datum score here was 350, suggesting that about one third of the field bid and made game.

Australia broke the scoring sequence on the next deal, sneaking an overtrick imp on a notrump part-score to make it 27-16. Then both sides balanced over a strong notrump to show both majors with a 5-

5 pattern and played their 5-3 fit to make +110. No swing on the next deal either, where both pairs had a strong 2NT auction to an absolutely normal 3NT and took advantage of a favorable lie in one of the two critical suits to wrap up ten tricks. That left it still 27-16.

Bd: 10 North
 Dir: East ♠ A42
 Vul: Both ♥ AJ643
 ♦ 105
 ♣ A85

West
 ♠ J10876
 ♥ K107
 ♦ Q
 ♣ QJ94

East
 ♠ 3
 ♥ 52
 ♦ KJ742
 ♣ K10763

South
 ♠ KQ95
 ♥ Q98
 ♦ A9863
 ♣ 2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	2♥
		All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	2♦ (♦ + 3♥)
		All Pass	

Both tables reached 4♥ but by very disparate routes. Cheng-Jui won the spade lead in dummy and immediately ruffed a heart, then advanced the ♥Q — a very reasonable line for ten tricks. When this was covered he ruffed another club in dummy and played ace and another diamond. Had West discarded on this trick the defenders could only have scored one more trump trick, so West ruffed in and played a spade, letting East score his small trump but leaving declarer with the rest.

Griff Ware won the spade lead in dummy, played ♣A ruff a club, then led a spade to his hand. East ruffed in and shifted to diamonds, letting West ruff the second diamond and lead a second spade for East to ruff. With two trumps remaining out declarer had to guess whether to split them or finesse, and given what he knew about spades and diamonds it was a blind guess. He got it wrong by playing for the drop and KORTAI had 13 imps to take the lead 29-27.

While playing trumps at trick four might fail to a 4-1 trump break offside with West having a small singleton, it seems to cover the bases in almost every other case and avoids embarrassment in scenarios like the one that actually occurred. Only eight pairs managed to find a route to go down.

Bd: 11 North
 Dir: South ♠ 10543
 Vul: None ♥ 5
 ♦ A865
 ♣ J986

West
 ♠ AQJ6
 ♥ KQ1084
 ♦ J97
 ♣ A

East
 ♠ 7
 ♥ J97632
 ♦ K32
 ♣ 743

South
 ♠ K982
 ♥ A
 ♦ Q104
 ♣ KQ1052

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
Dbl	2♣	2♥	1♣
4♣	Pass	4♥	3♣
			All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
Dbl	Pass	2♥	1NT
Pass	2♠	Pass	Dbl
3♥	3♠	All Pass	Pass

When players open hands like South's a strong notrump it pains me to have to see them finish up with imps in the in-column (indeed imps in on any board in that set). But objective reporters have to register the fact that Australia regained the lead on this deal when Sung and Yang missed the chance to bid their game or take Ware for a large penalty. While 4♥ proved easy to play, declarer setting up spades via the ruffing finesse to discard his diamond loser without risk, 3♠ was a contract that should surely have been doubled. After a heart lead declarer went after trumps repeatedly before dislodging the trump ace. That let West draw trumps and run hearts when in with the ♣A for down four. Had declarer been doubled he would no doubt have escaped for two down at worst by playing on clubs to lose four trumps, a diamond and a club.

Four E/W pairs overbid to the five-level to go down. One pair sold out to 1NT — you can supply the appropriate number of exclamation marks for that

result — and while one pair doubled 5♠ for +800, five E/W pairs did even better than that. I'm not sure if maximum credit is supposed to go to Kyoko Ohno and Akihiko Yamada who collected +1100 from 3♠x or to Qi YouGuang and Wang Fei who took 4♠x down +1400.

The next deal presented no problems at either of our tables but it was certainly not an easy hand.

Bd: 12
 Dir: West
 Vul: N/S

West ♠ Q5 ♥ J8732 ♦ K107 ♣ J76	North ♠ KJ87 ♥ AK ♦ 964 ♣ KQ104	East ♠ A102 ♥ Q64 ♦ Q85 ♣ 9852	South ♠ 9643 ♥ 1095 ♦ AJ32 ♣ A3
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Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

In 3NT Ware won the club lead cheaply in hand, then unblocked clubs to lead a spade to the jack, ducked by East. Ware now gave up a spade, won the heart switch to duck a second spade, and now had nine winners. 4♠ was more awkward but Cheng-Jui handled it with aplomb, winning the club lead in dummy to lead a spade to the jack and ace. Back came a club, so he could win and play the ♠K, then lose just a diamond, with two diamonds from dummy going on the clubs.

In the match involving the Hackett team, both tables played 4♠. Hallberg as North won the club lead in hand and unblocked clubs to lead a spade to the king. (In general this seems the right approach since leading a spade to the jack and ace would not guarantee you were out of the woods, while if the ♠K held declarer could almost claim ten tricks.) Not today though, since after the ♠K lost to the ace a diamond shift would have set the game. East passively exited in trumps, though, and Hallberg had regained control.

At the other table Senior led a club to the jack and king and back came a club to the ace. Now declarer

guessed to lead a spade to the jack. When Senior ducked smoothly, declarer elected to lead out two more rounds of clubs, pitching diamonds from dummy but letting West ruff in with his bare ♠Q. Now the defenders still had two trump tricks and a diamond to come; down one.

Evgeny Gladyshev was kicking himself here. He had bid diamonds as East over a strong club (!) but led a club against 4♠. Don't you know the saying "If they're good enough to bid, they're good enough to lead"?

Bd: 13
 Dir: North
 Vul: Both

West ♠ A843 ♥ AJ ♦ AQ1042 ♣ 32	North ♠ K109 ♥ KQ87 ♦ J7 ♣ K1074	East ♠ 762 ♥ 1053 ♦ K853 ♣ A98	South ♠ QJ5 ♥ 9642 ♦ 96 ♣ QJ65
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Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Kanetkar</i>	<i>Cheng-Jui</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Patrick</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Dbl	2♥	3♦	All Pass
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Sung</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Yang</i>	<i>Wilkinson</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♦(♥)
Pass	2♦(♥)	Pass	2♥
All Pass			

While the Open Room had no trouble finding a way into the auction, E/W were frozen out of the bidding by the transfer responses. 3♦ was simplicity itself to play, the ninth trick coming from the spade ruff in the short hand. Against 2♥ the defenders had only five top winners. Sang solved the defense's problem by leading a low club at trick one, and Yang ducked this to leave the defenders' communications in place. The club ruff set the part-score; nicely defended but no swing. Still, 33-29 for Australia, with an overtrick imp on the last deal giving them the win by 5 imps.

Incidentally, one pair combined wildness and luck well enough to bid to 3NT by West. This may seem a case of needing to build bricks from inadequate straw, but Sartaj Hans duly received the necessary heart lead to allow him to establish the ninth trick. Well bid...er, or something.

Match Four: Russia vs Hackett

by Barry Rigal



Dubinin



Holland



Gromov



Hackett



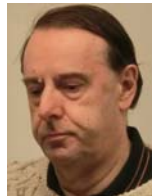
Drijver



Hallberg



Brink



Senior

The idea of an NEC tournament without Paul Hackett is a strange one. He is currently recuperating from a hip operation, we understand, so Jason would do his best to step into those giant shoes. Or would it be Brian Senior doing his best impersonation of Papa?

Bd: 17 North
 Dlr: North ♠ 763
 Vul: None ♥ Q2
 ♦ KJ6
 ♣ K10543

West
 ♠ Q5
 ♥ 1093
 ♦ Q9743
 ♣ AQ9

East
 ♠ A842
 ♥ J8765
 ♦ A105
 ♣ J

South
 ♠ KJ109
 ♥ AK4
 ♦ 82
 ♣ 8762

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
Dubinin	Holland	Gromov	Hallberg
Hackett	Drijver	Senior	Brink
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	All Pass	

Both tables reached 1NT by North after South opted for lead direction in third seat. Both Easts led a low heart and declarer put up the king to lead a club to the king and another club on which East discarded a low spade. Now the paths at the two tables diverged. Dubinin continued hearts and Holland won to clear clubs. He put in the ♦J on the diamond return and when Gromov returned a third heart declarer now had seven winners. Had he needed to guess spades (after a diamond continuation) I'm sure he would have done so.

In the other room Hackett shifted to a diamond and the defenders now set up diamonds and had seven winners.

The field was split pretty close to 50-50 with small part-scores going either way. The "big" plus score saw Qi YouGuang and Wang Fei collect 300 against 4♥x.

Bd: 18 North
 Dlr: East ♠ A108
 Vul: N/S ♥ A1087
 ♦ Q975
 ♣ Q6

West
 ♠ K732
 ♥ K9
 ♦ J1063
 ♣ A87

East
 ♠ Q54
 ♥ Q65432
 ♦ 842
 ♣ K

South
 ♠ J96
 ♥ J
 ♦ AK
 ♣ J1095432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Dubinin	Holland	Gromov	Hallberg
2♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♣
Dbl	All Pass	Pass	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Hackett	Drijver	Senior	Brink
Pass	Pass	2♥	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Both tables reached 3NT but with quite different degrees of confidence. Dubinin was prepared to up

Open/Closed Rooms

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubinin</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Both tables reached 3NT. Dubinin led a passive club while Hackett made the interesting choice of the ♥A — assuming whatever South had in hearts would not be the guarded king. Hallberg won the club lead in hand to cash four hearts (pitching spades), then finessed in diamonds and played two more rounds of diamonds. The defenders could cash three hearts but no more.

In the other room Hackett's lead let his side take three hearts on the go and shift to spades. Declarer had no choice but to cross his fingers, first in spades, then in diamonds. His luck was in and there was no swing (but I think this was a moral victory to Hackett, don't you?).

The field bid and made game here. Four Wests led hearts against 3NT but only at this table was the lead the ace. I suppose if the ♥J had been in dummy instead of declarer's hand I wouldn't be congratulating West on his imagination.

After a quiet 3NT, with every card well placed for N/S, we came to a different kettle of fish.

Bd: 23 North
 Dir: South ♠ K10942
 Vul: Both ♥ AK65
 ♦ Q
 ♣ 1084

West	East
♠ Q76	♠ AJ53
♥ QJ10973	♥ 82
♦ 7	♦ J9653
♣ A62	♣ Q7

South
 ♠ 8
 ♥ 4
 ♦ AK10842
 ♣ KJ953

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubinin</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
2♥	2♠	Pass	1♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	3♣

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Brink</i>
2♥	2♠	Pass	1♦
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♣
All Pass			5♣

Brink avoided the spade lead against 5♣ but he had to take two top hearts at once to pitch the spade. When he led the ♣10 it was covered by the queen and ducked. He unblocked diamonds, played a second trump, and Hackett won to play a third trump, leaving declarer with two slow diamond losers for down one.

3NT looked a more comfortable spot, given the lie of the clubs, but West was going to be able to duck his ♣A twice and leave declarer with no entires to dummy. As it was, though, Holland ducked the heart lead and a shift to a spade to the ten and jack for a diamond through left Holland without any tricks at all. He elected to win the ♦Q, take the top hearts, then lead a club to the king. The roof fell in. The defense had the whole heart suit to run plus two tricks in each black suit, and that meant +400 for Russia and 7imps. They led 13-8.

Just for the record, if declarer wins the heart lead and advances the ♣10 East must not cover. If the defenders duck the first two clubs declarer cannot quite do it. However, if East covers the first club declarer wins the king, crosses back to the eight, cashes his remaining heart winner, then overtakes the ♦Q to reach this ending:

North
 ♠ K10942
 ♥ 65
 ♦ Q
 ♣ 4

West	East
♠ Q76	♠ AJ53
♥ QJ107	♥ ---
♦ 7	♦ J9653
♣ A	♣ ---

South
 ♠ 8
 ♥ ---
 ♦ AK10842
 ♣ J9

Take a moment to plan the double-dummy implications of this position with the lead in North and declarer needing five more tricks. Ready?

Declarer overtakes the ♦Q and leads the ♠8 from

dummy — under which he must follow with the ♠4! Now if East wins and plays ace and another spade, South wins and gets out with the ♠2 to endplay East to give dummy three diamond tricks. Routine, of course. I'm sure that was exactly how no fewer than half the field made 3NT here; something of a shocking statistic, I'd say.

Bd: 24 North
 Dlr: West ♠ 98532
 Vul: None ♡ Q10763
 ♢ ---
 ♣ AK10

West
 ♠ J4
 ♡ AK95
 ♢ KJ984
 ♣ QJ

East
 ♠ AK6
 ♡ 4
 ♢ A763
 ♣ 98632

South
 ♠ Q107
 ♡ J82
 ♢ Q1052
 ♣ 754

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
1♢	Dbl	2♣(♢)	Pass
2♡	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♢	Pass	5♢	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Brink</i>
1NT	2♣(♡+♠)	Pass	2♢
Pass	2♡	Dbl	Pass
3♢	Pass	3♡	Dbl
3NT	All Pass		

3NT proved straightforward to handle when Hackett won the heart lead to play a diamond to the ace, with two entries to dummy for the diamond finesses.

In the other room Holland cashed two top clubs as Hallberg showed an odd number, then played a spade. Declarer won the ace and played the ♢A to discover the trump position. To make the contract now, declarer must (though he can choose the order of his plays from dummy) ruff a club to hand, ruff a heart to dummy, then finesse in trumps and ruff another heart. With dummy's side-suit winners now high and his trumps reduced to South's length, declarer can choose which order he wants to play winners from the board and his opponents are helpless. Dubin failed to ruff out the clubs (playing North for a 5=4=0=4 pattern) and eventually Hallberg overruffed dummy on the fourth round of hearts to gain 10 imps for his side and restore the Hackett

lead to 18-13. Almost the whole field found the route home in game, but they nearly all played 3NT.

On the next hand both N/S pairs negotiated a very awkward layout to play a 7-0 spade fit. Brink and Drijver got a trick higher, the Russians defended a trick better. No swing at +50 to each defense. Worthy of note is that the Beijing Lawyers played 2♠x in the 4-2 fit (splitting 7-0 offside) for 1100 to Singapore while Sweden collected 800 from Australia's attempt to play 4♠ the other way. So much for "declarer's advantage."

Bd: 26 North
 Dlr: East ♠ KQJ7
 Vul: Both ♡ J1064
 ♢ A63
 ♣ 73

West
 ♠ A965
 ♡ A5
 ♢ QJ987
 ♣ 65

East
 ♠ 832
 ♡ K972
 ♢ 42
 ♣ AKQ8

South
 ♠ 104
 ♡ Q83
 ♢ K105
 ♣ J10942

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
2♣	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass	2♡	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Brink</i>
1♢	Dbl	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	All Pass

In 1NT Senior won the club lead to play a diamond to the seven, then came back to hand to lead a diamond towards dummy again. Brink won the ♢K and played clubs, letting Senior set up diamonds for nine tricks. An opportunity missed? No. Against 3NT Hallberg led a club, won his ♢K and shifted to the ♠10, playing his partner for precisely the spade holding he had. From here on declarer was helpless. Three Souths led a spade to trick one, presumably in response to an overcall or double. But other than them, only a handful of defenders worked out how to set the game. It was 24-13 now, Hackett.

Russia gained 3 imps in unlikely fashion: saving against a making 3♡ in 3NT, which required slightly thoughtful defense to beat the game a trick. Then

came something more significant.

Bd: 28 North
 Dir: West ♠ J
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q109
 ♦ K5
 ♣ QJ86542

West
 ♠ A985
 ♥ 65
 ♦ J10932
 ♣ 73

East
 ♠ Q7643
 ♥ KJ83
 ♦ 8
 ♣ K109

South
 ♠ K102
 ♥ A742
 ♦ AQ764
 ♣ A

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	1NT
2♠	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

Drijver's 3♣ silenced everyone (though not quite the editors, who thought South had an 'automatic' 5♣ bid). But Brink has seen more of Drijver's preempts at unfavorable vulnerability than we have. 3♣ fetched +130 while 3NT on the lead of ♠9 — conveniently unblocking the suit — was enough to ensure +200, twist and turn as Hallberg might. His choice was to lead a heart to the nine. The defenders won, cashed out the spades, then still had a trick to come at the end. The match was tied at 24-24.

Five pairs made game here: South made 5♣ once on a heart lead, once on a top diamond lead, and 3NT by South made three times on a diamond lead.

Bd: 29 North
 Dir: North ♠ J76532
 Vul: Both ♥ KQ2
 ♦ K6
 ♣ K6

West
 ♠ A4
 ♥ 1097
 ♦ J9754
 ♣ J87

East
 ♠ KQ8
 ♥ A64
 ♦ Q8
 ♣ Q10432

South
 ♠ 109
 ♥ J853
 ♦ A1032
 ♣ A95

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Brink</i>
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
All Pass			

Both Norths showed a minimum with six spades. Hallberg chose to invite in spades, Brink in notrump, the latter a questionable decision. With trumps 3-2 nine tricks in spades were a formality while in notrump Brink ducked the initial diamond lead and Senior made him pay by shifting to clubs, the suit the defenders could actually set up. While the defenders might have beaten the game if Brink had won the first trick, they also might not have.

On to the grandstand finish.

Bd: 30 North
 Dir: East ♠ A8
 Vul: None ♥ K32
 ♦ KQJ1073
 ♣ J9

West
 ♠ KQ752
 ♥ Q
 ♦ 42
 ♣ AK432

East
 ♠ J103
 ♥ 985
 ♦ A9
 ♣ Q10875

South
 ♠ 964
 ♥ AJ10764
 ♦ 865
 ♣ 6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
		Pass	Pass
1♠	2♦	2♠	Dbl
Rdbl	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Brink</i>
		Pass	2♥
2♠	2NT	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

We have already observed in this match how much freer the Russians are to preempt. This time it

backfired spectacularly when the extra bidding space left in the Open Room let E/W bid themselves out low, while Hackett and Senior were almost forced into doing the right thing. Mind you, had Dubinin bid 3♣ at his second turn, or had Drijver jumped to 4♥ at his first turn, things might have been different.

In practical terms 4♠ was cold since North was always going to lead a diamond against it. Equally, ten tricks in hearts were just as straightforward and Holland duly took them; 13 imps to Hackett and a 43-24 win.

One third of the field made game as N/S, one third as E/W, with Nishida-Bokhee topping the bill with +730 in 3♥x.

20th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Wednesday (Feb. 11)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (5)	411, 412, 414, 415, 418, 419
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (6)	
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (7)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (8)	
Thursday (Feb. 12)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (9)	411, 412, 414, 415, 418, 419
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (10)	
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (11)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (12)	
Friday (Feb. 13)	09:00-11:15	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (1)	414, 415
	11:35-13:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final (2)	
	13:50-15:00	Lunch Break	414, 415
	15:00-17:15	NEC Cup Semi-Final (1)	
	17:35-19:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama IMP Pairs	503
Saturday (Feb. 14)	09:00-11:15	NEC Cup Final (1)	414, 415
	11:35-13:50	NEC Cup Final (2)	
	13:50-15:00	Lunch Break	501, 502
	15:00-17:15	NEC Cup Final (3)	
	17:35-19:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams	503
Sunday (Feb. 15)	10:00-17:30	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

