

NEC Bridge Festival

Tuesday, February 7, 2017
Bulletin Number 2

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Day One of the 2017 NEC Cup

At the end of Day One, the top qualifiers are led by team Israel (Michael Barel, Yaniv Zack, Ilan Bareket, Assaf Lengy) with 69.47 VPs, followed by team Hackett (Paul Hackett, Jason Hackett, Brian Senior, Alex Hydes) with 64.83 VPs and team China Dalain Aoxin (Huo Shiyu, Chen Jun, Li Xiaoyi, Hu Linlin) with 61.29 VPs. Ten other teams have VP totals in the 50s while another handful of teams are not far behind them with VP totals in the high 40s. 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	Israel.....	69.47	19	YBS.....	47.06	37	England/Norway.....	33.84
2	Hackett.....	64.83	20	KinKi.....	46.81	38	BACH.....	33.33
3	China Dalian Aoxin..	61.29	21	Kimura Yokohama....	46.77	39	Beijing Trinergy.....	31.92
4	Senior 2017.....	56.11	22	NANIWADA.....	46.37	40	Japan Youth.....	31.35
5	Zhiyijia.....	55.18	23	Air-TRFC.....	45.54	41	Gladiator.....	30.57
6	SWAT Squad.....	54.03	24	Sakurai.....	40.92	42	MASA.....	30.05
7	England/USA.....	53.32	25	HIRATA.....	39.87	43	Midori.....	29.93
8	Soaring Shou.....	53.25	26	Morimura.....	38.55	44	HOSHI.....	29.84
9	China Happy.....	53.18	27	LAS FLORES.....	37.69	45	Fukuyoshi.....	29.69
10	YBT.....	52.43	28	Rimi.....	37.25	46	Tropezienne.....	24.53
11	Shanghai Financial..	52.29	29	Wuhan Dongfang BC..	37.22	47	OK team.....	21.8
12	SARA.....	51.28	30	skylark.....	37.13	48	Bridge View.....	21.65
13	Kosing.....	50.89	31	YOYO5.....	36.97	49	KLS.....	20.67
14	POSEIDON.....	48.89	32	kaTsube.....	35.99	50	River Side.....	20.17
15	China Ladies.....	48.87	33	TBA.....	35.93	51	Hanmaum.....	18.4
16	China Open.....	48.35	34	Australia.....	35.54	52	Key Bridge.....	17.46
17	New Zealand.....	48.31	35	Katsumata.....	34.94	53	Challenge.....	10.23
18	China Relaxation....	47.56	36	Joy.....	33.99			

NEC Cup Bridge Festival on the Web

Follow the action at the 21st NEC Cup Bridge Festival by surfing to:

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/home/English/nec/21st/tabid/1429/Default.aspx>

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

Today's 1st VuGraph Matches will feature Israel (4) vs Hackett (1)
and Zhiyijia (28) vs SWAT Squad (2)

NEC Cup 2017: Conditions of Contest

Qualifying: A 12-round Swiss of 14-board matches will qualify the top 8 teams to the Knockout phase; no playbacks.

V.P. Scale for Qualifying: WBF 14-board scale (20 point scale, given to two decimal places).

Seating Rights for Qualifying: Blind seating 10 minutes before the start of match.

Tie-Breaks: At the end of the Swiss, ties will be broken by IMP quotient. If the IMP quotients are the same the head-to-head match (if any) will be used. If there is still a tie a coin toss will be used. 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 greater total of IMPs (including fractional IMPs due to penalties or score adjustments) is the winner of the match. In the event of an exact tie the team with the higher position in the Swiss is the winner of the match.

KO-Phase Seating: The team with the higher position from the Swiss has the choice of seating in either of the two 16-board segments of the quarter-finals and semi-finals. If they do not declare their choice before the match starts they will be deemed to have used their rights in the first segment. In the four 16-board segments of the final, the team with the higher position from the Swiss can choose the seating in either the first and fourth segments or the second and third. If they do not declare their choice before the match starts they will be deemed to have chosen the former.

Swiss Pairings: First-round Swiss matches will be 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.

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. Appeals will be permitted until the start of the next session except that they will only be permitted for 30 min after the last session of the Swiss or the last session of a KO match.

Match Scoring: Bridgemate scoring terminals will be used. Match results should be verified against the official result sheet (posted at the end of each match). Score corrections should be made before the start of the next session, but they will be accepted after the start of the next session if still timely (i.e., until the draw for the KO for corrections to results in the Swiss, until the start of the next KO round for corrections to the Quarter-final or Semi-final results, or until the award of prize money for the KO final), and if there is no reasonable doubt.

KO Draw: The team finishing 1st in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 5th-8th. The team finishing 2nd will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 5th-8th group. The same process is repeated for the team finishing 3rd and the team finishing 4th will play against the team not chosen by any of the other three 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 offence, 3 VPs for all subsequent offences; KO: 3imps for the 1st offence, 10imps for all subsequent offences;

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.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices: Mobile phones and other electronic devices capable of receiving/ transmitting information to/from the playing area (e.g., personal computers, tablets, etc.) 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 and other electronic devices in the playing area are prohibited during game time. Players with mobile phones or other electronic devices should surrender their devices to the staff at the service desk and receive a numbered tag for collecting their mobile phones and other devices after the session. 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.

Official Language: English

Other: Any matter not covered here will be decided according to the JCBL Conditions of Contest. If not covered by the JCBL Conditions of Contest it will be decided according to the WBF Conditions of Contest. If not covered by either, the decision of the JCBL Tournament Operations Department will be final.

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: 21st NEC Cup

#	Team Name	Members
1	Hackett:	Paul Hackett, Jason Hackett, Brian Senior, Alex Hydes
2	SWAT Squad:	Sartaj Hans, Tony Nunn, Sabine Auken, Roy Welland
3	England/USA:	Sally Brock, Barry Myers, Karen McCallum, Cenk Tuncok
4	Israel:	Michael Barel, Yaniv Zack, Ilan Bareket, Assaf Lengy
5	New Zealand:	Martin Reid, Peter Newell, Michael Cornell, Ashley Bach
6	Australia:	Siegfried Konig, Jimmi Wallis, Michael Whibley, Justin Howard
7	England/Norway:	David Bakhshi, Espen Erichsen, Terje Aa, Allan Livgard
8	China Open:	Chen Yunlong, Yang Lixin, Dai Jianming, Zhang Bangxiang, Zhao Jie, Li Jianwei
9	China Ladies:	Wang Wenfei, Shen Qi, Lu Yan, Liu Yan, Huang Yan, Wang Nan
10	Wuhan Dongfang Bridge Club:	Lian Ruoyang, Gui Shengyue, You Jianyong, Gao Fei, Yang Cai
11	Shanghai Financial Bridge Club:	Shan Baisong, Shen Yuxiong, Shao Zijian, Chen Dawei, Kazuo Furuta, Hiroki Yokoi
12	Beijing Trinergy:	Lu Dong, Wang Yanhong, Sun Shaolin, Kang Meng, Xin Guofang, Li Rui
13	China Happy:	Xue Xiaoli, Wang Fei, Zhang Jun, Zhu Minrong, Zhao Yonghui, Liu Haitao
14	China Dalian Aoxin:	Huo Shiyu, Chen Jun, Li Xiaoyi, Hu Linlin
15	China Relaxation:	Zhao Hailong, Liu Xiaoping, Jin Ke, Zhu Ping, Sheng Ming, Fu Zhong
16	KOREA YOYO5:	Whayoung Kim, Youngmee Kim, Namyoon Kim, Ingu Hwang, Sungsook Kang
17	KOREA Gladiator:	Min Soenyoungh, Sohn Jackie, Lee Hansang, Ahn Jaiyong
18	KOREA Joy:	Choi An hee, Lee Eun ja, Chang Eun kyung, Hong Pil hae, Kim Sun young
19	KOREA OK:	Chung Ilsub, Sung Kungghae, Jang Jungbae, Choi Jungjin
20	KOREA KLS:	Kim Yoonkyung, Park Jungyoon, Park Mungkee, Hwang Inyung
21	KOREA Challenge:	Kim Younhee, Koh Inkyung, Kim Kyungmi, Yea Eunjoo
22	KOREA Bridge View:	Lee Myeongjin, Lee Sooik, Yang Sunjoo, Han Kwoon, Roh Seunjin
23	KOREA Hanmaum:	Lee Soony, Kwon sungwon, Han Okhee, Lee ChoonHee
24	Kosing (Korea/Singapore):	Poon Hua, Loo Choon Chou, Kwon Haeryung, Yang Jiahong
25	YBT:	Yeh Chen, Zhang Yalan, Shih Jueiyu, Wang Ping, Ehud Friedlander, Inon Liran
26	YBS:	Patrick Huang, Jonky Chung, Chih Mou Lin, Bao Shan Kuang, Jen Lee Chi, Kuo Paw Cheng
27	Rimi:	Rimi Kawashima, Simon Chan, Jackson Lai, LH Chin
28	Zhiyijia:	Deng Zhuodi, Liu Jing, Liu Yinghao, Yin Jiashen, Hu Junjie, Chen Yichao
29	Soaring Shou:	Tian Wei, Li Zhenhe, Shi Bin, Dong Chunhui
30	POSEIDON:	Katsumi Takahashi, Hiroya Abe, Hidenori Narita, Lee Bokhee
31	BACH:	Yoko Okubo, Masaharu Takatori, Kimiyo Nakamoto, Reiko Hoshika, Peer Bach, Setsuko Lichtnecker
32	Key Bridge:	Cho Jung soon, Hong Jin hee, Oh Man jin, Miyako Nakadoi, Mitsuko Sugino, Sae Ohashi
33	Senior 2017:	Kazuhiko Yamada, Akihiko Yamada, Kyoko Ohno, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura
34	SARA:	Tadashi Teramoto, Kumiko Sasahira, Hideki Takano, Takeshi Niekawa, Shugo Tanaka, Masaaki Takayama
35	TBA:	Robert Geller, Setsuko Ogihara, Terumi Kubo, Hiroaki Miura
36	Katsumata:	Atsuko Katsumata, Kimiko Kamakari, Yasuyo Iida, Yoko Nenohi, Takako Nakatani, Yumi Yanagida
37	MASA:	Makiko Sato, Masayuki Hayasaka, Toshiko Kaho, Mariko Ueda
38	Fukuyoshi:	Yuki Fukuyoshi, Kyoko Sengoku, Daisuke Sugimoto, Megumi Takasaki, Hiroko Yanagisawa
39	Tropezienne:	Junko Takeda, Kazuko Kawashima, Masako Azuma, Keiko Ishihara
40	Kimura@Yokohama:	Osami Kimura, Yasuyoshi Toriumi, Aiko Banno, Harue Iemori, Setsuko Kimura, Chisato Kiriya
41	kaTsube:	Kenji Miyakuni, Ayako Miyakuni, Toshihiro Katsube, Masako Katsube
42	NANIWADA:	Toshiro Nose, Masaru Naniwada, Hideo Togawa, Hisami Kataoka, Junzo Kobayashi
43	HIRATA:	Yasuhiro Shimizu, Makoto Hirata, Tadashi Yoshida, Takashi Maeda, Hiroyuki Noda
44	Morimura:	Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Keisuke Akama, Shunsuke Morimura, Masayuki Ohashi
45	LAS FLORES:	Teruko Nishimura, Takanori Katayama, Sanekata Sonoike, Kotomi Asakoshi, Junko Nishimura, Yuki Harada
46	Sakurai:	Tsuneo Sakurai, Atsushi Kikuchi, Takehiko Tada, Kikuo Ito, Haruyoshi Sato
47	HOSHI:	Masako Sakurai, Yukiko Hoshi, Junko Tsubaki, Megumi Takasaka, Xi Yuheng
48	River Side:	Yumiko Kawakami, Masakatsu Sugino, Hiroko Tanaka, Ryoichi Yasuhara, Noriko Yagi, Toshiharu Hirose
49	Midori:	Midori Ito, Ayako Shimazaki, Kazuko Tachibana, Emi Sakata
50	Air-TRFC:	Yoko Fukuyama, Takashi Sumita, Mark LaForge, Toby Curtis, Ayako Matsubara, Chen Yuechen
51	KinKi:	Sonoko Namba, Chizuko Sugiura, Mamiko Odaira, Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka, Kazuko Okamoto
52	Japan Youth:	Tadahiro Kikuchi, Koki Kobayashi, Hitoshi Tanabe, Eishi Imakiire, Ryoichi Yamada, Naoto Katagiri
53	skylark:	Naoto Matsumoto, Sumiko Sugino, Kazuo Takano, Kazuko Takahashi

**Today's 1st VuGraph Matches will be Senior 2017 (33) vs KOREA Joy (18)
and SARA (34) vs Midori (49)**

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 Yokohama Open Pairs 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 Yokohama Open Pairs) 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/Yokohama Open Pairs)

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	40	49	16.38	16.38	8	32	14.85	31.23	53	69	16.72	47.95	5	52	16.88	64.83
2	46	67	19.65	19.65	25	12	10.66	30.31	5	34	5.81	36.12	53	38	17.91	54.03
3	50	74	20	20	29	14	6.52	26.52	51	42	14.64	41.16	30	30	12.16	53.32
4	38	82	20	20	33	42	14.85	34.85	29	63	19.56	54.41	28	39	15.06	69.47
5	43	52	12.71	12.71	6	51	18.29	31.00	2	49	14.19	45.19	1	23	3.12	48.31
6	16	52	12.44	12.44	5	12	1.71	14.15	38	63	19.56	33.71	24	14	1.83	35.54
7	41	40	16.72	16.72	9	23	9.03	25.75	33	38	8.42	34.17	29	19	0.17	33.84
8	48	40	16.38	16.38	1	14	5.15	21.53	44	54	18.98	40.51	13	19	7.84	48.35
9	42	58	17.19	17.19	7	26	10.97	28.16	11	24	6.52	34.68	43	25	14.19	48.87
10	20	38	14.64	14.64	11	10	5.81	20.45	24	23	6.77	27.22	41	15	10	37.22
11	19	42	13.96	13.96	10	25	14.19	28.15	9	TW	13.48	41.63	25	39	10.66	52.29
12	37	41	17.77	17.77	53	31	6.28	24.05	14	0	1.35	25.4	44	34	6.52	31.92
13	32	36	14.85	14.85	17	55	18.04	32.89	26	32	8.13	41.02	8	26	12.16	53.18
14	27	34	12.16	12.16	15	31	12.44	24.60	12	42	18.65	43.25	26	65	18.04	61.29
15	47	30	11.28	11.28	14	23	7.56	18.84	20	83	20	38.84	34	37	8.72	47.56
16	6	44	7.56	7.56	43	4	0.00	7.56	21	72	19.74	27.3	45	27	9.67	36.97
17	36	27	6.52	6.52	13	18	1.96	8.48	32	73	20	28.48	40	14	2.09	30.57
18	33	18	0	0	23	26	15.26	15.26	47	41	14.19	29.45	50	29	4.54	33.99
19	11	28	6.04	6.04	24	25	7.03	13.07	45	43	6.77	19.84	27	18	1.96	21.8
20	10	21	5.36	5.36	40	36	10.97	16.33	15	26	0	16.33	52	23	4.34	20.67
21	26	4	0	0	TW	17	6.52	6.52	16	19	0.26	6.78	TW	5	3.45	10.23
22	25	10	0.44	0.44	52	31	8.72	9.16	49	16	0.62	9.78	48	30	11.87	21.65
23	29	12	0	0	18	6	4.74	4.74	39	16	8.72	13.46	TW	41	4.94	18.4
24	31	22	6.52	6.52	19	35	12.97	19.49	10	34	13.23	32.72	6	52	18.17	50.89
25	22	61	19.56	19.56	2	10	9.34	28.90	35	44	14.19	43.09	11	37	9.34	52.43
26	21	75	20	20	34	26	13.23	33.23	13	38	11.87	45.1	14	28	1.96	47.06
27	14	27	7.84	7.84	30	17	7.03	14.87	50	21	4.34	19.21	19	55	18.04	37.25
28	39	59	19.83	19.83	35	19	10.33	30.24	36	75	20	50.24	4	20	4.94	55.18
29	23	81	20	20	3	26	13.48	33.48	4	12	0.44	33.92	7	73	19.83	53.25
30	44	27	9.67	9.67	27	27	12.97	22.64	31	58	18.41	41.05	3	23	7.84	48.89
31	24	34	13.48	13.48	51	17	7.29	20.77	30	18	1.59	22.36	47	33	10.97	33.33
32	13	18	5.15	5.15	36	17	3.28	8.43	17	6	0	8.43	TW	38	9.03	17.46
33	18	83	20	20	4	24	5.15	25.15	7	43	11.58	36.73	35	57	19.38	56.11
34	49	86	20	20	26	15	6.77	26.77	43	29	13.23	40	15	41	11.28	51.28
35	45	59	19.83	19.83	28	18	9.67	29.50	25	29	5.81	35.31	33	8	0.62	35.93
36	17	39	13.48	13.48	32	45	16.72	30.20	28	13	0	30.2	51	16	4.74	34.94
37	12	6	2.23	2.23	42	42	13.48	15.71	41	35	10	25.71	46	14	4.34	30.05
38	4	18	0	0	39	38	14.19	14.19	6	12	0.44	14.63	23	60	15.06	29.69
39	28	4	0.09	0.09	38	23	5.81	5.90	46	TW	1.59	7.49	32	50	17.04	24.53
40	1	23	3.62	3.62	20	33	9.03	12.65	52	43	16.21	28.86	17	50	17.91	46.77
41	7	12	3.28	3.28	48	31	12.71	15.99	37	35	10	25.99	10	15	10	35.99
42	9	27	2.81	2.81	37	30	6.52	9.33	48	61	18.87	28.2	49	47	18.17	46.37
43	5	43	7.29	7.29	16	67	20.00	27.29	34	18	6.77	34.06	9	10	5.81	39.87
44	30	28	10.33	10.33	47	24	13.72	24.05	8	9	1.02	25.07	12	46	13.48	38.55
45	35	5	0.17	0.17	46	44	13.96	14.13	19	54	13.23	27.36	16	28	10.33	37.69
46	2	15	0.35	0.35	45	30	6.04	6.39	TW	55	18.87	25.26	37	36	15.66	40.92
47	15	26	8.72	8.72	44	11	6.28	15.00	18	26	5.81	20.81	31	30	9.03	29.84
48	8	14	3.62	3.62	41	22	7.29	10.91	42	17	1.13	12.04	22	24	8.13	20.17
49	34	0	0	0	TW	20	8.72	8.72	22	65	19.38	28.1	42	9	1.83	29.93
50	3	5	0	0	TW	25	14.42	14.42	27	43	15.66	30.08	18	50	15.46	45.54
51	TW	29	13.48	13.48	31	26	12.71	26.19	3	25	5.36	31.55	36	36	15.26	46.81
52	TW	1	0.62	0.62	22	35	11.28	11.90	40	18	3.79	15.69	20	45	15.66	31.35
53	TW	53	18.04	18.04	12	44	13.72	31.76	1	41	3.28	35.04	2	2	2.09	37.13

C-VP=Cumulative VPs; TW=Three-Way

Match One: SARA vs Midori

by Barry Rigal



Ito



Teramoto



Sasahira



Shimazaki



Tanaka



Tachibana



Sakata



Takano

For the first match on BBO we would see four of the Japanese teams who the Bulletin Editors considered might be in the running for a qualifying place. As to how successful we have been in our betting in general...well, the fact that we are still writing bulletins and not lounging on the beach in Cancun should tell you the answer to that one.

On Deal 1, both Wests opened a strongish notrump with a 14-count. Both Easts used Stayman and then cautiously invited game with a 9-count, four-four in the majors, and both Wests naturally passed.

Bd: 1
 Dlr: North
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ KJ4
 ♥ 953
 ♦ Q5
 ♣ K9872

West
 ♠ 107
 ♥ AJ8
 ♦ AK1084
 ♣ Q104

East
 ♠ AQ95
 ♥ Q642
 ♦ J92
 ♣ 63

South
 ♠ 8632
 ♥ K107
 ♦ 763
 ♣ AJ5

Both Norths led a fourth best club. Both Souths won and returned the ♣J, clearing up a guess declarer would doubtless have got right anyway. Both Norths won to play a third club, Teramoto choosing the nine, Tachibana the eight. Declarer won the ten—but now what? If you can only take four diamond tricks you need a finesse in one of the majors, and since you want to get to dummy to play diamonds it feels right to lead a spade to the queen. Tanaka cashed one diamond and led the ♠10. North covered with the jack and declarer won cheaply, then finessed in diamonds, letting North cash out for +120.

In the other room Ito won the club to lead a spade to the nine. This feels wrong, but perhaps she was planning to finesse in whichever suit South did not return, had this lost to the jack. With both spade honors outside there was no consequence to her choice. A flat board at +120.

Sartaj Hans played 3NT when he too opened 1NT and Tony Nunn simply bid game after the Stayman response came up empty. After three rounds of clubs, Hans cashed one top diamond, took the spade finesse, led a spade to the queen, advanced the ♦J, and rose with the king, following Zia's dictum that "If they don't cover they don't have it." Had the queen not dropped he would have cleared diamonds and needed the heart finesse to bring home nine tricks. As it was, he could claim his contract.

Four other declarers brought home the game on a similar approach: Ilan Bareket, Liu Xiaoping, and Hu Junjie were the other successful Wests.

Bd: 2
 Dlr: East
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ AK10872
 ♥ QJ4
 ♦ K7
 ♣ A9

West
 ♠ J95
 ♥ 98765
 ♦ 98
 ♣ J65

East
 ♠ 4
 ♥ 3
 ♦ J106532
 ♣ K10873

South
 ♠ Q63
 ♥ AK102
 ♦ AQ4
 ♣ Q42

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Ito</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Shimazaki</i>	<i>Sasahira</i>
		Pass	1NT
Pass	4♥(♠)	4NT	5♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Tanaka</i>	<i>Tachibana</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Sakata</i>
		3♦	Dbl
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

At this vulnerability you'd expect very few Easts to be backward about coming forward here; indeed, any East who passed would doubtless have had reason to regret his restraint. Takano opened 3♦, Sakata doubled and Tachibana explored delicately with 6♠. (Would 5NT followed by 6♠ be a more serious grand slam try while 5♦ followed by 6♠ promise a first-round diamond control with those same values?) The editors could not agree what the calls should mean as to interest in grand slam or diamond control—but what else is new? If it takes till board two for us to disagree we must be in more than usually harmonious mode.

In the other room Sashira was allowed to open 1NT and now Teramoto produced a Texas 4♥, doubtless planning to follow up with keycard, when he might have been in position to ask for side kings, though that might not have been enough facing e.g. a 4-3-3-3 pattern. As it happened, Shimazaki backed in with an insouciant 4NT over 4♥. Sashira competed to 5♠ and now Teramoto might have risked a grand slam try but contented himself with a call of 6♠. Two somewhat unsatisfactory scores of 1460.

Nobody, even in their more charitable moments (an emotion foreign to Bulletin Editors) suggested four-card majors were known for their accuracy in slam bidding. Our hats off to Papa Hackett and Brian Senior who bid to 7NT as follows:

West	North	East	South
	Senior		Hackett
		Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	2NT	Dbl
3♣	4♣	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♥(♥K)
Pass	7NT	All Pass	

Note that the 1♥ opener let Senior count the 13th trick, a triumph indeed on a deal where the datum score was only slightly better than the score for the small slam. 14 pairs bid the grand slam, one played in game, and one E/W pair saved in 7♦ for a bargain –1700. Two pairs in the three-way match bid the grand slam. Well done, indeed.

Bd: 3	North	
Dlr: South	♠ J1084	
Vul: E/W	♥ 93	
	♦ Q52	
	♣ Q1086	
	West	East
	♠ 53	♠ AKQ96
	♥ KQ1074	♥ AJ
	♦ K843	♦ A106
	♣ 94	♣ A75
	South	
	♠ 72	
	♥ 8652	
	♦ J97	
	♣ KJ32	

Time for E/W to get their own back, this time with no risk of N/S interfering, despite the vulnerability. Both Easts opened 2♣, both Wests responded 2♠ to show a positive in hearts (a treatment that is relatively uncommon outside of Japan, by comparison, say, to controls or natural—but one can see the logic). Shimazaki rebid 2NT as East, heard her partner raise to 3NT and settled for 4♥. Takano also bid 2NT but over the raise to 3NT he placed the contract in 6♥. Again, you can see the logic here; with all the controls, there have to be 11 top tricks facing relatively normal breaks in the majors. Still, there are a lot of bids available between 3NT and 6♥ and it might have done no harm to go just a little slower. Both Souths led a trump, but Teramoto let go a spade against 4♥ on the run of the trumps and that cost the third overtrick, so SARA gained 12 imps instead of 13. They led by that number.

Again, reaching slam was very much the exception rather than the rule: +12 imps against the datum scoring. Five pairs went down in slam, one pair played 3♥ for 260 (we're not sure we wouldn't rather have gone down in the grand slam as a more dignified way to lose imps, as one pair did) and less than a quarter of the field bid and made slam, many in 6NT. So Tanaka/Takano deserved their pick-up.

If two slams in a row is good, why not let's make it three?

Bd: 4	North	
Dlr: West	♠ Q43	
Vul: Both	♥ 6	
	♦ KQ8632	
	♣ J108	
	West	East
	♠ A965	♠ KJ
	♥ 842	♥ AQJ5
	♦ 4	♦ AJ9
	♣ AK975	♣ Q632
	South	
	♠ 10872	
	♥ K10973	
	♦ 1075	
	♣ 4	

Both Wests helped their side's cause by opening the 11-count. Even Ely Culbertson (if not Al Roth) would have approved. Both Norths tried to put a spanner in the works by bidding 2♦ and now paths diverged. Takano doubled 2♦, heard 2♠ from his partner and closed shop rather precipitously in 3NT. Shimazaki started with a 3♦ cuebid (which we like), then used Blackwood over Ito's 3♠ bid. She found three key cards, asked for the trump queen with 5♥, and over the 5♠ response bid 5NT...and Ito put the dummy down. Was there some ambiguity as to whether 4NT was quantitative or keycard? Making 6♣ seems simple enough on a diamond lead if declarer draws trumps, plays on hearts, then eventually takes the spade finesse. Or you can ruff diamonds in the long hand and bring South under pressure. 5NT wasn't exactly comfortable, either, but the defenders set up the 11th trick by leading and continuing diamonds, to take Shimazaki off the hook. Still 12-0, SARA.

Sartaj Hans had the opportunity for a second nice play here. He declared 6♣ on the auction: 1♣-(1♦)-1♥; 2♥-2NT; 3♠-4♣; 4♦-4NT; 5♥-6♣; Pass. 2NT was a relay, 3♠ showed the 4-3-1-5 shape and Nunn could set clubs and ask for keycards. After a top diamond lead Hans drew trumps at once and took the heart finesse. When it lost and a heart came back he had a choice of lines. It was right to play to squeeze South if that player was 4-5-1-3 with the ♠Q but in that case mightn't he have raised to 2♦ at his first turn? So he took the spade finesse.

The datum here was 580, implying that more pairs went down in game or slam (or played partscores) than bid it successfully.

On the next deal an apparent bidding understanding saw Ito-Shimazaki miss a non-vulnerable game to make it 18-0 for SARA. Then, after a 4♠ game off an ace and a trump trick, the floodgates opened for SARA. Game here looked remarkably unappetizing but it cannot be defeated, despite the bad trump break.

Bd: 7 North
 Dir: South ♠ QJ10
 Vul: Both ♥ K102
 ♦ 10953
 ♣ A96

West ♠ AK6 ♥ 9 ♦ 8642 ♣ KJ1083	East ♠ 87432 ♥ QJ5 ♦ QJ ♣ 742
South ♠ 95 ♥ A87643 ♦ AK7 ♣ Q5	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ito</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Shimazaki</i>	<i>Sasahira</i>
			1♥
Pass	1NT(F)	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tanaka</i>	<i>Tachibana</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Sakata</i>
			1♥
Dbl	Rdbl	1♠	2♥
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

Sasahira accepted the invitation because of her controls while Sakata knew she had weak trumps on an auction where hearts figured not to break. After a top spade lead Ito shifted to diamonds. Declarer put up the nine, covered by the jack and ace, then drew two rounds of trumps and played a second spade. When a diamond came back (nicely defended) she played low from dummy and now the appearance of the ♦Q from East meant she had her tenth trick.

Against Sakata's 3♥ Tanaka led a top spade and sensibly shifted to the ♣K. However, this simply had the effect of speeding up the play. 10 IMPs to SARA, making the score 28-0.

About a third of the field bid game here, all but one of them bringing it home, though 3NT on repeated spade leads was not generally a success.

Bd: 8 North
 Dir: West ♠ A985
 Vul: None ♥ Q42
 ♦ K853
 ♣ AQ

West ♠ KJ1032 ♥ A63 ♦ J1062 ♣ 2	East ♠ 64 ♥ KJ85 ♦ 94 ♣ 109643
South ♠ Q7 ♥ 1097 ♦ AQ7 ♣ KJ875	

Open Room/Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ito</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Shimazaki</i>	<i>Sasahira</i>
<i>Tanaka</i>	<i>Tachibana</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Sakata</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Both tables reached 3NT in two bids. Before you get into details of the play, form your own hypothesis as to what is the best defense and who should prevail.

Tachibana received a heart lead—which looks good for the defense, doesn't it? Not so, since after four rounds of hearts the count is rectified for a squeeze on West. Takano cashed the fourth heart and followed his partner's signal by shifting to spades. Declarer won, unblocked clubs, crossed to the $\diamond Q$ and ran clubs, forcing West to discard all his spades. Alas, North failed to appreciate the significance of her spade spots, and kept a diamond loser, so the contract went down one.

In the other room the initial club lead looks ineffective but it makes declarer's task impossible. Teramoto took two top clubs to find the bad news and led a spade towards dummy. When East followed low without a flicker, declarer changed tack and put in the seven. West won and exited with a top spade, declarer winning the ace to lead a third spade. That was the last chance for West to shift to hearts. When she continued with a fourth spade, declarer won and cashed out ten tricks. 38-0 now for SARA.

For the record, when Jonky Chung for Yeh Brothers YBS played 3NT, the defense cashed four hearts and dummy discarded a spade. When East shifted to a diamond, Chung won in dummy, unblocked clubs, played the $\diamond K$ and a second diamond to dummy, then cashed clubs. This had the effect of producing a positional double squeeze around the spade suit, one defender guarding clubs, the other diamonds.

The datum was 190, indicating that half the field made game and half went down. But the most interesting "game" on the N/S cards was $1\heartsuit xx$ by South when West took the opportunity to double an artificial $1\heartsuit$ response (balanced positive, no major) to a strong club; Newell could redouble and Reid could sit it out. Technically the defense can prevail since West can lead diamonds to threaten a ruff. If you lead a spade to the seven, planning to run the $\spadesuit Q$, four rounds of hearts leave you a trick short. But the defense actually led hearts. East won the jack and shifted to a trump to the seven ten and ace. Reid played two top clubs. West ruffed and led ace and another heart without cashing the $\spadesuit K$. That was fatal, since it had the effect of forcing East to lead the fourth heart while South still had a trump. Reid ruffed in with the queen and West overruffed and shifted to a diamond. But Reid won in dummy, played a high trump to knock out the jack, and claimed.

On the next deal a slip by the Midori declarer let the defenders single in their trumps separately (at their second or third chance to do so) to beat a partscore and give SARA six more imps. Then came a difficult deal which rewarded the bashers, not the scientists.

Bd: 10	North	
Dlr: East	\spadesuit J5	
Vul: Both	\heartsuit K983	
	\diamond KQJ82	
	\clubsuit J4	
	West	East
	\spadesuit AQ10	\spadesuit K7642
	\heartsuit J10654	\heartsuit Q
	\diamond 93	\diamond 1074
	\clubsuit Q75	\clubsuit 9862
	South	
	\spadesuit 983	
	\heartsuit A72	
	\diamond A65	
	\clubsuit AK103	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Ito</i>	<i>Teramoto</i>	<i>Shimazaki</i>	<i>Sasahira</i>
Pass	2 \clubsuit	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2 \diamond

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tanaka</i>	<i>Tachibana</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Sakata</i>
Pass	2 \clubsuit	Pass	1NT
Pass	3 \diamond	Pass	2 \diamond
Pass	5 \diamond	All Pass	4 \diamond

Teramoto used Stayman and blasted 3NT opposite the 2 \diamond response. On Ito's normal but unfortunate heart lead declarer could lead the $\clubsuit J$, in case someone wanted to cover, and cash out for nine tricks when nothing nice happened. In the other room Tachibana showed diamonds after Stayman and now the spade weakness came to light. When Sakata played 5 \diamond she found that the heart losers were not going away. The only legitimate play for game if the defenders don't cash their spades is to take club finesse; if they do cash their spades you need the club finesse and a somewhat unlikely squeeze. After a trump lead declarer could only come to ten tricks and SARA had 12 more imps to lead 56-0.

You could argue that it was very unlucky for N/S here that 3NT was so easy to let through (all but two Wests did just that). But one of the successful defenders was David Bakhshi, who heard dummy show two spades and four hearts and South bid 3NT. He fished out the $\spadesuit Q$ at trick one and was rewarded beyond expectations by the result.

On the next deal SARA guessed an ace-queen combination better than Midori for 5 more imps, and then Tanaka-Takano bid to an excellent 6 \clubsuit while their counterparts played game in an inferior strain.

Bd: 12 North
 Dir: West ♠ J109642
 Vul: N/S ♡ 1076
 ♦ A9
 ♣ 92

West
 ♠ AK3
 ♡ AKJ8
 ♦ Q2
 ♣ AKJ7

East
 ♠ ---
 ♡ 954
 ♦ K8654
 ♣ Q8543

South
 ♠ Q875
 ♡ Q32
 ♦ J1073
 ♣ 106

When West showed a balanced game-force East showed the minors, West showed a club fit, and that was enough to do the trick. Four pairs went minus as E/W while half the field bid slam.

The best game for N/S is probably 3NT by South. Yes, the defenders can lead a spade and shift to A club, but in real life no one is going to do that. You would guess that after North preempts in hearts most Souths would opt to play 4♡ (though Auken-Welland did indeed bid to 3NT when South offered the choice of games after finding partner with a minimum hand and a good suit). Only one other pair managed to duplicate that feat: well done Zhao Yonghui and Liu Haitao.

Teramoto was allowed to make 4♡, though after a diamond lead with the South hand visible in dummy you would think West should work out to shift to spades and receive a club switch in return. In fact, Shimazaki led an unfortunate ♠A and now the club shift was almost impossible to find, though perhaps you could just about make a case for it. 12 moreimps to SARA.

Bd: 13 North
 Dir: North ♠ 87
 Vul: Both ♡ AQ9643
 ♦ 753
 ♣ 82

West
 ♠ 652
 ♡ 85
 ♦ J42
 ♣ AQJ94

East
 ♠ AQJ1043
 ♡ 72
 ♦ Q
 ♣ 10763

South
 ♠ K9
 ♡ KJ10
 ♦ AK10986
 ♣ K5

For Israel, Yaniv Zack as South declared 4♡ after the Multi 2♦ auction: 2♦-4♣; 4♦(♡) - 4♡; Pass. On West's ♡2 lead to the queen Zack won his ace, drew two rounds of trump, and advanced an innocent ♦6. West played low...and that was +680!

SARA closed out the match 86-0 with three more undertricks when both tables overreached to a hopeless 3NT.



"I told you, that pillar is NOT going to fall!"



"Can you believe he actually went down in 2♠?"



"The essence of good bridge is being able to see through your hair."



"I don't believe I've ever seen that number before."

Match Two: China Ladies vs England/Norway

by Rich Colker



Bakhshi



Lu



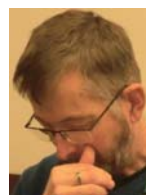
Erichsen



Huang



Livgard



Aa



Wang



Liu

Bd: 17
Dlr: North
Vul: None

North
♠ 73
♥ Q1065
♦ 10743
♣ Q102

West
♠ A98642
♥ 984
♦ A8
♣ 76

East
♠ ---
♥ KJ2
♦ KQJ965
♣ KJ94

South
♠ KQJ105
♥ A73
♦ 2
♣ A853

returned the suit as Aa ruffed. A third club went to Wang's king and a top diamond was ruffed with the ♠10 as Huang pitched a heart. Aa then led the ♠Q, ducked, followed by the ♠K. Huang ruffed, knocked out Aa's last trump, and now the ♥A was declarer's last trick. Down one, -100; 1 imp to England/Norway.

As you would imagine, there were N/S pairs who went beyond their comfort level in spades here but remarkably, no E/W tried to play spades. But in the grudge match between Australia and New Zealand, Cornell-Bach had the pleasure of defending against 3♠x by the Australian North, down 800.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	1♠
2♦	All Pass	2♣	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦	1♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

In the Open Room Liu led the ♠K against Erichsen's 2♦. Erichsen won (pitching a heart from hand), led a club to the jack and ace, ruffed the spade return, cashed the ♣K and ruffed a club with the ♦A (noting the fall of the queen and ten). He then played a heart to the jack and ace, ruffed the spade return, and played trumps from the top, eventually losing one trump trick to go with two aces for a painless +130.

In the Closed Room Huang went for the gusto and passed when her partner Wang reopened Aa's 1♠ with a double. Huang led the ♣7 to the nine and ace and Aa led back a club, dummy's ten losing to the jack. Wang played the ♦K and Huang overtook and

Bd: 18
Dlr: East
Vul: N/S

North
♠ A8654
♥ AJ64
♦ KQ
♣ QJ

West
♠ J9
♥ K1083
♦ J532
♣ A92

East
♠ Q107
♥ Q95
♦ A976
♣ K54

South
♠ K32
♥ 72
♦ 1084
♣ 108763

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1♥	1♠	2♠	Dbl
3♥	Dbl	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
1♥	1♠	1♦	Pass
2♦	Pass	Dbl	Pass
All Pass		Pass	2♠

Both E/W pairs played in spade partials, Lu-Liu one level higher after Liu doubled 2♠ for the lead and then ran from 3♥x. Maybe that lead director was not the best idea with such a weak hand; maybe Liu's soft and sloppy 17-count is not worth a double of 3♥ (though the penalty would surely have been 300 or more). Only The Shadow knows. A trump lead (from Q107) could have led to down two, but on the actual heart lead declarer was able to escape with eight tricks; -100. In the Closed Room the play and resulting tricks were much the same; +110 to England/Norway, who picked up a nifty 5 imps to increase their lead to 6-0.

Bd: 19 North
 Dlr: South ♠ 10962
 Vul: E/W ♥ Q107
 ♦ 106
 ♣ KQ52

West
 ♠ KQ43
 ♥ 98653
 ♦ K9
 ♣ A7

East
 ♠ AJ875
 ♥ K4
 ♦ 2
 ♣ J9864

South
 ♠ ---
 ♥ AJ2
 ♦ AQJ87543
 ♣ 103

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			1♦
Dbl	1♥(♠)	3♠	4♦
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
			1♦
Dbl	1♠	2♠	4♦
Pass	Pass	4♠	All Pass

At both tables 4♠ was made with the help of the ♦A lead, declarer losing just one trick in each off-suit for no swing; still 6-0 England/Norway.

This was an outstanding result for both E/W pairs (only four pairs in the room were allowed to go plus in 4♠). Not surprisingly, scores were all over the place here. In the match between England and China Open the auction began 1♦-(Dbl) at both tables. Both Easts bid spades but Alex Hydes bid 4♠ while Zhang bid 2♠ over 1NT. Both Souths jumped to 5♦ but Jason Hackett passed and let Hydes bid 5♠, doubled and down a trick on the lead of the ♦A. Li doubled 5♦ and led a top spade. Senior ruffed, crossed to a club and passed the ♥10, leaving himself the reentry to dummy for the diamond finesse had the heart

finesse lost. That was 8 imps to Hackett.

Bd: 20 North
 Dlr: West ♠ KQJ3
 Vul: Both ♥ 1043
 ♦ J107
 ♣ J53

West
 ♠ 964
 ♥ K975
 ♦ 65
 ♣ A962

East
 ♠ 85
 ♥ QJ8
 ♦ AK982
 ♣ KQ10

South
 ♠ A1072
 ♥ A62
 ♦ Q43
 ♣ 874

Open Room/Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	All Pass

The low spade lead in both rooms should have cleared the way for the defense to cash their four spade tricks and ♥A to hold 1NT to one overtrick. Both North's won with the jack, continued with the ♠K, and then switched to the ♦J at trick three. Both declarers won the ♦A and knocked out the ♥A. In the Open Room Liu cashed the ♠A and led a fourth spade to hold declarer to eight tricks while in the Closed Room Aa continued with a low diamond to the ten and king and now declarer had nine tricks with both round suits splitting favorably. That was 1 imp to China Ladies; finally on the scoreboard to close the lead to 6-1.

Bd: 21 North
 Dlr: North ♠ AQ8
 Vul: N/S ♥ 85
 ♦ Q762
 ♣ 10854

West
 ♠ 765
 ♥ 1043
 ♦ K985
 ♣ Q96

East
 ♠ 10432
 ♥ AKQJ762
 ♦ 4
 ♣ A

South
 ♠ KJ9
 ♥ 9
 ♦ AJ103
 ♣ KJ732

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
			Dbl
2♥	Pass	1♥	All Pass
	Pass	4♥	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Huang	Livgard	Wang	Aa
	Pass	1♥	Dbl
2♥	Dbl	4♥	All Pass

4♥ appears destined for down one with four top losers (three spades and the ♠A), but a lot can slip 'tween the lead and last trick. Both Souths led a low club. In the Closed Room Wang won and tried to sneak through her diamond but Aa rose ace, after which declarer could not avoid three spade losers for down one, -50. In the Open Room Liu ducked the diamond and now, with spades three-three, declarer was home free; +420 and 10 moreimps to England/Norway, who now led 16-1.

Less than a quarter of the field misdefended in this way to let game make, though almost all the field did play game here with the E/W cards.

Bd: 22	North
Dlr: East	♠ 108654
Vul: E/W	♥ K5
	♦ 9832
	♣ 95

West
♠ AKQ9
♥ AJ42
♦ 54
♣ KQ6

East
♠ J3
♥ 963
♦ AQ1076
♣ J102

South
♠ 72
♥ Q1087
♦ KJ
♣ A8743

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Bakhshi	Lu	Erichsen	Liu
		Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Huang	Livgard	Wang	Aa
		Pass	Pass
1♣ (1)	1♥(♠)	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

(1) Precision

In the Open Room Lu led the ♠5. Bakhshi won in hand with the queen and tried a diamond to the queen. Liu won and switched to the ♥10 (jack, king, 3) and now the heart return established the setting tricks. To add injury to insult, Bakhshi took a reasonable line by trying a second diamond finesse, but when Liu produced the jack she could cash out for down two, E/W -200.

In the Closed Room Livgard, perhaps influenced systemically by Aa's failure to double 2♦, led the ♥K, ducked around, and continued with the ♥5 (9, 10, J). Huang tried a diamond to the queen but Aa won and continued with a third heart to the ace. With seven tricks in (four spades, two hearts and a diamond) Huang now played on clubs to knock out the ace and establish two club tricks for +600 and 13imps for China Ladies, who closed England/Norway's lead to just 2imps at 16-14.

The datum here was 210 for E/W, suggesting that a bit more than half the field managed set the game.

Bd: 23	North
Dlr: South	♠ J43
Vul: Both	♥ K43
	♦ K853
	♣ A95

West
♠ A6
♥ J8
♦ Q1094
♣ KJ764

East
♠ 109872
♥ Q97
♦ A2
♣ 1083

South
♠ KQ5
♥ A10652
♦ J76
♣ Q2

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Bakhshi	Lu	Erichsen	Liu
			1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
2NT(♣+♦)	Dbl	3♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Huang	Livgard	Wang	Aa
			1♥
Pass	3♦(1)	Pass	3♥

All Pass

(1) Invitational heart raise

In the Open Room Lu's 2♥ raise looks a bit conservative, although the flat distribution and scattered honors do argue for just that. And Lu was right: 3♥ likely goes down at least one (provided declarer divines the diamond position accurately). Against Erichsen's 3♣ Liu led the ♠K to the ace and a spade came back. Lu won and switched to a low heart to the ace for a heart back. Lu won and exited a spade, ruffed in dummy. Now Erichsen called for the ♣K. Lu won the ace, returned a club to Liu's queen and declarer could now win the heart return, draw the last trump, and escape for down one, -100.

In the Closed Room 3♥ was indeed the contract. Huang resolved the diamond position for declarer by

leading the $\diamond 10$, ducked to Wang's ace. Wang switched to the $\clubsuit 8$ (Q, K, A) and Aa cashed the $\heartsuit K$, then played a heart to the nine, ten and jack. Huang cashed the $\clubsuit J$ and continued with a third club, hoping Wang could ruff. Instead it was declarer who ruffed, drew the last trump, knocked out the $\spadesuit A$, and still had to lose a diamond for down one, -100; 5 imps to China Ladies, who took the lead for the first time at 19-16.

Bd: 24 North
 Dir: West $\spadesuit 3$
 Vul: None $\heartsuit A1098653$
 $\diamond 654$
 $\clubsuit AJ$

West
 $\spadesuit 10652$
 $\heartsuit KQ$
 $\diamond 10832$
 $\clubsuit 532$

East
 $\spadesuit AK98$
 $\heartsuit 72$
 $\diamond QJ7$
 $\clubsuit K984$

South
 $\spadesuit QJ74$
 $\heartsuit J4$
 $\diamond AK9$
 $\clubsuit Q1076$

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	1 \heartsuit	Dbl	Rdbl
1 \spadesuit	2 \heartsuit	Pass	3NT
Pass	4 \heartsuit	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
Pass	1 \heartsuit	Dbl	Rdbl
1 \spadesuit	2 \heartsuit	Pass	3 \heartsuit
All Pass			

In the Open Room Lu switched from conservative on the previous deal to aggressive here as she opened the high-card deprived North hand and opted for 4 \heartsuit over 3NT, both contracts having excellent play as the cards lay. Erichsen got off to the best lead for the defense, the $\diamond Q$, but Lu played decisively. She won the $\diamond A$, cashed the $\heartsuit A$, then played ace and another club and now had a pitch for her third diamond. She ended up losing a trump, a spade and a club; +420.

In the Closed Room it was Aa who donned the conservative mantle and chose to simply invite with his 13-count opposite an opening bid. (How bad can their openers be?!) Livgard's play devolved into the same line as Lu's and he emerged with the same 10 tricks for +170, but lost 6 imps to China Ladies, who increased their lead to 9 imps at 25-16.

The whole N/S field went plus here, the vast majority bidding and making game.

Bd: 25 North
 Dir: North $\spadesuit A3$
 Vul: E/W $\heartsuit J95$
 $\diamond A10732$
 $\clubsuit 962$

West
 $\spadesuit K764$
 $\heartsuit 874$
 $\diamond Q84$
 $\clubsuit AK4$

East
 $\spadesuit 1052$
 $\heartsuit K10632$
 $\diamond 965$
 $\clubsuit 75$

South
 $\spadesuit QJ98$
 $\heartsuit AQ$
 $\diamond KJ$
 $\clubsuit QJ1083$

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2 \spadesuit	Pass	3 \clubsuit
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	3 \diamond (inv)	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

On this far-from-exciting deal both declarers scrambled 10 tricks in 3NT for a push at +430. Still 25-16, Ladies.

Bd: 26 North
 Dir: East $\spadesuit J86$
 Vul: Both $\heartsuit Q10$
 $\diamond 10765$
 $\clubsuit K854$

West
 $\spadesuit A32$
 $\heartsuit 8$
 $\diamond Q8432$
 $\clubsuit AQ97$

East
 $\spadesuit Q104$
 $\heartsuit KJ6532$
 $\diamond AK$
 $\clubsuit 102$

South
 $\spadesuit K975$
 $\heartsuit A974$
 $\diamond J9$
 $\clubsuit J63$

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
		1 \heartsuit	Pass
2 \diamond	Pass	2 \heartsuit	Pass
3 \clubsuit	Pass	3 \diamond	Pass
3 \spadesuit	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
		1 \heartsuit	Pass
1NT	Pass	2 \heartsuit	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Against 3NT in the Open Room Liu go off to a low spade lead, after which the contract could always be defeated. Erichsen won Lu's jack with the queen, cashed the $\diamond K$, then led the $\clubsuit 10$. Liu deftly covered with the jack (necessary to keep control) and Lu won the queen with the king, then returned a spade, ducked, followed by a third spade to the ace. Erichsen crossed to the $\diamond A$, played a club to the ace, cashed the $\diamond Q$ then the $\clubsuit 9$, hoping for a miracle in either suit, and when both failed led a heart to the ten, jack and ace. Liu returned a heart knocking out the king and then claimed down one; -100 for E/W.

In the Closed Room Huang received a low club lead from the other side and now the contract was viable. She won the jack with the queen and led a heart to the ten, jack and ace. Aa switched back to clubs as Livgard won the king and switched to a diamond. Wang won the ace, ducked a heart to the queen, won the diamond return, cashed the $\heartsuit K$, and now was at the crossroads: Anything but the $\spadesuit Q$ would lose the contract. Wang chose the $\spadesuit 4$ and now she was dead in the water. She won the ace, cashed the $\clubsuit A$ and $\spadesuit 9$, and lost the last two tricks to Aa for down one, -100; a push when she might have had a 13-imp pickup. Still 25-16, Ladies.

About a quarter of the field brought home 3NT here—a surprisingly high percentage, *n'est-ce pas?* The most common unsuccessful lead was a club but declarer still had to take some pretty nice views to come home.

Bd: 27 North
 Dir: South \spadesuit AQ105
 Vul: None \heartsuit K2
 \diamond Q52
 \clubsuit J1065

West
 \spadesuit J73
 \heartsuit J98
 \diamond KJ106
 \clubsuit 932

East
 \spadesuit 94
 \heartsuit A107
 \diamond 98743
 \clubsuit KQ8

South
 \spadesuit K862
 \heartsuit Q6543
 \diamond A
 \clubsuit A74

Open Room/Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
			1 \heartsuit
Pass	1 \spadesuit	Pass	2 \spadesuit
Pass	2NT	Pass	4 \diamond
Pass	4 \spadesuit	All Pass	

Both 2NT and 4 \diamond were artificial but we'd guess they

meant slightly different things in the two rooms. In any case both N/S pairs reached 4 \spadesuit , received the $\clubsuit K$ lead, and with the hearts splitting kindly emerged with 11 tricks for a push at +450. Still China Ladies, 25-16.

Bd: 28 North
 Dir: West \spadesuit 103
 Vul: N/S \heartsuit AJ42
 \diamond J9742
 \clubsuit Q9

West
 \spadesuit AKQ9
 \heartsuit 109853
 \diamond AQ85
 \clubsuit ---

East
 \spadesuit 8642
 \heartsuit KQ
 \diamond 3
 \clubsuit AKJ763

South
 \spadesuit J75
 \heartsuit 76
 \diamond K106
 \clubsuit 108542

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
1 \heartsuit	Pass	2 \clubsuit	Pass
2 \diamond	Pass	2 \spadesuit	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
1 \clubsuit (1)	Pass	2 \clubsuit	Pass
2 \diamond (2)	Pass	3 \heartsuit (3)	Pass
3 \spadesuit	Pass	4 \diamond (4)	Pass
4 \spadesuit	All Pass		

- (1) Precision
- (2) Relay
- (3) Secondary spades (?)
- (4) Control (?)

In the Open Room Erichsen's 2 \spadesuit may not have been totally natural (simply a noise, perhaps) so Bakhshi bypassed his spades to bid notrump, after which the pair arrived in game-in-same. Lu led a diamond to the king and ace and declarer messed around a bit before cashing out to finish with an overtrick when the $\clubsuit Q$ fell doubleton; +430.

In the Closed Room Huang and Wang found their four-four spade fit after several rounds of relays and control bids and settled for the spade game. Livgard led a low diamond to the king and ace. Huang cashed the $\spadesuit A$, led a heart to the ace, won the heart return, cashed the $\clubsuit AK$, played a spade to hand, then ruffed a heart and claimed when Aa overruffed; +450. After three push boards we finally had a swing: 1 imp to China Ladies, increasing their lead to 10 imps at 26-16.

While these results might seem unremarkable, the percentage of the field who climbed to the spade slam (about a quarter) suggests that even in 2017 discretion may still prove the better part of valor.

Bd: 29
 Dir: North
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ J74
 ♥ AK82
 ♦ AJ10
 ♣ 987

West
 ♠ Q1052
 ♥ 109763
 ♦ Q5
 ♣ 62

East
 ♠ A63
 ♥ 4
 ♦ K862
 ♣ AKQJ3

South
 ♠ K98
 ♥ QJ5
 ♦ 9743
 ♣ 1054

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
	1♦	2♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
	1♣	Pass	1♠(1)
Pass	1NT	Dbf	Pass
2♥	All Pass		

(1) No 4-card major

In the Open Room Erichsen's 2♣ overcall ended the auction rather abruptly. Liu led the ♥Q and when that held switched to a trump, fearing diamond ruffs in dummy. Erichsen won, led a diamond to the queen and ace, won the trump return, cashed two more trumps, then played ace and a spade, going up with the queen when Liu ducked for his eighth trick; +90.

In the Closed Room Huang found herself in 2♥ after her partner's risky (with a doubleton heart) pre-balancing double. Or did she mean the double as penalty with a club stack? (Our Chinese may not be good enough to find out.) On the (deceptive?) ♣7 lead she managed to scramble seven tricks for down one, -100, and 5 imps to England/Norway, who pulled to within 5 at 26-21.

Bd: 30
 Dir: East
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ K107
 ♥ J62
 ♦ 96
 ♣ 109876

West
 ♠ A85
 ♥ A10953
 ♦ 53
 ♣ A43

East
 ♠ J42
 ♥ Q4
 ♦ Q10874
 ♣ KJ2

South
 ♠ Q963
 ♥ K87
 ♦ AKJ2
 ♣ Q5

Open Room/Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bakhshi</i>	<i>Lu</i>	<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Liu</i>
<i>Huang</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Aa</i>
		Pass	1NT

All Pass

Against 1NT in the Open Room Bakhshi led the ♥5. Liu guessed wrong, calling for the ♥J from dummy (Q, K), and now the hearts were ready to go. Then, to compound her misery, she tried a spade to the ten and jack and now came a barrage of hearts, Liu pitching one of each minor from dummy and two diamonds from hand. Bakhshi next cashed the ♣A, led a club to the king, and when her queen fell the defense had a club and a spade still to come for down three, -150 for N/S.

In the Closed Room Aa declared the same contract with the same lead but managed to hold it to down two, -100, for a 2-imp gain for England/Norway. When the match ended China Ladies had outlasted England/Norway to win by 3 imps, 26-23, 10.97 to 9.03 in VPs.

Roy Welland declared 1NT here on the ♥10 lead and misguessed by putting up the jack. He guessed spades at trick two as the defenders won the ♠A and ran hearts at him. He pitched a club and a diamond from hand and from dummy, and when West exited with the third spade he took his last spade winner to produce this ending:

North
 ♠ ---
 ♥ ---
 ♦ 9
 ♣ 10987

West
 ♠ ---
 ♥ ---
 ♦ 53
 ♣ A43

East
 ♠ ---
 ♥ ---
 ♦ Q108
 ♣ KJ

South
 ♠ 9
 ♥ ---
 ♦ AKJ
 ♣ Q

On the ♠9 West let go a diamond, dummy a club and East...? when he pitched a club declarer cashed one diamond and exited in clubs to create a wrinkle.

Love your enemies...
 it will confuse them greatly.

Match Three: Hackett vs skylark

by Barry Rigal



Hydes



Takano



Jason



Sugino



Paul



Senior



Matsumoto



Takahashi

Bd: 1
Dir: North
Vul: None

North
♠ Q93
♥ AQ10
♦ J82
♣ QJ109

West
♠ 10
♥ 87653
♦ K1093
♣ A52

East
♠ K82
♥ KJ4
♦ AQ5
♣ K743

South
♠ AJ7654
♥ 92
♦ 764
♣ 86

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hydes	Takano	Jason	Takahashi
	1♣	Dbl	1♠
3♥	3♠	4♥	4♠
Dbl	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sugino	Paul	Matsumoto	Senior
	1♣	1NT	2♠

All Pass

Against Senior's quiet 2♠, reached after a somewhat surprising pass by Sugino, the defenders led hearts, shifted to a low club, then cashed out the diamonds. Declarer guessed trumps sensibly and lost the obvious six tricks. In the other room Hydes was surely going to take ten tricks in 4♥ (four tricks in each red suit and two clubs, unless he misguessed diamonds—by no means impossible). But 4♠x was both a safer and a more lucrative plus score. When declarer, culpably, misguessed trumps by leading to the jack, then playing the ace, that was 800; Hackett out to a fast 13-0 lead.

The datum here was +140 for E/W; game was bid at about a quarter of the tables.

A duplicating accident on boards two and four meant that different deals had to be substituted, on which Hackett's lead increased to 22-0. The one-way traffic continued when normal service was resumed.

Bd: 3
Dir: South
Vul: E/W

North
♠ K10954
♥ 105
♦ 962
♣ AQ5

West
♠ J
♥ 9763
♦ AKJ
♣ 109832

East
♠ Q82
♥ KQJ82
♦ 1073
♣ K7

South
♠ A763
♥ A4
♦ Q854
♣ J64

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hydes	Takano	Jason	Takahashi
			Pass
Pass	2♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	3♥	3♠
Pass	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sugino	Paul	Matsumoto	Senior
			Pass
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Senior put down a spectacularly suitable dummy for Papa Hackett in 2♠. Papa won the heart lead, led a low trump to his king, then finessed spades and exited in hearts. The defenders had one heart, one

club and three diamond tricks but Hackett had +110.

Meanwhile, Jason decided merely to invite game facing Hydes' balancing double, till the opponents persuaded him that his partner really did have a singleton spade. 4♥ may not have been the world's greatest contract but it did have the undoubted merit of being cold. The lie of the clubs meant Jason did not even need the diamond finesse, but it was working for him anyway. Not surprisingly, only a handful of tables bid game on their combined 20 hcp (with three points wasted in spades). Those 13imps made it 34-0.

Bd: 5
Dlr: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ Q984
♥ AJ
♦ J96532
♣ 7

West
♠ 73
♥ Q10864
♦ AKQ7
♣ K8

East
♠ A652
♥ 932
♦ 84
♣ AJ64

South
♠ KJ10
♥ K75
♦ 10
♣ Q109532

Open Room

West <i>Hydes</i>	North <i>Takano</i>	East <i>Jason</i>	South <i>Takahashi</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣(♥)	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Closed Room

West <i>Sugino</i>	North <i>Paul</i>	East <i>Matsumoto</i>	South <i>Senior</i>
1♥	1♠	2♣	2♠
4♥	Dbl	All Pass	

Jason's Drury 2♣ had little to spare. He wisely signed off over 2♦ but up-valued his aces in the expectation of facing a 1-5-4-3 type. His partner's assets were not only skinny (not a word heard much around this England team) they were also in the wrong place. Hydes received a club lead, which must have given him some real expectation of scrambling ten tricks. He tried the jack, covered all around, led a club to the ace as North pitched a diamond, then led a trump to the ten and jack. From here on he was simply arranging to get out for down one (as Teveye would have said, "Its no disgrace—but its no triumph either.").

By contrast, Papa heard his vulnerable partner open and bid freely and was happy to take a swing at 4♥ (and yes, if the Drury bid in the other room was skinny the 2♣ bid here was positively anorexic).

Declarer won the club lead in hand, cashed the ♦A, and played a spade to dummy to lead a second diamond. Now the defenders crossruffed the minors with a spade to come, and racked up a painless 300. Hackett led 40-0.

Bd: 6
Dlr: East
Vul: E/W

North
♠ QJ643
♥ J65
♦ KQ10
♣ 54

West
♠ A72
♥ A107
♦ J764
♣ K108

East
♠ K109
♥ Q93
♦ A98
♣ QJ72

South
♠ 85
♥ K842
♦ 532
♣ A963

Open Room

West <i>Hydes</i>	North <i>Takano</i>	East <i>Jason</i>	South <i>Takahashi</i>
1♦	1♠	1♣	Pass
2NT	All Pass	Dbl	Pass

Closed Room

West <i>Sugino</i>	North <i>Paul</i>	East <i>Matsumoto</i>	South <i>Senior</i>
1♦	Pass	1♣	Pass
2NT	All Pass	1NT	Pass

Such is the decline of opening bids that neither West, with a 12-count and a bunch of intermediates, was prepared to drive his partner's vulnerable opening bid to game. "O tempora, o mores" would doubtless have been the reader's reaction, too. Hydes justified his pessimism by taking only eight tricks after a spade lead; Matsumoto received a heart lead from Senior and ended with nine tricks. That got skylark on the board with an imp, now 40-1, but Hackett hit back at once.

Bd: 7
Dlr: South
Vul: Both

North
♠ 92
♥ KJ7
♦ K10974
♣ Q92

West
♠ Q
♥ AQ5
♦ Q532
♣ AK876

East
♠ KJ1064
♥ 1032
♦ AJ8
♣ 105

South
♠ A8753
♥ 9864
♦ 6
♣ J43

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Jason</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥(♠)	Pass
2♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sugino</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Matsumoto</i>	<i>Senior</i>
			Pass
1♣	1♦	1♠	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

ACBL readers will be pleased to know that Alex Hydes has been dutifully following the rules about opening 1NT with a singleton (only the ace, king or queen please). His partner drove to 3NT and after a diamond lead into the tenace Hydes emerged with ten tricks. Sugino may have been intending to rebid 2NT over 1♠, and should probably have followed through on that approach, despite the 1♦ overcall down-valuing her hand. This was not a good day to be overly cautious, and Hackett had another 10 imps to lead 50-1.

3NT by West may look comfortable enough, but as Barel-Zack demonstrated, it can be set if East is declarer. After a strong club auction Zack led the ♥9 to Barel's jack. Zack ducked the spade return, and when declarer played the ♦Q (covered all around) to drive out the ♠A, Zack took his ace and led a second heart. When declarer finessed, Barel won his king and led out the ♦10, and the bad spade break meant declarer was toast.

Bd: 8
 Dir: West
 Vul: None

North
♠ AJ1085
♥ 73
♦ Q96
♣ QJ7

West	East
♠ 9	♠ KQ32
♥ KQ6542	♥ J
♦ AK8	♦ J32
♣ A94	♣ 108532

South
♠ 764
♥ A1098
♦ 10754
♣ K6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Jason</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♠
Dbf	Pass	3♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sugino</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Matsumoto</i>	<i>Senior</i>
1♥	1♠	1NT	2♠
3♥	All Pass		

3♣ handled beautifully when, after a spade lead to the ace, Jason ruffed his spade loser in dummy, played two rounds of trumps, then set up a heart to take care of his diamond loser; +110.

At the other table 3♥ on a top club lead struggled. The club blockage might have given declarer a chance, had she won and played a spade. However, so long as Paul could keep his hands off a diamond, the defense would prevail. As it was, declarer ducked the first trick and when South played a diamond through she finessed, and went down two. It was 55-3 now, Hackett.

Bd: 9
 Dir: North
 Vul: E/W

North	East
♠ AJ8	♠ Q10654
♥ 532	♥ K4
♦ K943	♦ 76
♣ 543	♣ Q982

West	South
♠ 732	♠ K9
♥ AQ976	♥ J108
♦ J52	♦ AQ108
♣ KJ	♣ A1076

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Jason</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♦
1♥	2♦	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sugino</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Matsumoto</i>	<i>Senior</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT

All Pass

Hydes experimented with ♣K to the first trick. A nice try, but declarer had just too much fire power in the form of five diamond tricks and three black tricks. 1NT lost the first five heart tricks but declarer always had seven tricks. One imp to skylark.

Bd: 10
 Dir: East
 Vul: Both

North
♠ J852
♥ K854
♦ 973
♣ K6

West	East
♠ AK10976	♠ 3
♥ QJ9	♥ 2
♦ J10	♦ AKQ8652
♣ Q10	♣ J875

South
♠ Q4
♥ A10763
♦ 4
♣ A9432

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hydes	Takano	Jason	Takahashi
		1♦	2NT
3♥(♠)	Dbl	4♦	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sugino	Paul	Matsumoto	Senior
		3NT	All Pass

Hackett was comprehensively outbid here as Matsumoto opened 3NT and played there, with his ♣J the critical outside value that allowed for the ninth trick. Senior led the ace and another club and the defenders cashed their hearts, but declarer claimed the balance. Against 4♠ Takano led a heart, and the defenders cashed their clubs, then played a diamond, leaving declarer unable to avoid two trump losers. That made it 55-16, with more to come for skylark—though not without a struggle.

Bd: 11	North
Dlr: South	♠ K84
Vul: None	♥ 87
	♦ KQJ65
	♣ 752

West	East
♠ 73	♠ AQJ2
♥ AQJ	♥ K10954
♦ A982	♦ 4
♣ A843	♣ QJ9

South
♠ 10965
♥ 632
♦ 1073
♣ K106

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hydes	Takano	Jason	Takahashi
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sugino	Paul	Matsumoto	Senior
			Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠(♥)	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Dbl	6♥	All Pass

It looks as if either Hydes intended his 4♥ bid to be good trumps or he was evaluating his hand as a minimum for hearts. There seems either to have been a problem with the message or the messenger.

6♥ isn't cold, but with the major suits behaving as well as could possibly be expected 12 tricks look easy. What Sugino should not have done was to draw trumps before ruffing a spade. However, with clubs 3-3 she emerged with a sweaty +980 and suddenly the match was slightly closer at 55-27, with just a few deals to go. Could skylark produce a more impressive escape than Steve McQueen?

No, they couldn't, since it was Hackett's turn for a little luck.

Bd: 12	North
Dlr: West	♠ Q732
Vul: N/S	♥ 86
	♦ KQ8
	♣ 9864

West	East
♠ KJ84	♠ A10965
♥ ---	♥ AKQ53
♦ J6543	♦ A
♣ QJ72	♣ K10

South
♠ ---
♥ J109742
♦ 10972
♣ A53

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Hydes	Takano	Jason	Takahashi
		1♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sugino	Paul	Matsumoto	Senior
		1♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦(♠Q?)	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Both Souths led the ♥J. Matsumoto won in hand, laid down the ♠A, and was doomed at once. Jason saw his extra chance if spades were 3-1 and hearts 4-4; he could pitch all four clubs from dummy and avoid the loser in that suit altogether via the ruffing finesse. He ruffed the lead and as the cards lay he needed to set up clubs before playing on trumps. When he cashed the ♠K he found the ♠Q but simultaneously eliminated his dummy entry. Still, he drew trump and advanced the ♣K (more in hope than expectation?). But when South took the trick declarer claimed +980 for a not-unfortunate 14 imps, making it 69-27.

A small improvement on Jason's line is to win the ♥A, play the ♠K to find the good/bad news, pitch one heart on the clubs, ruff the other heart, and still have just enough entries to dummy to draw trumps.

Bd: 13
 Dir: North
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ Q
 ♥ AK54
 ♦ 86
 ♣ Q87532

West
 ♠ A632
 ♥ 108
 ♦ A9742
 ♣ J10

East
 ♠ K109875
 ♥ Q93
 ♦ J53
 ♣ A

South
 ♠ J4
 ♥ J762
 ♦ KQ10
 ♣ K964

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Jason</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>
	1♣	1♠	Dbl
2NT(♠)	4♥	4♠	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sugino</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Matsumoto</i>	<i>Senior</i>
	Pass	2♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	2NT(1)
3♠	All Pass		

(1) two places to play...or Lebensohl, depending on which side of the table you are on.

It is hard to believe the astounding difference in valuation of the two Norths, one driving to game facing a seven-count, the other not deeming it worth an opening bid. Me, I'm somewhere in-between. No matter who might have been right, 3♠ wrapped up 140 while 4♠ had four inevitable losers when there was no miracle in the diamond suit; 69-33, Hackett.

No fewer than seven pairs took ten tricks in 4♠, most frequently after the ♦K lead. That may be necessary, but it does not seem sufficient.

There was till plenty of room for more action...

Bd: 14
 Dir: East
 Vul: None

North
 ♠ Q2
 ♥ AQ2
 ♦ KQ8764
 ♣ 82

West
 ♠ K105
 ♥ 1096
 ♦ J5
 ♣ K9743

East
 ♠ J8763
 ♥ J73
 ♦ A9
 ♣ Q106

South
 ♠ A94
 ♥ K854
 ♦ 1032
 ♣ AJ5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hydes</i>	<i>Takano</i>	<i>Jason</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sugino</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Matsumoto</i>	<i>Senior</i>
		Pass	1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Where Takahashi declared 3NT, he ducked the club lead for two rounds, won the third pitching a spade from dummy, then played on diamonds and wrapped up +430. Senior, on a slightly less informative auction, decided to win the first club lest a second club be played (which he would have to duck) followed by a spade shift. Also, if he was going to follow a line that involved the ♦A being offside, he might run into two losers in each minor and one in spades, even if he guessed well at trick one. But on Senior's play of winning the ♣A at trick one, when the ♦A was to his right and clubs were 5-3 (not by any means a given on the lead of the ♣4) the defenders could cash out the clubs and take him one down. The final score was 69-43 and skylark had come back somewhat to salvage a few victory points from the wreckage.



"Yeah, more funny peculiar than funny ha-ha."



"Let's pray for finding new partners."

Match Four: England/USA vs Poseidon

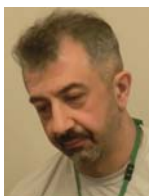
by Barry Rigal



Bokhee



McCallum



Tuncok



Takahashi



Brock



Abe



Narita



Myers

The match started with a bang as an adventurous action from West of the Poseidon team saw him put his partner in what G. H. W. Bush would have described as “deep doo-doo.”

Bd: 17 North
 Dlr: North ♠ 7
 Vul: None ♡ AJ862
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ AJ1097

West
 ♠ AK8
 ♡ Q10543
 ♦ 96
 ♣ KQ4

East
 ♠ J9632
 ♡ ---
 ♦ 108542
 ♣ 853

South
 ♠ Q1054
 ♡ K97
 ♦ AJ73
 ♣ 62

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
	1♡	Pass	2♡
Dbl	4♡	4♠	Dbl

All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
	1♡	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	3♡

All Pass

Brock passed throughout, but must have felt quietly confident defending 4♡. After her partner’s spade lead she might have done best to win the ace and return a low spade, but in fact she won the king and led a top club. Declarer won, led a trump to dummy, then advanced the ♡9, covered all around. When he gave up a club he could ruff the next top spade and play a diamond, overtaking in dummy, finesse the

trumps, and lead winners, letting Brock score her long trump.

However painful –420 might have been, it did not compare to Takahashi’s discomfort in 4♠x. He ruffed the opening heart lead, led a club up, and McCallum won and returned a top club. Declarer won to play a diamond. McCallum took it and played another top club, Tuncok pitching a heart. McCallum shifted to a trump to dummy’s eight and declarer next ducked a second diamond to North, who led a low heart. Declarer ruffed that, ruffed a diamond, then cashed the ♠A, but that was it. In all, declarer took three ruffs, a club and two spades for down 800; 8 imps to England/USA.

For the record, Alex Hydes (West for Hackett) against New Zealand heard Jason Hackett come in over a strong club to show spades and diamonds. He won the ♠A to play back a low spade, and declarer had no reason to get this right. Once he ruffed, the defenders could get in again with a club to lead the ♠K and defeat the game. Since Paul Hackett had played 4♡xx for +880 this was merely the gilt on the gingerbread, but it was nicely defended nonetheless. Coincidentally, for team Sakurai Tsuneo Sakurai and Kikuo Ito also collected +880 while Takehiko Tada and Atsushi Kikuchi were defeating 4♠ in the other room.



“Did you hear? Lady Gaga is singing at the closing ceremony.”

POSEIDON got on the board with an overtrick imp in a quiet 3NT, then a weak notrump gave POSEIDON a valuation problem.

Bd: 19 North
 Dlr: South ♠ A
 Vul: E/W ♥ K954
 ♦ J1052
 ♣ 10865

West
 ♠ K98532
 ♥ AQ8
 ♦ AQ3
 ♣ 2

East
 ♠ 1064
 ♥ 106
 ♦ K94
 ♣ QJ973

South
 ♠ QJ7
 ♥ J732
 ♦ 876
 ♣ AK4

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
			1NT(11-14)
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Rdbl
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
			Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♠	All Pass		

Brock took a cautious view on her rebid, down-valuing the weak spades (yes, some people might temporize with 2♦) and bought the hand in 2♠. After a diamond lead she played to ruff a heart in dummy, then led a spade to the king, a reasonable line but one that produced only eight tricks. McCallum, who might reasonably have doubled 4♠, led a low club. Declarer put up the queen and Tuncok won a tricky ace and shifted to an equally tricky low spade. Declarer let this ride and when a low club came back put in the nine, ruffing away the king. Now she just needed the heart finesse to succeed in his unlikely game. When it lost she was doubtless more hurt than surprised. That made it 13-1 for England/USA.

Seven declarers were lucky enough to make 4♠ after guessing trumps—not all of them on a heart lead, though.

The fact that there's a "Highway to Hell" and only a "Stairway to Heaven" says a lot about anticipated traffic numbers.

Bd: 20 North
 Dlr: West ♠ J97
 Vul: Both ♥ A10987
 ♦ A6
 ♣ K32

West
 ♠ A2
 ♥ KJ5
 ♦ K107
 ♣ Q10964

East
 ♠ Q108
 ♥ Q62
 ♦ 832
 ♣ A875

South
 ♠ K6543
 ♥ 43
 ♦ QJ954
 ♣ J

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
1♣	1♥	1NT	Dbl (t/o)
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
1NT	All Pass		

After a heart lead won in hand Brock drove out the ♣A and claimed seven tricks when a heart came back. McCallum, in 2♠, received a diamond lead to the queen and king. She won in hand, led a diamond to the jack, then advanced the ♣J. West covered, she ducked, ducked the ♥J shift, then won the ♥A, ruffed a club, ruffed a diamond, ruffed a club, then led the fourth diamond from dummy, discarding a heart from hand when West ruffed in.

That was the defenders' third trick while declarer was up to seven. West now led a fourth club, ruffed with the ♠8 by East and overruffed in dummy. In the three-card ending (below), the lead was in dummy.

	♠ J9	
	♥ 9	
	♦ ---	
	♣ ---	
West		East
♠ A		♠ Q10
♥ 5		♥ Q
♦ ---		♦ ---
♣ 9		♣ ---
	South	
	♠ 65	
	♥ ---	
	♦ 9	
	♣ ---	

McCallum now needed to lead a spade, since with the trump suit blocked, West would have to win and lead a club, allowing an elopement at trick 12. When

instead she played a diamond the defenders could take their trumps separately.

Bd: 21
 Dir: North
 Vul: N/S

North	♠ Q109	East	♠ 8754
	♥ KJ753		♥ 10
	♦ 10		♦ 8743
	♣ 8653		♣ KJ97
West	♠ AJ3	South	♠ K62
	♥ 8642		♥ AQ9
	♦ QJ95		♦ AK62
	♣ AQ		♣ 1042

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
	Pass	Pass	1♣(16+)
Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
All Pass			

In 2♥ eight tricks were relatively easy, in the form of one spade, two diamonds and five hearts. In 3♥ one might have expected Tuncok to draw trump and misguess spades for down one. Instead, he won the diamond lead, ducked a club, then won the trump shift and ducked a second club. When back came another heart he won in hand and played a third club to East, as West pitched a low spade. East went back to diamonds and Tuncok now went into the tank (they were already 4-plus boards behind the other room) before winning the king to pitch a spade from dummy. This was the position:

	North		East
	♠ Q10		♠ 875
	♥ KJ7		♥ ---
	♦ ---		♦ 74
	♣ 8		♣ K
West		South	
♠ AJ		♠ K62	
♥ 86		♥ 9	
♦ J9		♦ 62	
♣ ---		♣ ---	

When Tuncok led a low spade towards dummy West could duck (as he did), letting declarer win and ruff a club with the ♥9 for his ninth trick, or win to play a heart, after which East would get squeezed in the black suits. Had West pitched a diamond on the third club declarer would have had to find the ♠J.

Bd: 22
 Dir: East
 Vul: E/W

North	♠ 98	East	♠ KJ642
	♥ 964		♥ 2
	♦ A972		♦ K1054
	♣ AJ42		♣ 875
West	♠ Q1075	South	♠ A3
	♥ KQ1073		♥ AJ85
	♦ Q86		♦ J3
	♣ 6		♣ KQ1093

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
		Pass	1♣(16+)
1♥	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
		Pass	1NT
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Brock led a top heart against 3NT, ducked around, then shifted to a low spade to the king and ace. Next came five rounds of clubs, forcing West to pitch two hearts, one diamond and one spade (Brock chose the seven), while East pitched two diamonds when perhaps it would have been more helpful to pitch a count spade. Declarer next led a diamond to the ace and a second spade. Brock now had two easy ways to set the game. She could win the queen and return the ten, or almost guarantee success for the defense by cashing the third spade and playing a second diamond. Instead she played the ♦Q while leaving spades blocked. Myers had to win and return a spade and Brock was endplayed in hearts at trick 12.

In the other room, after the same start, five rounds of clubs saw West pitch a diamond, two hearts and the ♠10. East meanwhile discarded one low spade, so declarer ducked a heart. Now, when West played a diamond, rather than cash out the three spade winners declarer could take the ♦A and two heart tricks for +400 and a flat board. Two nice declarer plays to take advantage of some uninspired defense;

still 14-1, England/USA.

Twelve of the "top tier" teams let through 3NT but only six teams in the bottom half of the field. A little learning must be a dangerous thing.

Finally, as Board 23 came up, the editors thought we had a flat board. Wrong!

Bd: 23 North
 Dir: South ♠ QJ985
 Vul: Both ♥ K
 ♦ 953
 ♣ Q1064

West
 ♠ K4
 ♥ J876532
 ♦ 107
 ♣ 85

East
 ♠ 1063
 ♥ A9
 ♦ QJ862
 ♣ K93

South
 ♠ A72
 ♥ Q104
 ♦ AK4
 ♣ AJ72

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
2♥	Dbl	Pass	1♣(16+)
All Pass			3NT

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	4♠	All Pass	3♠

The Closed Room did their job well enough, but Tencok was forced to commit himself over 2♥ since 2NT would have been non-forcing. His choice of 3NT looked doomed but Bokhee trusted the opponents too much and led a diamond. Declarer won and guessed to play on spades. West won to continue the attack on diamonds and Tencok ducked and eventually finessed clubs for 10 tricks and the loss of just 1 imp.

A total of eight teams were punished for playing 3NT but six were let off the hook for missing their eight-card spade fit.

POSEIDON added a single overtrick imp on a dull game, by which point the Closed Room had finished their set, before another challenging deal put in an appearance.

Bd: 25 North
 Dir: North ♠ J1064
 Vul: E/W ♥ 72
 ♦ 62
 ♣ K10942

West
 ♠ 5
 ♥ KQ54
 ♦ AK97
 ♣ AJ87

East
 ♠ KQ982
 ♥ 98
 ♦ QJ108
 ♣ 63

South
 ♠ A73
 ♥ AJ1063
 ♦ 543
 ♣ Q5

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
2NT	Pass	Pass	2♥
3♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
		3NT	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
Dbl	Pass	Pass	1♥
3NT	All Pass	2♠	Pass

Abe led a club against 3NT. Brock ducked this and the next club so Abe won and shifted to spades. When Brock put up the king she no longer had a chance to take more than eight tricks. Bokhee won the heart lead (7, 8, 10, Q) and immediately led a spade to the nine. Whatever the technical merits of this line, it got her to nine tricks in no time at all. Well done for spotting the chance; 15-14, POSEIDON.

POSEIDON added to their lead in fluky fashion, Bokhee-Takahashi playing a partscore on a deal where slam looks a better spot. However, game went down in the other room when Myers found an unsafety play in trumps which cost him a trick and then a key side-suit broke 4-0 offside to beat his vulnerable game. No fewer than eight other declarers made the same play (I'm not sure that will make any of them feel any better about their play, but "a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind," they say.). That made the score 21-14, POSEIDON.

Both Souths then played a delicate 3NT carefully, establishing KJ9643 facing the stiff 8 by running the eight. This was necessary, with ♣AQ10 offside, and ten pairs were punished for their carelessness. Tuncok emerged with an overtrick, to make it 15-21.

Bd: 28
 Dir: West
 Vul: N/S

North
 ♠ KJ1064
 ♥ A852
 ♦ KJ8
 ♣ 7

West
 ♠ Q753
 ♥ J1073
 ♦ A
 ♣ AK105

East
 ♠ A98
 ♥ K64
 ♦ 62
 ♣ Q9863

South
 ♠ 2
 ♥ Q9
 ♦ Q1097543
 ♣ J42

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
1♣	2♣(♠+♥)	3♣	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
1♣	1♠	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

You might not be fans of the auction to 3NT but as North a heart lead seems clear, not a diamond. Abe tried a spade, which gave declarer eight tricks, and when she guessed hearts as well, she was up to nine. Some careless discarding gave her a tenth trick and 8imps. England/USA regained the lead at 23-21. Not entirely surprisingly, no other E/W attempted 3NT successfully.

Bd: 29
 Dir: North
 Vul: Both

North
 ♠ A4
 ♥ 1042
 ♦ 109
 ♣ AK10852

West
 ♠ KQJ1097
 ♥ 853
 ♦ A
 ♣ QJ4

East
 ♠ 8653
 ♥ A7
 ♦ KQJ53
 ♣ 93

South
 ♠ 2
 ♥ KQJ96
 ♦ 87642
 ♣ 76

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bokhee</i>	<i>McCallum</i>	<i>Takahashi</i>	<i>Tuncok</i>
	2♣	2♦	2♥

4♠ All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Brock</i>	<i>Abe</i>	<i>Myers</i>	<i>Narita</i>
	1♣	1♦	1♥

1♠ Dbl
 3♠ All Pass
 2♠ Pass

Brock did quite well to stay out of game here, though one could imagine the defenders leading three rounds of clubs to let 4♠ through. McCallum cashed two clubs, Tuncok echoing to show two, then shifted to hearts to set the game. Declarer went up with the ♥A, unblocked diamonds, ruffed her club winner to dummy, then tried to run diamonds to get rid of her hearts but McCallum ruffed the third diamond for a sweaty down one.

Nine pairs let through the spade game, presumably by repeated club leads.

The final deal saw two overtricks to POSEIDON and a win for England/USA, 29-23.



"If I finesse the five, maybe I'll get in the bulletin."



"That's your last psych this week."



"Look, it's a bird." "No, it's a plane..."



"Not with my line-up sheet!"

21st NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Wednesday (Feb. 8)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (5)	414, 415, 416, 417
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (6)	418, 419
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (7)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (8)	
Thursday (Feb. 9)	10:00-12:00	NEC Cup Swiss (9)	414, 415, 416, 417
	12:20-14:20	NEC Cup Swiss (10)	418, 419
	14:20-15:30	Lunch Break	
	15:30-17:30	NEC Cup Swiss (11)	
	17:50-19:50	NEC Cup Swiss (12)	
Friday (Feb. 10)	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	
	15:00-17:15	NEC Cup Semi-Final (1)	414, 415
	17:35-19:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final (2)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama IMP Pairs	503
Saturday (Feb. 11)	09:00-11:15	NEC Cup Final (1)	414, 415
	11:35-13:50	NEC Cup Final (2)	
	13:50-15:00	Lunch Break	
	15:00-17:15	NEC Cup Final (3)	
	17:35-19:50	NEC Cup Final (4)	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Teams	501, 502
Sunday (Feb. 12)	10:00-17:30	Yokohama 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



Alert!

Teams failing to submit their line up in time (10 minutes before the start of the match) will receive a 1-VP penalty (per offense). You've been warned.

Real-Time NEC Cup Match Updates on the Web

Wondering how your favorite team is doing RIGHT NOW? Surf to the JCBL home page

<http://www.jcbl.or.jp/home/English/nec/21st/tabid/1429/Default.aspx>

and click on a Results link.