



NEC Bridge Festival

Sunday, February 12, 2017
Bulletin Number 7

Editors: Rich Colker, Barry Rigal

Ding Junfeng – Hu Linlin Win Yokohama Open Pairs Takako Ijuin – Akio Ijuin Win JCBL Cup



Yokohama Open Pairs: Winners



JCBL Cup: Winners

Top Finishers in Yokohama Open Pairs and JCBL Cup

Rank	Yokohama Open Pairs (pairs)		JCBL Cup (8 pairs)	
	Pair	Score	Pair	Score
1	Ding Junfeng – Hu Linlin	1792.05	Takako Ijuin – Akio Ijuin	43
2	Huo Shiyu – Chen Jun	1768	Mamoru Minakuchi – Hisanao Munakata	37.5
3	Tomoko Wada – Kazuo Furuta	1725.2	Shunji Kobayashi – Yoko Mitsuhashi	37.5
4	Michael Whibley – Ashley Bach	1704.24		
5	Zhao Yonghui – Liu Haitao	1699.45		
6	David Bakhshi – Kazuko Tsumori	1685.95		
7	Ayako Miyakuni – Miho Sekizawa	1679.55		
8	Wang Wenfei – Shen Qi	1678.95		
9	Chen Yunlong – Zhao Jie	1666.45		
10	Takashi Maeda – Mariko Matsukawa	1665.32		



Yokohama Pairs 2nd



Yokohama Pairs 3rd



JCBL Pairs 2nd-3rd



JCBL Pairs 2nd -3rd

NEC Cup Bridge Festival 2017

Domo Arigato

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

As always Yokohama, and especially the Pacifico, are wonderful places for this event. Each year we marvel at the developments in the area, and this year is exceptional. The Conference Center is a terrific playing venue and the Pacifico area is just teeming with new construction. The weather this year, though at times a bit rainy, was probably a good deal better than what many of us would have experienced back home. As always, everyone has been warm and friendly and it is our continuing great pleasure to return to each festival to reunite with our many good friends to share the happy times and the fun and excitement of this tournament. Your kindness and generosity warm our hearts. In honor of the coming Valentine's Day we wish everyone love and joy for every day of the year.

The significant prizes and broad participation continue to make the **NEC Bridge Festival** an important event on the bridge calendar, and one which continues to grow in prestige. This year's field of 53 teams in the NEC Cup (the most ever; 2004 was second with 52 teams) included many top teams as well as many improving Japanese teams. The quality of bridge was excellent, as usual, providing us with a number of well-played and well-defended hands for our archives. We hope our role here has in some small way contributed to the tournament's and JCBL's continued success. This year's festival was by any measure a success.

The Bulletin Editors are grateful to those who provided us with deals, stories and other material to help us keep you informed. Many thanks to *Robert Geller*, the JCBL liason to this event. Thanks also to *Matt Smith*, Tournament Director par excellence, who ran a smooth and pleasant tournament; to *Omasa-san*, for his awesome technical, computer, and directing support; to *Michika Matsuo*, for her wonderful pictures that you see in these bulletins (which as usual we subjected to our peculiar sense of humor); to *Nakamura-san*, for once again suffering with us long into the night (he continues to be the unluckiest person in Japan to have been assigned this task again this year) so that you may have daily bulletins fresh with your morning coffee, and especially for his work with the pictures, results, hand records and many other things too numerous to list here; to *Suzuki-san* and *Kido-san* for their hard work and help with many things, both technical and otherwise; to *Maeda-san* for his work with BBO and to BBO itself; to *Koike-san* who helped to direct the events this weekend; to *Nakatani-san*, for his continuing friendship, support and directing skills; and to the many others who provided us with moral support during our long work sessions. Thanks also to the many volunteers who perform the myriad functions critical to making this tournament a success, while we remain oblivious to what is going on around us, absorbed in our work. As you know, we consider all of you part of our extended family here in Japan. And finally, many thanks to the players, who produced such exciting bridge.



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

Director? We don't need no stinkin' director!

by Barry Rigal

This deal, from Friday's Yokohama IMP Pairs, was brought to my attention by Jimmi Wallis and Ziggy Konig, who were E/W here.

Bd: 3	North		
Dlr: South	♠ 1065		
Vul: E/W	♥ 962		
	♦ AKQ62		
	♣ AQ		
West		East	
♠ 762		♠ KJ4	
♥ 87543		♥ KJ10	
♦ 974		♦ 53	
♣ 98		♣ KJ763	
	South		
	♠ AQ93		
	♥ AQ		
	♦ J108		
	♣ 10542		

3NT (by South) looks to be the normal spot here, and Konig (West) led a second highest heart, the auction having marked him with a Yarborough from Ziggy's (East's) perspective. When Wallis played the king, declarer followed accidentally with the queen.

Now according to law this was a played card, since it had not been played by accident, but obviously it was not the card that declarer, a Japanese woman who was beginning to show signs of embarrassment, had intended to play. Both opponents insisted she pick it up and play the card she would have wanted to play on the trick. Regardless of whether this falls within the rules or not, it is clearly within the spirit of the game and a generous gesture by a visitor to Japan to our hosts.

All's well that ends well

by Barry Rigal

Sabine Auken gave me an unusual defensive problem from the first round of the Swiss. The hands have been rotated to make South declarer.

	North		North	
Dlr: East	♠ 753		Dlr: East	♠ 753
Vul: None	♥ 52		Vul: None	♥ 52
	♦ Q84			♦ Q84
	♣ AKQJ3			♣ AKQJ3
West		West		East
♠ AQJ82		♠ AQJ82		♠ 106
♥ A7		♥ A7		♥ Q104
♦ K972		♦ K972		♦ J10
♣ 74		♣ 74		♣ 1098652
			South	
			♠ K94	
			♥ KJ9863	
			♦ A653	
			♣ ---	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♥
1♠	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

As West you decide to lead the ♠Q (yes you might have led the ♠A but let's not quibble). This holds the trick, partner following with the six (standard signals) and declarer playing the four. What next?

At the table, if you play a low spade you will regret it! Here's the full story.

Declarer (who had followed low by accident) got out with a third spade, and when Sabine won and played a fourth spade she ruffed in dummy. Best defense might be to overruff, and when declarer wins in hand and leads a low diamond West wins to lead a fifth spade, letting East discard his last diamond. That way the defense get back to two down.

But note, if declarer takes the ♠Q with the king at the first trick she cannot get out for fewer than down three—no matter what she does. So the play saved at least one trick against perfect defense and actually saved two. And no, Sabine was not declarer.

Head Scratchers from the Open Pairs

by Barry Rigal

My thanks to Dawei Chen for drawing my attention to the following. In the first session of the Yokohama Open Pairs three deals presented interesting problems for declarer and the defenders.

Bd: 15
Dlr: South
Vul: N/S

North
♠ 1052
♥ Q107
♦ Q105
♣ KJ85

West
♠ Q876
♥ J3
♦ KJ642
♣ 76

East
♠ AK3
♥ 9642
♦ A3
♣ A932

South
♠ J94
♥ AK85
♦ 987
♣ Q104

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
			All Pass

South's heart lead let the defenders cash out that suit (playing standard signals North can encourage with the ten to simultaneously unblock the suit but it is much easier on a low heart lead). Dummy had to find two discards and let go a diamond and a club, North pitched a suit-preference ♠2, so South shifted accurately to a low club to the king and ace.

Chen now ran four rounds of spades, North discarding the ♣8, then the ♣5, and South the ♦7. Chen diagnosed that the ♦Q had to be guarded and offside. This was the ending:

	North	
	♠ ---	
	♥ ---	
	♦ Q105	
	♣ J	
West		East
♠ ---		♠ ---
♥ ---		♥ ---
♦ KJ64		♦ A3
♣ ---		♣ 93
	South	
	♠ ---	
	♥ ---	
	♦ 98	
	♣ Q10	

Chen crossed to his ♦A and led a sneaky low club from hand. To defeat the game South had to rise with ♣Q (the right play whether North or East has the jack) to exit with a diamond. When South failed to imitate the crocodile and swallow up partner's jack, North had to overtake the ♣10 and was endplayed to

concede the rest. And for all of us inclined to cast the first stone and blame South, North should have discarded the ♣J at the previous turn to help partner get it right.

Deal 20
Dlr: West
Vul: Both

♠ K972
♥ QJ75
♦ K86
♣ J3

West
♠ 5
♥ AK83
♦ A5
♣ 1098762

East
♠ AQ106
♥ 964
♦ Q9732
♣ A

South
♠ J843
♥ 102
♦ J104
♣ KQ54

Open Room

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	3NT	

Chen, playing with Takahiko Hirata, found the natural but unfortunate lead of a low spade to his partner's king and declarer's queen. East led a diamond towards the ace and Chen played the jack. Declarer took the ace and led back to the nine and Chen's ten (probably an error in theory as well as in practice). Now Chen inferred that for declarer to be playing on diamonds rather than clubs he must have a singleton club. So he shifted to a low club and Hirata did well to play low. The bare ♣A popped up and declarer played a third diamond, letting Hirata unblock clubs and exit with a heart honor, ducked all around. Then Hirata exited with his second top heart to lock declarer either out of his hand or dummy, and force him to concede two more tricks whatever he did. Two down was a top for N/S.

The following deal worked out very well for a couple of visitors to Yokohama.

Bd: 21
Dlr: North
Vul: N/S

North
♠ Q95
♥ 987
♦ K543
♣ J96

West
♠ 86432
♥ A
♦ Q972
♣ 873

East
♠ AK7
♥ KQJ43
♦ A6
♣ A42

South
♠ J10
♥ 10652
♦ J108
♣ KQ105

Jack Zhao was seated West and his partner, Chen Yunlong, elected to open 1♥ rather than 2NT. With the opponents silent the bidding continued: 1♥-1♠; 3♣-3NT. You can hardly blame Fu Zhong (Jack's ex-partner) for leading a diamond, rather than a club, but that meant 12 tricks for Zhao—a near top.

Not a complete top though, since David Bakhshi and his partner bid to 6♠ on this deal, and also received a diamond lead. Again, when declarer ran that to her hand she had 12 tricks...and an even better score.

6♠ here looks as if you have 11 relatively easy tricks with the majors breaking, but too much work to do on a club lead. Curiously though, as Dawei Chen pointed out, you can even make slam on a club lead.

Win the ♣A, play a low heart to your ace, and trust South's count signal in hearts. Take one spade, cash two hearts, pitching clubs, ruff a club, then go back to the ♠K. So far so good.

This is the ending:

North
 ♠ Q
 ♥ ---
 ♦ K543
 ♣ J

West
 ♠ 86
 ♥ ---
 ♦ Q972
 ♣ ---

East
 ♠ 7
 ♥ J4
 ♦ A6
 ♣ 4

South
 ♠ ---
 ♥ 10
 ♦ J108
 ♣ Q10

The fall of the spade honors makes North the heavy favorite to hold the ♠Q rather than South having begun with ♠QJ10 precisely. It would be right to cash hearts now if North began with a 3-4-4-2 pattern, but if you believe South, you should play North for only three hearts. So ruff the third club and exit with a spade. In the four-card ending North has only diamonds left and must lead one around to your queen and concede the rest.

Decisions, Decisions

by Barry Rigal

The Swiss teams threw up a play problem that has a mere 29 imps riding on your trick one play. First the bidding. As West you hold:

♠ —
 ♥ 10964
 ♦ AKQJ103
 ♣ AQ7.

Partner bids a nebulous club (11-14 balanced or clubs), RHO bids 1♠, you bid 2♣ showing diamonds, LHO bids 3♠, and RHO raises to 4♠. Back to you. Your call?

You elect to explore delicately with 6♦, which travels around to RHO, who awards it a red card. You have nothing to say, but partner puts the blue card down and 6♦xx becomes the final contract. On the lead of the ♥8 this is what you see (spots approximate):

West
 ♠ ---
 ♥ 10964
 ♦ AKQJ103
 ♣ AQ7

East
 ♠ K1074
 ♥ AQ7
 ♦ 9642
 ♣ K9

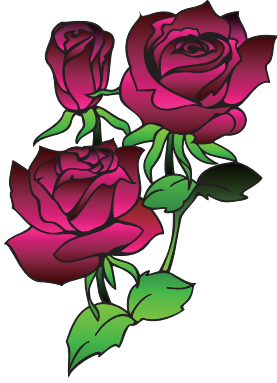
It all looks too easy. You plan to win the ♥A, draw a couple of trumps, pitch a heart on the third club and give up a heart. So you play the ♥A...and East ruffs! Down one, since the heart loser will not go away.

RHO held:

♠ AQJ63
 ♥ ---
 ♦ 5
 ♣ 10865432

Strange, but true.





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