



BULLETIN
www.IBPA.com
mail@ibpa.com

THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION

Editor: JOHN CARRUTHERS

This Bulletin is published monthly and circulated to around 400 members of the International Bridge Press Association comprising the world's leading journalists, authors and editors of news, books and articles about contract bridge, with an estimated readership of some 200 million people who enjoy the most widely played of all card games

N° 467 Year 2003 Date December 10

President:

PATRICK D JOURDAIN
8 Felin Wen, Rhiwbina
Cardiff CF14 6NW WALES UK
(44) 29 2062 8839
email: pdjourdain@hotmail.com

Chairman:

HENRY G FRANCIS
6875 Stornaway Drive
Memphis, TN 38119 USA
(1) 901 754 3405 Cell: 901 335 6875
Email: hfranci1@midsouth.rr.com

Executive Vice-President:

JAN TOBIAS van CLEEFF
Prinsegracht 28a
2512 GA The Hague, NETHERLANDS
(31) 70 360 5902
Email: jvcleeff@xs4all.nl

Organizational Vice-President:

PER E JANNERSTEN
Villa Cicero
SE-774 27 Avesta, SWEDEN
(46) 22 66 1900
Email: ibpa@jannersten.se

Secretary:

MAUREEN DENNISON
148 Thornbury Road, Osterley
Isleworth TW7 4QE, ENGLAND UK
(44) 20 8560 3788 F: 20 8568 3553
Email:
maureen_dennison@ibpa.freemove.co.uk

Membership Secretary:

Dr STUART STAVELEY
Rhu-na-Bidh, Shieldaig, Strathcarron
Ross-shire IV54 8XN SCOTLAND UK
(44) 1520 755 217 F: 1520 755 355

Treasurer:

HANS CHRISTER ANDERSSON
Arstagatan 20 C
75434 Uppsala, SWEDEN
(46) 18 253584 O: 18 175764
Email: jus289n@tinet.se

Honorary General Counsel:

WILLIAM J PENCHARZ
50 Broadway, Westminster
London SW1H 0BL ENGLAND
(44) 207 222 7000
Email: billpencharz@bdb-law.co.uk

Awards Secretary:

BARRY JRIGAL
Apt 8E, 22 West 26th Street,
New York NY 10010, USA
(1) 212 366 4799
Email: barryrigal@mindspring.com

Sponsored Members' Secretary:

IRENA CHODOROWSKA
UI Sewastopolska 3m41
02-758 Warsaw, POLAND
(48) 842 5054
Email: poyel@post.pl

IBPA Personality of the Year



Photo: Ron Tacchi

Gianarrigo Rona accepts the IBPA Personality of the Year award from
IBPA President-elect Patrick Jourdain

The IBPA Annual Awards for 2003

(Announced at the AGM in Monte Carlo, Tuesday, November 11, 2003)

Personality of the Year: Gianarrigo Rona (Italy)

To bear the role of President of a Zonal organisation as large as Europe at the same time as presiding over the Italian Bridge Federation, its most successful NBO in terms of medals in the world's leading bridge tournaments, is in itself a remarkable achievement. Our nominee has done that for four years.

This year the EBL inaugurated a major addition to the international calendar, a European championship that was open to all the world's players whether European or not. From a bridge point of view this concept was a major success, with an exceptionally high quality field in all eight events where a new European title was at stake. In future years when medallists look back at past winners, they will see worthy champions in 2003.

Address all editorial correspondence to: **JOHN CARRUTHERS**
65 Tiago Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4B 2A2, Canada
Tel: +1 416 752 7034 Fax: +1 416 344 2444
Email: ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca

Rona (Cont.)

Our candidate has such influence in high places that one might have expected him also to arrange for the weather to suit the playing area's lack of air conditioning. That he did not proves merely that he is human. But human in a way that is a compliment for a person attaining high office: a warm personality, a generosity of spirit, and an ability to remain good-tempered even under pressure.

Gianarrigo Rona, 63, lives in Milan with his wife Cippi. He has two sons from a previous marriage. He retired as a fourth-generation lawyer two years ago, handing over to a son and two nephews. In his youth he was a fine basketball player, competing in the Italian top league. His interest in powerboat racing led to a post on the Italian Federation for that sport from 1981 to 1983.

He learned bridge in the Sixties, later achieving the status of WBF International Master. He was non-playing captain of the Italian Open Team in 1984 and 1985. He joined the board of the Italian Bridge Federation (FIGB) in 1978 and became its President in 1986, a post he still holds. Under his Presidency, FIGB was recognised as a National Sport Federation by the Italian National Olympic Committee, and Rona is now a member of its National Council. Italian bridge players are the current holders of the world title for the Rosenblum Teams, the Olympiad Open Teams, the World Open Pairs, and the World Junior Teams. Junior bridge in Italy is so healthy that the country has numerous candidates waiting to take a spot on their illustrious Open Team.

Rona joined the board of the European Bridge League in 1995 and became its President in 1999, being re-elected this year for a 4-year term. Under his aegis, the EBL has modernised its regulations, improved the training and grading of Tournament Directors, provided courses and seminars for bridge teachers, and implemented major changes to the bridge calendar.

Historically, the EBL has had an excellent relationship with the Bridge Press, never better than under Rona. Witness this year's EBL-sponsored Clippings Competition. This was mutually beneficial to both organisations, or, to be more precise in the case of the IBPA, to those members who were prepared to send in clippings, as all the money was dispensed in prizes.

The IBPA Personality of the Year 2003 is Gianarrigo Rona.

THE ROMEX AWARD FOR BEST BID HAND

Winners: Bart Bramley & Sidney Lazard (USA). See Bulletin 456, page 6, *The Blues*, from the Blue Ribbon Pairs, Phoenix, December 2002

Author: Bart Bramley (USA)

Other finalists:

- Zia Mahmood & Michael Rosenberg (USA). From *Sonny Moysé, Alive and Well*, Bulletin 451.3, LM Pairs at Washington ACBL's Nationals

Author: ACBL Daily Bulletin

- Gabriel Chagas & Diego Brenner (Brazil). See 454.5, *Papaya with Sugar*, at Rio de Janeiro Championship
Author: Diego Brenner
- Peter Fredin & Magnus Lindqvist (Sweden) in the Spingold. 465.5 – *Long Beach*
Author: Paul Linxwiler
- Gabi Fentresi & Adele Gogoman (Hungary)
Author: Junior Camp Bulletins



Photo: Ron Tacchi

Sidney Lazard Accepts the Romex Award for Best Bid Hand from outgoing IBPA Chair Alan Truscott. It is rare to see an auction with seven natural bids reach the top-scoring contract despite intervention, when three strains and two different levels are under consideration. This was beautifully handled by both players.

The Blues

By Bart Bramley, Chicago

Our best bid hand was from the first final session:

Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ —	♠ A 10 7 5
♥ A K Q 7 5 4 3	♥ 10 6
♦ A 10 5 3	♦ Q J
♣ K 7	♣ A Q J 10 9

West	North	East	South
Lazard		Bramley	
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♣	3 ♠
4 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	6 ♣	Pass
7 ♥	Pass	7 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Sidney eschewed opening two clubs because the opponents were at favorable vulnerability and he had a spade void. When the opponents jammed the auction Sidney still had a big problem at his second turn. His delicate four diamond bid was a great solution, as it was natural, forcing, and low. Four diamonds may look obvious, but ask around and you'll find out differently. My four heart preference was conservative, but I feared bidding more on a potential misfit. Luckily for us, the four heart bid relieved Sidney of any concerns about hearts running. Sidney's next call, the four spade cuebid, continued his gradual approach to a complex hand. Having

pulled in a notch earlier, I was comfortable driving to slam over four spades, but I was still not sure of the best trump suit. I chose the descriptive six club call, simultaneously accepting the slam try, showing a strong suit, and offering six clubs as a choice of contract. Note that six clubs could be the winning contract opposite ♠-- , ♥AQxxxx, ♦AK10xx, ♣xx or the like. That was good news for Sidney, who knew that the club king was huge, so he confidently bid seven hearts. Equally confidently, I converted to seven no trumps based on possession of the spade ace. I knew Sidney held solid hearts, the diamond ace, and one of the minor suit kings.

Note that our auction was completely natural except for four spades, a cuebid of a void, hardly a big contribution to a contract of seven no trumps. We used no ace-asking bid and cuebid no aces. Every bid but four spades showed a suit, and our last several bids were all offers to play. Yet when we reached seven no trumps we both knew it was cold!

There was a small point in the play. On the spade lead I pitched a heart from dummy. Sidney, who had been looking nervous, perked up and said, "That's a good sign!" I didn't need the seventh heart for thirteen tricks, but if hearts had been four-zero, I could still have made the contract with the diamond finesse and a squeeze if LHO had ♠Jxxx, ♥J98x, ♦K9xx, ♣x, a holding consistent with the bidding. Plus 2220 was worth 42 on a 51 top.

THE ITES AWARD FOR BEST DEFENCE

Winner: Eric Greco (& Geoff Hampson) (USA) at Nebraska Regional – *Cornhusker Defence*, 464.13
Authors: Larry Cohen & Alan Truscott (USA)

Other finalists:

- Richard Oshlag (& David Lindop) (USA) in the Spingold at Washington. From 451.5 – *Spingold Emotions: Despair and Elation*
 Author: ACBL Washington Daily Bulletin
- Adam Mesbur & Nick Fitzgibbon (Ireland) 2002 Europeans, 451.16 – Points from the Postbag
 Author: Maureen Hiron (Spain)
- Bengt-Erik Efraimsson (& Kenneth Borin) (Sweden). From *A Swedish Defence*, 453.15
 Author: Arne Frennelius (Sweden)
- Bharat Rao & Burrell Humphreys (USA) at Philadelphia Nationals. See *The Queens* 459.4
 Author: Andy Stark (Canada)
- Mik Kristensen (& Mikkel Nohr) (Denmark) from the Nordic Championships. See *A Grown Up Youngster*, 463.7
 Author: Ib Lundby (Denmark)

One can just imagine the thrill for Greco and the anguish of declarer as the deal unwound. So sad to go three off when at one point you can make 12 tricks!! (Yes, if declarer plays the ace of clubs on the second round of the suit, West gets squeezed later) But there was a sound reason for declarer's play. So was dummy sympathetic?



Photo: Ron Tacchi

Eric Greco and Alan Truscott receive their awards for the ITES Best Defence of the Year from ITES Africa Managing Director Dilip Gidwani

Cornhusker Defence

By Larry Cohen, Boca Raton, FL and Alan Truscott, New York City

Anyone who spotted Warren E. Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway at the Summer North American Bridge Championships in Long Beach, California, last month might have been excused for thinking that he was the wealthiest person present. However, that would have been wrong, for one of his teammates in the Master Mixed Teams was Bill Gates of Microsoft.

A week later, Buffett, back at his Omaha, Nebraska home, entertained a group led by another financial wizard, Peter Lynch, and played a friendly match. Lynch and his wife, Carolyn, then continued to the 'Nebraska' regional tournament, played just outside the state, across the Missouri River, in Iowa. Their team was uniformly successful, winning three knockout events and the Swiss teams.

In one knockout event, Eric Greco, West for the Lynch team on the diagrammed deal, produced a stellar defence.

Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ A K 8 7	
♥ J 4	
♦ J	
♣ Q J 10 7 5 4	
♠ Q 10 6	♠ 5 4 3 2
♥ 9 6 2	♥ Q 10 8 7
♦ A K 10 8 7	♦ 6 3 2
♣ K 2	♣ 9 6
♠ J 9	
♥ A K 5 3	
♦ Q 9 5 4	
♣ A 8 3	

At the other table, Greco's teammate South opened a 14-16 no trump, and dummy transferred to clubs and then showed spades. South bid three no trumps and received a fourth-best diamond eight lead. Dummy's jack won, and the queen of clubs went to West's king. West cashed the high diamonds, and declarer claimed ten tricks for plus 630.

Contrast this with what happened at Greco's table. South opened one diamond, and again the dummy showed clubs and spades with South arriving in three no trumps. Greco led a high diamond and got the discouraging deuce from partner Geoff Hampson. Even looking at all four hands, it's difficult to see a way to beat the game, but Eric found it. He played the diamond seven at trick two, won by declarer's nine.

Declarer crossed in spades (East showing an even number) and led the queen of clubs for a finesse. Greco ducked in tempo. Declarer, afraid to lay down the club ace (if East has king-third, he can't be let in for a diamond through), continued with dummy's club jack, passed around to Greco's now bare king.

Greco continued the good work by shifting to the spade queen. Not only did this pin the jack, but it also severed declarer from dummy's clubs. The ace of clubs was now blocking the suit. Declarer countered by ducking the spade! Had Greco woodenly continued spades, declarer could have won in dummy and thrown the club ace to make the contract. But, having done everything right so far, Greco wasn't going to fall from grace at that point. He accurately shifted to hearts, the final nail in declarer's coffin.

Declarer now had to fail by three tricks, down 300! Declarer, seemingly with nine top tricks, was held to two clubs, two hearts, one spade and one diamond trick. Making the right play in all four suits (at the right time), Greco earned 14 IMPs for his team with his superb defence.

The Digital Fountain Award for Best Played Hand

Winner: Geir Helgemo (Norway) OK Bridge. From 460.8 – *A Thing of Beauty*

Author: Geir Olav Tislevoll (Norway)

Other finalists

- Thorvald Aagard (Denmark) Danish Club Teams Championship. From *Danish Bridge Encyclopaedia*, 455.11
Author: Svend Novrup (Denmark)
- Bob Richman (Australia) 2002 Dick Cummings Pairs. *The Giveaway*, 456.8
Author: Ron Klinger (Australia)
- Boye Brogeland (Norway) Vanderbilt. From *Oh Boye*, 459.7
Author: P-O Sundelin (Sweden)
- Fu Zhong (China) 2002 Chinese Club Teams Championships. 460.2 – *Deals from the Middle Kingdom*
Author: Fu Qiang (China) (and Jack Jie Zhao)

Classic Helgemo. This is yet another example of his superior ability to see through complex positions to the way home. Geir's ability to project the end-position of the cards at the early point of the deal makes him appear a magician at the table.



Photo: Ron Tacchi

The Geirs collect their awards from Anna-Maria Torlontano

A Thing of Beauty

By Geir Olav Tislevoll, Trondheim, Norway

This lovely piece of declarer play took place when Geir Helgemo and Jimmy Cayne were practising on OKBridge. Since it did not occur in a big tournament, there was a danger that it would not come to light. To remedy that, here it is:

Dealer South. Neither Vul.

♠ Q 9 8 6 5	♠ J 7
♥ 3 2	♥ K Q 5
♦ K 10	♦ Q J 9 5 4 3
♣ Q J 9 3	♣ 8 4
♠ 3	
♥ A J 10 8 6	
♦ 8 7 6	
♣ A K 6 5	

West	North Cayne	East	South Helgemo
--	--	--	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	2 ♦	Pass
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

East-West were strong opponents and West found the best lead - a trump - which prevented declarer from ruffing a diamond for his tenth trick. Geir took the first trick with the ace over East's queen. If spades had been four-three, there would not have been much to tell. In that case, declarer would have had no problem in establishing the fifth spade.

The play would continue ace, king of spades, discarding a diamond. Then a spade is ruffed, and if both opponents follow to that trick, declarer plays three rounds of clubs. The defenders must then play two more rounds of trumps to deny declarer a club ruff, and he ends up in dummy with the nine of hearts. He would then ruff another spade, and can get to the now good, fifth spade with his diamond ace.

But, luckily for all but East-West, East showed out on the third spade, discarding the club eight. Geir ruffed and played

the jack of hearts to East's king (East cannot profitably duck). East continued hearts to dummy's nine. On that trick, West had to find a discard, and he could not let a black card go without giving declarer an easy task. So West discarded his diamond king, best defence. This was left:

	♠ 10 4	
	♥ --	
	♦ A 2	
	♣ 10 7 2	
♠ Q 9		♠ --
♥ --		♥ --
♦ 10		♦ Q J 9 5 4 3
♣ Q J 9 3		♣ 8 4
	♠ --	
	♥ 10	
	♦ 8 7	
	♣ A K 6 5	

Now came a strange but beautiful trick: the diamond two, jack, seven, and ten! If East now switches to a club declarer plays low and West will be end-played, forced to help declarer in spades or clubs. But East continued with a diamond to the ace. On that trick, West had to discard again. He could not give up a club, but since there was no more entry to the North hand he could afford to let a spade go, and so he did.

However, that only delayed the inevitable. Helgemo still had one joker left to play out: he ruffed a spade with his last trump, and that took away West's last spade as well. With four cards left both West and South held only clubs. North had a high spade and his three clubs. A low club toward dummy's ten gave West no good option. Beautiful, yes?

THE OKBRIDGE AWARD FOR BEST JUNIOR DEAL

Winner: Ophir Reshef (Israel) from *The ACBL Junior Camp*, 451.14. Originally reported in *The Times of London*.
Author: Andrew Robson (UK)

Other finalists:

- Martin Schaltz & Andreas Marquardsen (Denmark) European Youth Championships, Torquay. From *A Danish Defense*, 453.14
 Author: Jens Otto "Charles" Pedersen
- Andrea Boldrini (Sicily) at 8th European University Championships, 464.2
 Author: Christer Andersson (Sweden)
- Szymon Kapala and Lukasz Brede at 2003 World Junior Pairs 464.6
 Author: Henrik Røn
- Olivier Bessis & Godefroy de Tessières (France) at 9th World Junior Teams, Paris. From *The Daily Bulletin*
 Author: Brian Senior

This was a beautiful false-card and quick thinking by declarer not only to realize the significance of dummy's 9 in the suit, but how East would be tempted into returning the trick conceded, as well as diverting the club switch.

The False-Card

By Andrew Robson, London

Ophir Reshef found a great false-card on this deal.

Dealer East. NS Vul.

	♠ A Q	
	♥ 9 7 5 4	
	♦ K Q J 8 7	
	♣ A 6	
♠ J 6 4 3 2		♠ 9 7 5
♥ 6		♥ A J 10 8 2
♦ 9 4 2		♦ A
♣ K 10 7 2		♣ Q J 9 8
	♠ K 10 8	
	♥ K Q 3	
	♦ 10 6 5 3	
	♣ 5 4 3	

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

North-South really belong in a part-score - two no trumps is their best-scoring spot, but an aggressive auction such as the one shown is quite reasonable. What would you expect the fate of the contract to be? Well, on a spade lead by West declarer drives out the diamond ace, and the defence must play clubs to hold declarer to nine tricks. On a heart lead and club shift, or on a club lead at trick one, declarer cannot make more than eight tricks. Agreed?

Well, consider East's problem if his partner leads a heart to trick one. The obvious solution is to go up with the ace; if no honour appears, shift to clubs and hope for the best. Nice logic, but...

Ophir Reshef was sitting South and on the auction shown above he was treated to a heart lead. Gauging the situation accurately, he called for a low heart from dummy, and when East put up the ace he dropped the queen! East sniffed the air suspiciously for a few minutes then took the bait and returned a low heart, letting Ophir run this to dummy's nine and collect his ten tricks for all 15 matchpoints out of 15.

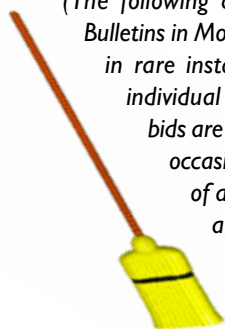
!! REMINDER !!

Your 2004 membership is now due. If you are not currently paid up, please forward payment to Stuart Stavely at the address/fax number on page 1.

AMERICAN SWEEP!

By Brent Manley, Memphis, TN
 Mark Horton, Romford, UK
 Brian Senior, Nottingham, UK
 and Knut Kjærnsrod, Tored, Norway

(The following deals have been culled from the Daily Bulletins in Monte Carlo, edited by Brent Manley. Except in rare instances, the Bulletin articles did not have individual bylines. One small quibble – conventional bids are annotated, but seldom explained. We have occasionally re-edited a piece slightly, their order of appearance has been made chronological, and we've added bits for continuity. The last three deals are from the New Orleans Daily Bulletins, edited by Henry Francis and Brent Manley.)



By now you will likely know that the USA won all three events in Monte Carlo for which qualification was necessary: the Bermuda Bowl, the Venice Cup, and the Seniors Bowl. Just in case you thought the USA was waning as a bridge power, you now know better! The Transnational Teams, open to all, was taken by Italy. Like all good stories, we'll start at the beginning.

These Championships were seen as fairly competitive at the top, with USAI, Italy and Norway being fancied in the Bermuda Bowl, Germany, China and USAI seen as co-favourites in the Venice Cup, and Indonesia, France and USAI looking strong in the Seniors Bowl. Longer odds were being offered on Sweden and Poland in the Bermuda Bowl, the Netherlands in the Venice Cup, and Denmark in the Seniors.

It would, the pundits thought, be a surprise if the winners came from outside that group of teams. In the Transnational, on the other hand, there were a dozen or more teams that could take the title.

The Round Robins

Day I

We are pretty sure that Norwegian Vikings reached Vinland (Newfoundland) a thousand years ago. It is more dubious if they reached Bermuda, but our modern bridge Vikings attacked the Atlantic island in the opening match of the Championships with the same fury that their ancestors would have used. When the warriors left the battlefield, the Bermudians were beaten 25-0. On this board, Terje Aa saved himself from being squeezed to flatten the board.

Bermuda Bowl. RRI, Bermuda v. Norway.

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

<p>♠ 9 7 6 5 3 ♥ Q 9 3 ♦ 8 ♣ A K Q J</p> <p>♠ 10 4 ♥ J 10 7 5 4 ♦ K Q ♣ 10 7 5 2</p>	<p>♠ A J 8 2 ♥ K 2 ♦ 10 9 6 3 2 ♣ 6 4</p> <p>♠ K Q ♥ A 8 6 ♦ A J 7 5 4 ♣ 9 8 3</p>
--	--

In the Open Room, Boye Brogeland went two down in three no trumps after a heart lead to the queen and king, ducked, and a heart continuation.

In the Closed Room, the Bermudian South ended in four spades after a transfer sequence. Glenn Grotheim led the king of diamonds to the ace, and the spade king was taken by East's ace. The club shift was won in dummy, and a spade to the queen was followed by a diamond ruff. A spade went to Aa's eight while South shed a diamond. This was the position:

<p>♠ — ♥ J 10 7 5 ♦ — ♣ 10 7 5</p>	<p>♠ 9 ♥ Q 9 3 ♦ — ♣ A K Q</p>	<p>♠ J ♥ K 2 ♦ 10 9 6 ♣ 4</p>
<p>♠ — ♥ A 8 6 ♦ J 7 ♣ 9 8</p>		

If you do not consider the consequences properly, you cash the spade knave and exit with a club or diamond. Look what happens then – you end up helplessly squeezed in the red suits on the run of the clubs.

Aa instead led the ten of diamonds, trumped in dummy, and ruffed the third club. He then played a diamond to the knave and had a diamond to cash when in with the king of hearts. Well defended. Two down and a pushed board.

The same deal was also of interest in a Senior Bowl match:

Seniors Bowl. RRI. France v. Indonesia

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

West	North	East	South
Budirahardia	Adad	Sacul	Aujaleu
—	—	Pass	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
West	North	East	South
Mari	Lasut	Leenhardt	Manoppo
—	—	Pass	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Both Souths declared three no trumps on the lead of a low heart. Aujaleu put up dummy's queen and ducked when that was headed by the king. Sacul returned a heart and the suit was cleared. Aujaleu played the spade queen to the ace and Sacul switched to a diamond to the ace and king. Aujaleu cashed the king of spades, then the clubs, and conceded down two for minus 100.

Mari also led a low heart but Manoppo played low from dummy, winning the king with his ace. Manoppo played a

spade honour and Leenhardt won and switched to the diamond ten for the ace and queen. Manoppo cashed the spade, then crossed to a club to play another spade. There was still time for the defence to switch back to hearts, but when a diamond was continued and declarer played low he had his ninth trick; plus 400 and 11 IMPs to Indonesia.

Next year, not so far away now, the European Championships will be staged alongside a huge bridge festival in Malmö, Sweden. Here in Monaco, the second round of the Bermuda Bowl featured an all-Scandinavian encounter between the country that will host the Championships and their neighbours, Norway, runners-up in this event last time. A lot of the smart money is on Norway going one better this time and, as you will see, they were in no mood to take prisoners.

Bermuda Bowl. RR2. Sweden v. Norway.

Board 18. Dealer East. NS Vul.

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ K 9 6 3 ♥ 5 3 ♦ 8 ♣ Q J 8 7 5 3</p> <p>♠ 8 5 ♥ J 8 6 ♦ A Q 10 7 4 2 ♣ 6 4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">♠ A 10 4 2 ♥ K Q 10 2 ♦ K 9 ♣ K 9 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ Q J 7 ♥ A 9 7 4 ♦ J 6 5 3 ♣ A 10</p>
--	--

West	North	East	South
Gustawsson	Sælensminde	Morath	Brogeland
—	—	1 NT	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

South led the spade queen and declarer failed to divine the diamond position, finishing one down for minus 50. At the other table:

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Lindqvist	Helness	Fredin
—	—	1 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Same contract, same lead. Helness ducked the first spade, won the second, and played a heart to the jack. When that held he played a second heart and South thought for a very long time before ducking. In isolation that is a mistake, as declarer can now arrive at nine tricks by picking up the diamonds. Of course, he was not going to do so, but many in the Vugraph audience believed he would, including a commentator or two. So, in the end it was just another flat board.

Imagine if East had been holding the king, nine, eight of diamonds. That would have been embarrassing in the comparison.

The first day ended with USA2 atop the Bermuda Bowl standings, USA1 heading the Venice Cup, and Indonesia leading the way in the Seniors.

Day 2

Bermuda Bowl. RR5. USA1 v. USA2

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 9 6 4 3 ♥ K ♦ A 3 ♣ A Q 8 6 5 3</p> <p>♠ K Q 2 ♥ 10 7 4 2 ♦ K 6 4 2 ♣ 10 4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">♠ A J 8 ♥ J 5 3 ♦ J 10 5 ♣ K J 9 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ 10 7 5 ♥ A Q 9 8 6 ♦ Q 9 8 7 ♣ 2</p>
---	---

West	North	East	South
Landen	Soloway	Rajadhyaksha	Hamman
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Landen and Rajadhyaksha (who will henceforth be referred to as Pratap, his given name), took all their tricks against this unfortunate contract, and Soloway was down three for minus 150.

At the other table, Wolff forced the defence to make an early decision, to their detriment.

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Wolff	Meckstroth	Morse
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Meckstroth led the jack of diamonds to the queen, king and ace, and Wolff shot the diamond three right back. Meckstroth won the ten and was at the crossroads. He needed to play spades, but after some thought he exited with a low heart. Wolff went up with dummy's ace, dropping his singleton king, cashed the queen for a spade pitch, then played two more rounds of diamonds, discarding spades.

Meckstroth ruffed the fourth diamond, but it was with a natural trump trick. Wolff lost three trump tricks, a diamond and a spade. Plus 90 gave USA2 a 6-IMP gain.

Bermuda Bowl. RR5. USA1 v. USA2

Board 14. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 3 ♥ K J 8 4 ♦ K J 7 6 2 ♣ K 4 2</p> <p>♠ A K J 4 ♥ Q 9 7 5 2 ♦ Q 8 3 ♣ 8</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">♠ 10 5 2 ♥ A 10 6 ♦ A 9 5 ♣ A Q 9 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♠ Q 9 8 7 6 ♥ 3 ♦ 10 4 ♣ J 10 7 5 3</p>
---	---

West	North	East	South
Landen	Soloway	Pratap	Hamman
—	—	1 NT	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Soloway got off to the aggressive lead of a low diamond, ducked by Landen to his queen. He immediately played a low trump to the ten, taking the right view there. Then a spade to the jack, a heart to the ace, and a spade to the ace. Soloway ruffed, cashed the heart king, and exited with the diamond king.

Landen won the ace, played a spade to hand, and ran trumps. This effected a double squeeze on the hapless defenders, Landen scoring three tricks with the ace, queen, nine of clubs in the end game. Plus 450.

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Wolff	Meckstroth	Morse
—	—	1 NT	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

With Meckstroth, East, as declarer, Morse led the club five to the king and ace. Meckstroth tried ace and a low heart to the queen. Wolff took the king and played his spade to the two, six and jack. A third round of trumps put Wolff in again, with the heart jack. This time he played the diamond seven.

It's clear that if Meckstroth ducks this, he gets home. However, not believing Wolff would underlead the diamond king, he rose with the ace and played the six of clubs from hand, upon which Morse followed with the three, having squandered the seven on an earlier round of trumps.

Again Meckstroth was in a position to make the contact by discarding a diamond on the club, and another on the club queen. He could then ruff a diamond to dummy to pull the last trump. He'd score three spades, three hearts, a diamond and three clubs.

Still not believing, Meckstroth instead ruffed the club, pulled the last trump, and in desperation led a diamond, hoping for an endplay and defensive error. Wolff gratefully took four diamond tricks for down three, Meckwell minus 150.

As Bob Hamman so often says, "The best are merely bad, the rest are really terrible."

Venice Cup RR5. Germany v. USA2
Board 13. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ 7 5 4	
♥ A J 8	
♦ A J 5 2	
♣ A J 6	
♠ Q 10 8 3	♠ J 9 2
♥ 5 2	♥ Q 9 6 4
♦ Q 9 6 3	♦ K 10 8 7
♣ 9 8 3	♣ 7 4
	♠ A K 6
	♥ K 10 7 3
	♦ 4
	♣ K Q 10 5 2

West	North	East	South
Reim	Mancuso	Nehmert	Rogers
—	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

The first Venice Cup match to appear on VuGraph featured Germany and USA2. The German team certainly looked the part in their team uniforms (however, I am reliably informed they shrink when washed!). It proved to be an interesting, if not flawless, encounter with the Americans getting the big swings while Germany kept collecting bits and pieces.

A heart lead gave declarer twelve tricks. Plus 690 to USA2. At the other table...

West	North	East	South
Wittes	Auken	Cohen	von Arnim
—	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	4 ♦
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	6 ♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

This was a very playable contract. In isolation, the right play in hearts is to play East for the queen, as you can also pick up queen, nine to four in her hand. However, the best play on the hand is to play West for the queen of hearts, intending to use the jack and ace of hearts as entries for a dummy reversal. So, win the spade lead, play ace and ruff a diamond, king of clubs and a club to the jack to ensure they break, then diamond ruff, heart to jack, diamond ruff, heart to ace, and ace of clubs drawing the last trump. The major suit kings make twelve tricks. If the queen of heart drops, thirteen tricks are made.

Declarer won the spade lead, played a club to the ace and a club to the king. Now she played a diamond to the ace and a second diamond, on which East played the king. Declarer can still get home now by crossing to dummy with a trump and running the jack of hearts - she would need to finesse the nine later if East covers - but on this day you just knew that the slam swing could only go one way. A heart to the jack saw East win and that gave USA2 a 13 IMP pick up.

Venice Cup RR5. Germany v. USA2
Board 15. Dealer South. NS Vul.

♠ 6	
♥ K 5 4 2	
♦ A J 10 6 4 2	
♣ A 2	
♠ K 10 9 5	♠ A 2
♥ Q 10 8	♥ J 7 3
♦ 9 7 5 3	♦ Q 8
♣ 6 3	♣ K Q 9 8 7 4
	♠ Q J 8 7 4 3
	♥ A 9 6
	♦ K
	♣ J 10 5

West	North	East	South
Reim	Mancuso	Nehmert	Rogers
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the three of clubs and declarer finished two off. Minus 200.

West	North	East	South
Wittes	Auken	Cohen	Von Arnim
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

So, North-South had reached the game that might make, but the general view was that declarer would go down unless East led a low club, winning the high club lead in hand and playing the ace and jack of diamonds. However, Sabine looked further ahead.

Suppose you follow that line and the diamonds are three-three? When the defenders take the queen of diamonds they can switch to a heart. Declarer cannot afford to duck, as that will risk the loss of two spades, a heart, a diamond and a club. So you win in hand and cash the diamonds - but the last one will squeeze the dummy! You will be down to:

♠ Q J 8
♥ A
♦ —
♣ J 10

and will have no safe discard.

So, Sabine won the club lead with the ace and played a heart to the nine, eventually playing to drop the queen of diamonds doubleton. This tremendous effort was worth all of the 13 IMPs it earned. USA2 had won an exciting match by 43-39 IMPs, 16-14 VP.

Italy, Chinese Taipei and Denmark led the Bermuda Bowl, the Venice Cup and the Seniors Bowl respectively at the conclusion of the second day's play.

Day 3

Bermuda Bowl. RR8. USA2 v. Egypt Board 21. Dealer North. NS Vul.

	♠ 6 5	
	♥ Q 7 6 3	
	♦ K 10 6 5 4	
	♣ 6 5	
♠ 10 8 7 3 2		♠ K Q 9 4
♥ J		♥ 9 8 4 2
♦ 9		♦ 7
♣ J 9 7 4 3 2		♣ A K Q 8
	♠ A J	
	♥ A K 10 5	
	♦ A Q J 8 3 2	
	♣ 10	

West	North	East	South
Naguib	Wolff	A. Sadek	Morse
—	Pass	1 ♣	Double
2 NT	Pass	3 ♣	3 ♦
3 ♠	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

USA2 had felt, with some justification, that Lady Luck had not been on their side in the slam zone. That feeling was ameliorated in their match against Egypt.

Morse must have regretted missing the odds-on slam, breathing a sigh of relief when the nasty trump split materialized. Only two rounds of clubs at the beginning would allow the slam to make - South gets the ruff, plays the other three hearts from his hand, enters dummy with a diamond and pulls the last trump, shedding the jack of spades. That would be twelve tricks (and poor defence, obviously). Morse recorded plus 650.

Tarek Sadek and Waleed ElAhmady did better in the auction, but the result was not at all satisfactory to Egyptian partisans.

West	North	East	South
Landen	T. Sadek	Pratap	El Ahmady
—	Pass	1 ♣	Double
4 ♣	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	4 ♥	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	6 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Tarek's five diamond bid improved the South hand so much that El Ahmady blew straight into the good slam. The four-one trump split doomed the contract, however. Pratap Rajadhyaksha started with the club king and switched accurately to the king of spades. El Ahmady won the ace and cashed the heart ace and king, getting the bad news in trumps.

He could have cashed out for down one, but there was one small chance to make twelve tricks. If East held both outstanding diamonds, South could enter dummy with a diamond, ruff a club, cash his last heart and return to dummy to pull East's fourth heart, discarding the spade jack. It was not to be, however; and El Ahmady finished two down for minus 200 and a 13 IMP swing to USA2.

When things are not going well, it can be difficult to break out of your slump. Through the first few rounds of the Bermuda Bowl, Sweden's team seemed to be experiencing just such a problem. It was a strong team that was projected to qualify for the knockout phase of the competition, but half-way through the round robin, they were in serious danger of not making the cut. On the following deal from their match against USA1, Peter Fredin got off to an unusual lead against a heart game, but the defence survived anyway.

Bermuda Bowl. RRI0. Sweden v. USA1

(See top of next page.)

The contract in both rooms was four hearts, after a one diamond opening by West (Strong Club Systems). In the Closed Room, Soloway, South, started with a low spade, giving Nyström no chance at ten tricks, and he finished one off for minus 100.

Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.

♠ K 10 8 3 ♥ A 7 3 ♦ Q 8 7 4 ♣ 10 6 ♠ A Q 6 ♥ Q 9 6 2 ♦ A 2 ♣ 9 8 7 4 ♠ J 5 4 2 ♥ J 4 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ K Q 5 2	♠ 9 7 ♥ K 10 8 5 ♦ K J 10 5 ♣ A J 3
--	--

In the Open Room, however, Fredin led a low club from the South hand, giving Meckstroth a chance. Declarer played a heart to the queen and ace at trick two, and won the club return with the ace. He played a spade to the queen and king, and the spade exit was won by the ace over the nine and jack.

At that point, Meckstroth was in a position to make the contract. He had to guess the trump layout to do that, and when he led a heart to the ten and jack, Fredin had a club to cash for one down and a push.

Some of the world's finest declarers failed to make game on the following deal. Nevena Senior, playing for England against India, showed that game could not be defeated if declarer took proper care.

Venice Cup. RR8 (Same deals as BB RR10). England v. India. Board 24. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

♠ 7 4 ♥ K 9 4 2 ♦ 10 6 5 4 3 ♣ J 8 ♠ Q 10 5 ♥ A Q 8 ♦ 8 7 ♣ A K Q 9 2 ♠ K J 8 6 2 ♥ J ♦ K Q J ♣ 10 7 4 3	♠ A 9 3 ♥ 10 7 6 5 3 ♦ A 9 2 ♣ 6 5
---	---

West	North	East	South
Penfold	Shivdasani	Senior	Deora
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	1 ♠
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣ ¹	Pass
3 ♥ ²	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Checkback
2. Maximum with three hearts

South made the normal lead of the diamond king. Senior took the first necessary step by ducking this trick. She won the diamond continuation and played a heart to the jack, queen and king. North switched to a spade. Although the contract can still be made on the actual lie by ducking the spade, Senior saw that that was unnecessarily risky as well (if spades were six-one).

Accordingly, Senior rose with the spade ace and played the top clubs, overruffing on the third round. Now she ruffed her losing diamond, cashed the heart ace, ruffed a club and drew the last trump, leaving South with nothing but spades. Now it was safe to lead a spade towards the queen, South being forced to give dummy the final trick for plus 420.

Bermuda Bowl. RRI0. Sweden v. USAI

The contract at both tables on the following deal was three no trumps by East. In the Closed Room, Hamman and Soloway did not err in the defence, holding declarer to eight tricks.

Board 29. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ Q 8 ♥ A J 8 4 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ 9 8 5 2 ♠ 7 5 ♥ K 9 3 ♦ A J 10 8 2 ♣ J 10 6 ♠ J 10 3 2 ♥ 10 7 6 5 ♦ Q 7 ♣ Q 7 4	♠ A K 9 6 4 ♥ Q 2 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ A K 3
--	--

In the Open Room, Fredin started with the heart six to the three, eight and queen. Meckstroth play a low diamond from hand toward the dummy, and Fredin played low, a fatal error. Meckstroth put in the jack and Lindqvist made the good play of ducking, but to no avail. Meckstroth simply played a low diamond off dummy. Lindqvist won the king and played a club, but it was too late for the defence. Meckstroth had two spades, a heart, four diamonds and two clubs for nine tricks and plus 600.

It's a different story if Fredin puts up the diamond queen, giving Meckstroth a Hobson's choice. He can win the ace, but so long as Lindqvist ducks the next diamond, the defence can hold Meckstroth to two tricks in each suit. If Meckstroth ducks the diamond queen, Fredin continues hearts to set up five tricks for the defence.

At the end of Day 3, Italy and Chinese Taipei maintained their leads, while France took over the lead in the Seniors.

Day 4

Senior Bowl. RR9 (Same deals as BB RR12). Argentina/Brazil v. USAI. Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

♠ A 4 ♥ A J 10 7 6 ♦ 7 5 4 ♣ A J 5 ♠ Q 3 2 ♥ Q 9 8 4 3 ♦ 2 ♣ 10 6 4 2 ♠ 6 5 ♥ K 5 2 ♦ K Q J 9 8 ♣ K Q 9	♠ K J 10 9 8 7 ♥ — ♦ A 10 6 3 ♣ 8 7 3
--	--

West	North	East	South
Hayden	Chagas	Bates	Assumpção
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	1 ♥	2 ♠	Double
3 ♠	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West	North	East	South
Monsegur	Baze	Mooney	Kasle
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	1 ♥	2 ♠	Double
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Both Norths declared four hearts on a spade lead. Both won and played a heart to the king at trick two, discovering the bad break. For the USA, Grant Baze continued with a heart to the jack and a diamond up, winning the king when Guillermo Mooney ducked. The queen of diamonds lost to the ace and Mooney gave Monsegur a ruff. One more trick in spades was all the defence could muster: plus 420 for USAI.

Gabriel Chagas saw the danger of conceding two diamond ruffs if they were four-one, so played a spade at trick three to cut defensive transportation. Garey Hayden won the spade, collected his diamond ruff, then gave Chagas a ruff-sluff. Chagas ruffed in the short hand, discarding his third diamond, led to the heart ten, then crossed to a club to ruff a diamond, thus shortening his trumps to the same length as Hayden's.

Now Chagas could cross to dummy with another club and run diamonds. Hayden could ruff or not, as it suited him, but could not score another trick. Plus 420 for a push.

Senior Bowl. RR9. Argentina/Brazil v. USAI.

Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.

♠ A 9 5 4	♠ Q 8 6
♥ A K	♥ J 9 2
♦ K 3	♦ Q 5
♣ A K Q 6 5	♣ 10 9 8 4 2
♠ J 10 7	♠ K 3 2
♥ Q 8 5 4	♥ 10 7 6 3
♦ A J 8 4 2	♦ 10 9 7 6
♣ J	♣ 7 3

Baze-Kasle bid to three no trumps, making it exactly on a club lead when declarer was able to establish a third spade trick for his side.

Chagas declared four spades on the (what was to prove unfortunate) lead of the club ten. He won the queen and played a spade to the king followed by a diamond off dummy to West's ace. Back came another diamond to Chagas' king, and he noted the fall of the queen on his left. He played ace and another trump, splitting them out and losing to East's queen. East got out a heart to Chagas' king.

Now Chagas cashed the thirteenth spade, squeezing East. He could not afford to let a club go for fear of Chagas setting up his fifth club, so he correctly discarded a heart. Chagas had an answer for that – he cashed the heart ace and exited with the club five. Poor East had to play away from his nine-four-two of clubs into declarer's ace-king-six. Plus 420 and 1 IMP to the South Americans.

When Eric Kokish spotted Alfredo Versace in the VuGraph Theatre just before the start of Italy's match with Norway, Kokish asked why Versace and Lauria were not playing.

Versace explained that it was important for the new pair on the team – Fulvio Fantoni and Claudio Nunes – to gain some experience in tough matches. "Besides," Versace said, "we never beat Norway anyway."

He was right! In a tough, well-played match, Norway won 27-22.

Bermuda Bowl. RRI3. Italy v. Norway

Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.

♠ Q 9 4 2	♠ A 7 6
♥ Q 6 4	♥ A K 3
♦ 10 9 5 4 3	♦ A Q 7 6
♣ A	♣ K J 9
♠ K	♠ J 10 8 5 3
♥ 10 9 8 5 2	♥ J 7
♦ K J 8	♦ 2
♣ 10 6 4 2	♣ Q 8 7 5 3

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Fantoni	Sælensminde	Nunes
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	2 ♠	Double	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Nunes led the spade jack and Saelensminde was soon wrapping up eleven tricks for plus 660.

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Helness	Bocchi	Helgemo
—	—	—	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♥	3 NT	Pass
Pass	4 ♠	Double	4 ♠
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

Geir Helgemo's two spade bid showed a weak, two-suited hand with either the black suits or the red suits. Either way, Tor Helness knew his side had a great fit – and the vulnerability was right for a sacrifice.

The Italians could have bid four no trumps and pushed the board, but they did even better. Girorgio Duboin started with the diamond king, then switched to the king of spades at trick two. He then played a heart to Bocchi's king, and Bocchi continued with ace and a third spade. Helgemo won that trick in dummy and ruffed a diamond, then played a club to the ace and ruffed another diamond.

When Helgemo played the jack of hearts from hand, Bocchi made the key play - he ducked. If Bocchi had taken the king, he would have been forced to help Helgemo to at least two more tricks - the play of the diamond ace would set up dummy's ten and a low club would have allowed Helgemo to win a trick with the queen. Helgemo would then put Bocchi in with a club, and he would be in the same position as before. A heart to dummy's queen would allow Helgemo to play a fourth round of diamonds, again establishing the ten.

By ducking the heart, Bocchi held Helgemo to just one more trick - a club ruff in dummy - and he finished four down for minus 800 and a loss of 4 IMPs.

Norway gained the lead in the match on the following deal, when Boye Brogeland judged the auction well at one table and Helgemo defended well at the other.

Bermuda Bowl. RRI3. Italy v. Norway.

Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ 7	
♥ 8 7 6 5	
♦ 10 8 5	
♣ 10 8 6 4 3	
♠ K 6 5 2	♠ Q 9 8 4
♥ Q 2	♥ J 10 9 3
♦ Q 2	♦ A K J 9
♣ A K J 9 5	♣ 7
♠ A J 10 3	
♥ A K 4	
♦ 7 6 4 3	
♣ Q 2	

West	North	East	South
Brogeland	Fantoni	Sælensminde	Nunes
1 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Sælensminde's three club bid showed a four-four-four-one hand with a singleton club. Fantoni led a heart and Brogeland had an easy time, coming to eleven tricks and plus 660.

In the Open Room, Duboin-Bocchi were warned that spades may not be breaking, but they opted for the spade game anyway.

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Helness	Bocchi	Helgemo
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦ ¹	Double
1 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Hearts
2. Takeout (spades and diamonds)

Helness started with a normal diamond lead, giving Duboin a chance. He ran diamonds, discarding his hearts as Helness ruffed in with his singleton spade. The heart return was ruffed in hand by Duboin, who then played the ace, king, and a third club, ruffing in dummy with the queen.

Helgemo gave his play careful consideration, then discarded a heart. Then when Duboin played a spade from dummy, Helgemo could rise with the ace and play the jack back, ensuring four trump tricks and the set.

Had Helgemo overruffed the queen with the ace, Duboin could have ruffed the ace of hearts return, then ruffed a club with the nine in dummy. Helgemo would have had to either let that hold, or give Duboin an entry to dummy with a heart to take the trump finesse.

In their match against China in the Venice Cup, Francine Cimon, also warned of the four-one spade break by an opposing takeout double, won the diamond lead and led a spade immediately. Not sure of how many heart tricks would cash, South played the three and declarer won the king. Now Cimon was home - she ran diamonds, pitching her hearts, and all South could do was take her three trump tricks.

There is a winning line that does not rely on a defensive slip - win the opening lead and play two more diamonds, discarding one heart. Then lead a spade from dummy. If South ducks, ace of clubs and a club ruff, followed by the fourth diamond, limits declarer's losses to three trump tricks.

Alternatively, a club to the ace and a spade to the queen limits the defence to two trump tricks and a heart.

As Day 4 drew to a close, Italy had opened up a bit of space over USAI in the Bermuda Bowl and China now led the Venice Cup, while USAI had forged to the lead in the Seniors Bowl.

Day 5

Canada had been playing very well all week and were lying third when they met Chinese Taipei on Vugraph. As we took our seats in the YuGraph Theatre, pen and paper in hand, the Canadian captain asked us to go gently on his players, but as the match unfolded, it quickly became clear that this was not a day on which any of the players would enhance their reputations. The match brought to mind a comment the Duke of Wellington made about his troops on the eve of the Battle of Waterloo, "I don't know if they frighten the enemy, but they terrify me."

Bermuda Bowl. RRI5. Canada v. Chinese Taipei

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ Q J 8	
♥ 5 2	
♦ J 9 7 4 3 2	
♣ 7 2	
♠ 10	♠ A 9 6 4 2
♥ A Q 10 4	♥ K J 9 7
♦ A K Q 8 6 5	♦ —
♣ J 4	♣ Q 10 6 5
♠ K 7 5 3	
♥ 8 6 3	
♦ 10	
♣ A K 9 8 3	

West	North	East	South
D.Wolpert	H.L.Yang	Czyzowicz	Ding-Ming
Huang	G.Wolpert	C.H.Wu	Demuy
—	Pass	1 ♠	2 ♣
2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

If the play record is accurate, the defence started with three rounds of clubs, declarer ruffing high on the table. (A simpler line is to discard on the third club, leaving you ten easy tricks, even if North holds four trumps.) Declarer now played ace and another diamond, ruffing low. South could overruff and play another club and the contract could no longer be made.

Declarer did not shine at the other table either. Vincent Demuy led a trump and declarer won in dummy to play two top diamonds, discarding spades. South ruffed and played three rounds of clubs, but declarer could ruff high, and with the remaining trumps dividing two-two, he had ten tricks and 11 IMPs.

Both declarers in six spades on the following deal went back to basics to get a count on the opponents' hands before making the crucial play.

Bermuda Bowl. RRI 6. China v. Norway

Board 23. Dealer South. Both Vul.

<p>♠ J 9 5 2 ♥ A 5 ♦ A J 10 ♣ A J 7 2</p> <p>♠ A 10 8 ♥ J 8 6 4 ♦ 6 5 ♣ Q 10 8 3</p> <p>♠ K Q 7 6 4 3 ♥ K 7 3 ♦ K 7 4 2 ♣ —</p>	<p>♠ — ♥ Q 10 9 2 ♦ Q 9 8 3 ♣ K 9 6 5 4</p>
---	---

West	North	East	South
Haojun	Sælensminde	Zejun	Brogeland
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	2 NT	Pass	4 ♣
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	5 ♥	Pass	6 ♦
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Haojun led a low club and Brogeland played low from dummy, ruffing in hand. He played a heart to dummy's ace, cashed the club ace, throwing a diamond, then played a spade to the king, ducked. Another spade brought out Haojun's ace, and Haojun continued with a third round of spades. On these three spades, East discarded a club, a diamond and another club.

Brogeland won the third spade in dummy with the jack, then played a heart to the king and ruffed a heart, then ruffed a club, bringing down East's king. When he played his final trump from hand, both defenders let their last heart go, and dummy threw the club jack. Everyone was down to three cards.

Brogeland knew East had no spades, four hearts and at least five clubs. As he had thrown a diamond early, that marked him with zero-four-four-five distribution. He went with the odds and finessed East for the diamond queen. Plus 1430. Well done.

At the other table, Zhong and Jie cue bid their way to the slam. It remained for Jie to make it.

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Zhong	Helness	Jie
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	4 ♣
Pass	4 ♦	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	5 ♣
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Jie also received a club lead. He went up with the ace, pitching a diamond, and played a spade to the king, ducked. Helgemo also won the second spade and got out a third, Helness also pitching two clubs and a diamond.

Jie ruffed a club, played a heart to the ace, ruffed another club, and played king and a heart, ruffing. The club king had also fallen from Helness, so Jie backed his judgment that East was zero-four-four-five, and also picked up the diamond queen after ace and a finesse. A noble push.

Bermuda Bowl. RRI 6. China v. Norway

Board 31. Dealer South. NS Vul.

<p>♠ 8 2 ♥ A Q J 7 6 ♦ J 9 6 ♣ K 10 2</p> <p>♠ Q 9 4 ♥ 8 2 ♦ A Q 10 2 ♣ A Q 8 7</p>	<p>♠ A K J 6 ♥ K 9 5 3 ♦ 5 4 ♣ 6 5 3</p> <p>♠ 10 7 5 3 ♥ 10 4 ♦ K 8 7 3 ♣ J 9 4</p>
---	---

West	North	East	South
Haojun	Sælensminde	Zejun	Brogeland
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♦	1 ♥	Double	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Despite finding partner with the heart stopper he himself had promised, there were not enough tricks, and declarer finished two off for minus 100.

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Zhong	Helness	Jie
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♣	1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Helgemo gave Helness all the information he needed – that he was short in hearts. Jie led the heart ten to the ace and Fu Zhong returned the jack, suggesting possession of the club king to partner. That information was available to Helness as well, so he tried the diamond finesse. When that worked it was clear sailing. He cashed the diamond ace, ruffed a dia-

mond, ruffed a heart, cashed the club ace, and ruffed another diamond. He could then ruff his last heart high and claim the ace-king of spades for ten tricks and 11 IMPs.

Note Helness' careful ruff of the diamond before ruffing any hearts to prevent South discarding a diamond from four-two-three-four distribution. Very nice indeed.

Italy had about a half-match lead over the USA1 team in the Bermuda Bowl, which in turn was more than a full match ahead of third. In the Venice Cup, it was a virtual four-way tie among USA1, the Netherlands, China and USA2. France had regained the lead in the Seniors.

Day 6

Careful play was also required on the next deal.

Senior Bowl. RRI1. Indonesia v. USA1.

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

<p>♠ A Q J 9 7 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ Q 10 9 6 ♣ 2</p>	<p>♠ 10 6 4 3 2 ♥ Q 7 4 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ K 8</p>
<p>♠ 8 ♥ A K J 10 5 ♦ A J 7 ♣ A Q 6 5</p>	<p>♠ K ♥ 9 6 2 ♦ K 8 5 ♣ J 10 9 7 4 3</p>

West	North	East	South
Budirahardja	Baze	Sacul	Kasle
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Double	2 ♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West	North	East	South
Woolsey	Lasut	Robinson	Manoppo
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Many Norths, facing passed partners, chose a weak jump overcall. Both our Norths here contented themselves with a simple one spade bid, however. Whereas Steve Robinson raised Woolsey, Denny Sacul chose to pass, then pass and bid only three heart after his partner's second double. Woolsey raised himself directly to game.

Both declarers won the club lead and drew two rounds of trumps before trying to ruff a club in dummy. Their care was rewarded by scoring ten tricks. That was plus 170 to Indonesia and plus 620 to the USA for a 10 IMP gain.

In the final round robin match of the Venice Cup, it was likely that the winner of the England-Sweden match would take the eighth and final qualifying spot. This was the decider.

Venice Cup. RRI7. England v. Sweden

Board 15. Dealer South. NS Vul.

<p>♠ Q 8 4 ♥ A Q J 10 5 ♦ 2 ♣ K Q 5 3</p>	<p>♠ J 9 3 2 ♥ 8 6 3 2 ♦ A J 10 ♣ A 4</p>
<p>♠ 10 ♥ K 9 ♦ K Q 9 7 6 4 3 ♣ J 10 2</p>	<p>♠ A K 7 6 5 ♥ 7 4 ♦ 8 5 ♣ 9 8 7 6</p>

West	North	East	South
Brunner	Andersson	Goldenfield	Larsson
3 ♦	3 ♥	4 ♦	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East's decision to bid only four diamonds came in for some criticism, but it left the Swedish declarer in a precarious contract that should have been defeated.

East led ace and another diamond. Attempting to maintain trump control, North played the queen of hearts from hand. West gratefully won the king, but failed to take advantage of her good fortune. Whereas a spade or heart continuation would have sunk North without a trace, West instead led the club two. Declarer, not being prescient, put the queen on this. East won the ace, and could still have scuppered the contract by playing another club to knock out the vital entry to declarer's hand, but she played a spade.

Declarer ducked the spade to the queen, drew trumps, and double-finessed the remaining spades for a stunning plus 620. Less the minus 300 in five diamonds doubled in the other room, that meant 8 IMPs to Sweden and a qualifying spot. One down in four hearts would have meant 9 IMPs to England and qualification for them instead.

The qualifiers for the knockout portion of the Championships were decided. First place would have its choice among the teams finishing fifth through eighth, then second among the remaining teams, and so on.

The quarterfinal matches in the Bermuda Bowl would be Italy v. Australia, USA1 v. Chinese Taipei, Poland v. USA2, and Norway v. Bulgaria. USA2 had blitzed their final match opponents to squeak in a single VP ahead of Canada (losers to Poland in the final match), who were devastated to finish ninth in such a fashion.

In the Venice Cup, China would face Sweden (who had battled England successfully in the final match for the last playoff spot), USA1 would play Chinese Taipei, and USA2 chose Canada, leaving the Netherlands to face Germany.

In the Seniors Bowl, it looked like a two-horse race, with USA1 leading France coming into the home stretch, with only three matches to go. There would be no knockout; the round robin winner would take the gold. It would prove to be USA1, followed to the wire by France and USA2 for the win, place and show honours.

The Knockout Portion

The Quarterfinals

USA2 had had an up-and-down battle in the round robin, being very well placed with a few rounds to go, then falling out of a qualifying spot, then blitzing the final opponent to qualify by a single Victory Point. Poland was not impressed, and duly chose them as opponents over Bulgaria. They lived to regret that decision.

Piotr Gawrys showed why he has been one of the world's top players for many years on this deal, and showed the Americans that he and Krysztof Jassem believe that, "vulnerability is for children."

Bermuda Bowl. Q-final Session 1. Poland v. USA2. Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

♠ Q J
 ♥ 8 6
 ♦ Q 10 9 5 4 3
 ♣ 9 3 2
 ♠ 4
 ♥ K J 10 2
 ♦ K J 7 6
 ♣ 10 6 5 4
 ♠ A 10 6 2
 ♥ A Q 7 4
 ♦ 8
 ♣ A K Q J
 ♠ K 9 8 7 5 3
 ♥ 9 5 3
 ♦ A 2
 ♣ 8 7

West	North	East	South
Landen	Gawrys	Pratap	Jassem
—	—	1 ♣	1 ♠
Double	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 ♠	Double	Redouble	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦	Double	6 ♥	Pass
Pas	Pass		

Notice that Jassem overcalled at unfavourable vulnerability on a king-high suit, where he was booked for minus 500 at the one-level if Pratap had had the nerve (gall?) to pass, and that Gawrys, with 5 HCP passed three times, but found two doubles!

With (he thought) diamonds and spades locked up by the defence, Jassem led a trump. Pratap won in the dummy, crossed to the spade ace and led a diamond up. Jassem ducked, of course, and have a little sympathy for Pratap. His LHO had overcalled at unfavourable, but his RHO had doubled the five diamond response to Blackwood. What was he to do, poor fellow? He put in the jack and down he went. He could ruff out the doubleton ace, but, barring a defensive error, could not get back to use it.

Gawrys did not err, of course, returning a trump to defeat the slam. Since Zawislak-Krupowicz had stopped in four hearts at the other table, that was 11 IMPs to Poland. Notice that because of the honour distribution in the round suits, six clubs would have made on a line of play similar to the one that occurred at Pratap's table.

A little later in the same session, with the USA having staged a rally and leading by 15 IMPs...

Bermuda Bowl. Q-final Session 1. Poland v. USA2. Board 12. Dealer West. NS Vul.

♠ A J 9 7
 ♥ 9
 ♦ Q J 10 8 6
 ♣ Q 7 4
 ♠ K 10 8 5 3
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ A K 5 3
 ♣ J 3
 ♠ 4 2
 ♥ A K 10 8 5 3
 ♦ —
 ♣ A 8 6 5 2
 ♠ Q 6
 ♥ J 7 4 2
 ♦ 9 7 4 2
 ♣ K 10 9

West	North	East	South
Landen	Gawrys	Pratap	Jassem
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Jassem led diamonds, the unbid suit, and must have been dismayed to see Pratap pitch both his losing spades away on dummy's diamond honours.

Pratap played ace and another club, Gawrys winning the queen and shifting to the heart nine. Declarer put in the ten, but Jassem withheld the jack, preserving his side's trump trick. Pratap scored plus 450, losing just a heart and a club.

At the other table, Zawislak-Krupowicz also reached four hearts and Morse led the club ten. Krupowicz won the ace when he could have ensured the contract by covering with the jack and ducking Wolff's queen; he then compounded the error by playing another club instead of a trump to dummy to dispose of his spades. Morse, given a second life, rose with the club king and led the spade queen. That gave the defenders two spades, a club and a trump trick; 11 IMPs to USA2.

Is there anyone you'd rather have declaring for you, if your life were on the line, than Jeff Meckstroth? Watch him bring home another 'impossible' game...

Bermuda Bowl. Q-final Session 2. USA1 v. Chinese Taipei. Board 23. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ 6 5
 ♥ J 7 6
 ♦ A K 7 3
 ♣ Q 10 6 4
 ♠ K 9 3 2
 ♥ A
 ♦ Q 9 8 4 2
 ♣ J 9 7
 ♠ A J 8 4
 ♥ 5 2
 ♦ 10 6 5
 ♣ A 8 3 2
 ♠ Q 10 7
 ♥ K Q 10 9 8 4 3
 ♦ J
 ♣ K 5

West	North	East	South
Nickell	Yang	Freeman	Chiu
Yen	Rodwell	Wu	Meckstroth
—	—	—	1 ♥
Pass	1 NT	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Nickell started with a low diamond and when Chiu went up with the ace, down went his chance to make the contract. Nickell-Freeman did not err, taking two spades, a heart and a club for plus 100.

Meckstroth, on the same lead, ducked it to his jack and led a trump. Yen won his heart ace and had to 'guess' what to do. He tried to give his partner a diamond ruff. Curtains!

When the Netherlands and Germany met in the quarterfinals of the Venice Cup, it meant that either the defenders or the previous winners would be gone by the time the semifinals rolled around.

Venice Cup. Q-final Session 6. Netherlands v. Germany. Board 81. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ A 6 5 3		
♥ J 7 3 2		
♦ A 10 7 5		
♣ 6		
♠ K 7	♠ 9 4 2	
♥ A K 9	♥ Q 8 5 4	
♦ 8 4 3 2	♦ J 9	
♣ J 10 5 3	♣ A 9 4 2	
	♠ Q J 10 8	
	♥ 10 6	
	♦ K Q 6	
	♣ K Q 8 7	

West	North	East	South
van Zwol	Auken	Arnolds	von Arnim
—	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 NT ¹	Pass	3 NT
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Spade raise

As Vriend and van der Pas had subsided in three spades at the other table, there would be a swing here whatever happened. The Dutch women were wide awake for so early in the day and after three rounds of hearts and a successful trump finesse, Carla Arnolds was not too hard pressed to rise with the ace of clubs and play a fourth heart to promote her spade nine to the setting trick. Six IMPs to the Netherlands.

In the Bermuda Bowl, Italy beat Australia, and would face Norway (according to Verscae, the team they "never beat"), winners over Bulgaria. The two USA teams would face each other in the second semifinal, having defeated Chinese Taipei and Poland, respectively.

In the Venice Cup, USA1 beat Chinese Taipei and would play their countrywomen, who had beaten Canada. China beat Sweden and would face the Netherlands, victors over Germany.

Interlude

Transnational Teams. Match 5. Fergani v. Miroglio. Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

	♠ 8 7	
	♥ K Q 9 3 2	
	♦ 10 5 4	
	♣ Q J 3	
♠ Q		♠ J 10 9 5 4 2
♥ J 10 8 7 6		♥ A
♦ Q 6		♦ J 9 2
♣ 10 9 7 5 2		♣ A 8 6
	♠ A K 6 3	
	♥ 5 4	
	♦ A K 8 7 3	
	♣ K 4	

West	North	East	South
Kowalski	Czyzowicz	Tuszynski	Wolpert
—	—	—	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	1 ♠	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Diego Brenner had doubled Nicolas l'Ecuyer in two spades at the other table. There was nothing to the play and the Brazilians beat it a trick for plus 100. It was up to their teammates to beat three no trumps and win a few IMPs.

Kowalski started with the spade queen, which Darren Wolpert allowed to hold. He switched to a heart which went to the king and ace, and Tuszynski continued the attack on spades. Wolpert won this and played king and another club, East winning the second. Tuszynski soldiered on with spades and the key moment arrived after Wolpert won the king.

When declarer cashed the diamond king, Kowalski played low and the defence was finished. Wolpert played as if he had the hand records, ducking a diamond to West's queen. He lost a trick in each suit for a spectacular plus 400 and 7 IMPs to the Canadians.

The Semifinals

Aggression, tactics, and philosophy showed up in the Bermuda Bowl semifinal between the two USA Open teams.

Bermuda Bowl. Semifinal Session 3. USA1 v. USA2. Board 48 Dealer West. EW Vul.

	♠ A K Q 8 5	
	♥ 10 8 7 5 2	
	♦ —	
	♣ 6 4 3	
♠ 6 3		♠ 9 7 4 2
♥ —		♥ 9 6 3
♦ Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5		♦ K 2
♣ K J 5		♣ A Q 10 7
	♠ J 10	
	♥ A K Q J 4	
	♦ A 4 3	
	♣ 9 8 2	

West	North	East	South
Hamman	Wolff	Soloway	Morse
3 ♠	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	5 ♠	Pass	5 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

You would get away with this against some players, but Bob Hamman is not one of them. A club lead meant one off. Note that Soloway could have helped Hamman find the lead by bidding four clubs. Had he done that, Wolff might well have passed four hearts for plus 420 to his side.

West	North	East	South
Landen	Rodwell	Pratap	Meckstroth
3 NT ¹	Double ²	Pass	6 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Minor suit preempt
2. Major takeout

Landen led a diamond, perhaps trying to give partner a ruff, and lost 14 IMPs for his passivity. If Pratap were ruffing a diamond, why had he not doubled six hearts? Perhaps he didn't know where the second trick was coming from.

Pratap also had a chance for the lead-directing four club bid. He had even less jeopardy than Soloway, since his partner had essentially bid at the four-level on his own. Who knows what Meckstroth would have done over that? Four hearts would seem pathetic, wouldn't it?

There were no surprises in the end. The semifinal winners were USAI in both main events. China defeated the Netherlands in the other Venice Cup semifinal, and Italy beat Norway in the other Bermuda Bowl semifinal, putting the lie to Versace's earlier comment to Kokish about never beating Norway.

The Finals

It would be a classic Bermuda Bowl final, Italy v. USAI, the two best teams in the world, from the two nations with all but a handful of the Bermuda Bowl titles between them, battling for the championship of the world.

The Venice Cup would be a classic of a different kind, with Kathie Wei's team battling her former students from the People's Republic. Additionally, to add further interest, the USA's Betty Ann Kennedy had won the first and second Venice Cups in 1974 and 1976. Could she add a third almost 30 years after the first? Both Wei-Sender and Kennedy said this would be their last Venice Cup, win or lose.

Bermuda Bowl Final. Session 2. Italy v. USAI

Board 30. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

	♠ K 10 6	
	♥ J 4 3	
	♦ A Q	
	♣ K Q J 8 7	
♠ Q J		♠ A 5 4 3 2
♥ 9 7 5		♥ Q 10 2
♦ K 9 8 6 3		♦ J 7
♣ A 9 6		♣ 10 5 3
	♠ 9 8 7	
	♥ A K 8 6	
	♦ 10 5 4 2	
	♣ 4 2	

The Bermuda Bowl was a back-and-forth affair, with both teams holding substantial leads at different points.

West	North	East	South
Nunes	Rodwell	Fantoni	Meckstroth
—	—	Pass	Pass
Pass	1 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Fantoni led the two of spades to the jack and king. Rodwell led the club king to Nunes' ace. He cashed the spade queen, then exited with a low diamond, which Rodwell won with the queen. That gave West 10 HCP: he could not have the heart queen. Rodwell cashed the two top clubs, getting the good news there, crossed to the heart ace, and played a diamond to his ace.

On the next two clubs, East had to come down to a singleton spade ace to keep his heart guard, whereupon Rodwell exited with a spade to take the last two heart tricks. Plus 180. Rodwell won an IMP, since Bocchi-Duboin had made 140 in hearts. It was only an IMP – big deal.

Bermuda Bowl Final. Session 3. Italy v. USAI

Board 44. Dealer West. NS Vul.

	♠ A 8 7 6 2	
	♥ 6 2	
	♦ 7 6 4 3 2	
	♣ A	
♠ J 5 4		♠ K 9
♥ K 9 7 5		♥ A J 10 8
♦ Q J 5		♦ A 8
♣ K Q 6		♣ J 8 5 3 2
	♠ Q 10 3	
	♥ Q 4 3	
	♦ K 10 9	
	♣ 10 9 7 4	

West	North	East	South
Versace	Rodwell	Lauria	Meckstroth
1 ♣	1 ♠	2 ♣	2 ♠
Pass	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West	North	East	South
Hamman	Bocchi	Soloway	Duboin
Pass	Pass	1 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Lauria was an easy one down in four hearts, losing a trick in each suit. Soloway therefore stood to gain 10 IMPs if he could locate the heart queen. Duboin led the club ten and Soloway ducked in dummy to Bocchi's ace. Bocchi switched to a spade, ducked to the queen, and ducked the spade ten on the way back.

Soloway cashed dummy's clubs and tried the diamond queen, just in case Bocchi covered. When Bocchi played low, Soloway went up with the ace and ran his remaining clubs. On each club, Bocchi discarded diamonds, giving Soloway a complete count of the hand. He had five spades by inference and had shown up with five diamonds and one club. Therefore he had two hearts.

At this level, the game-within-a-game is bluff and double bluff. How much credence was Soloway to give to Bocchi's discards. Eventually, he led the heart jack to the king and another to the ten. Two off, and 2 IMPs to Italy.

Bermuda Bowl Final. Session 5. Italy v. USA I

Board 70. Dealer East. EW Vul.

♠ 5 2 ♥ A J 7 2 ♦ 9 6 4 2 ♣ A J 7	♠ K J 3 ♥ Q 8 3 ♦ A K 5 ♣ K Q 4 3	♠ 7 6 4 ♥ K 6 5 4 ♦ Q J 7 ♣ 10 9 8	♠ A Q 10 9 8 ♥ 10 9 ♦ 10 8 3 ♣ 6 5 2
--	--	---	---

West	North	East	South
Versace	Rodwell	Lauria	Meckstroth
—	—	Pass	Pass
Pass	1 ♣ ¹	Pass	1 ♦ ²
Pass	1 NT	Pass	2 ♥ ³
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 NT
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass

- 1. Strong
- 2. Negative
- 3. Spades

West	North	East	South
Nickell	Bocchi	Freeman	Duboin
—	—	Pass	Pass
Pass	2 ♦ ¹	Pass	2 ♥ ²
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♣ ³
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass

- 1. Balanced 18-20
- 2. Spades
- 3. Doubleton heart (?)

The Monte Carlo Daily Bulletin is silent on the meaning of the three alerts, and this is an auction where they would be useful. Two diamonds and two hearts can be deduced from the players' reactions to them. We're guessing at the meaning of three clubs, though!

With the heart jack onside, three no trumps would have made easily enough, but four spades certainly had chances. When Lauria, East, led a trump, declarer, Rodwell, was able to establish a long club for a diamond discard.

At the other table, Freeman led the queen of diamonds, and Bocchi won to play a spade to dummy for a club play. Nickell ducked and Bocchi won the king. Bocchi then drew trumps ending in the dummy, and perhaps not giving Nickell enough credit, or perhaps paying Freeman a great compliment, played a heart. Nickell went in with the ace and played a diamond, establishing the fourth defensive trick. That was 10 IMPs to USAI.

Bermuda Bowl Final. Session 6. Italy v. USA I

Board 86. Dealer East. EW Vul.

♠ 10 7 6 4 ♥ K J 2 ♦ 10 6 ♣ K 9 6 5	♠ A J 2 ♥ 10 6 ♦ A Q J 3 2 ♣ Q 10 3	♠ — ♥ 8 3 ♦ K 8 7 5 4 ♣ A J 8 7 4 2
--	--	--

West	North	East	South
Versace	Rodwell	Lauria	Meckstroth
—	—	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass

West	North	East	South
Hamman	Bocchi	Soloway	Duboin
—	—	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣ ¹	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♦	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	5 ♣
Pass	5 ♦	Double	Pass
Pass	Redouble	Pass	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♠	Double	Redouble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- 1. Artificial game force

Meckstroth, at one table, perhaps annoyed at missing the good slam, ruffed the opening club lead, led ace and another heart and claimed twelve tricks. However, when Versace pointed out that if he played the heart jack, then the king, Meckstroth would undoubtedly ruff high and lose a trump trick. Meckstroth humbly agreed. Plus 450.

So, Italy was set to gain a bundle by making six spades redoubled at table two. The YuGraph Theatre was electric with excitement. Hamman led the diamond ten and Duboin put up the ace, and as Meckstroth had done, led a heart without cashing a high trump on the table. He'd still have been alright had he finessed, but as Meckstroth had done, Duboin played ace and another. He was soon done in in the same fashion, but his eleven tricks meant minus 200 and 12 IMPs to the USA when it could easily have been 16 to Italy.

The Last Three Boards

Bermuda Bowl Final. Session 6. Italy v. USA I

The last three boards in the 2003 Bermuda Bowl were the most dramatic in the history of World Championship play. Italy led by 8 IMPs, 290-282 when Board 126 was placed on the table. There was plenty of scope for a swing. Could either team capitalize?

Board 126. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ Q J 10 7 5 4
 ♥ K J 9 4
 ♦ A K 8
 ♣ —

♠ A K 9 8 3	♠ —
♥ —	♥ 10 7 5 3 2
♦ Q 8 4	♦ 9 7 3
♣ A K Q 10 3	♣ 9 6 5 4 2

♠ 6 2
 ♥ A Q 8 6
 ♦ J 10 5 2
 ♣ J 8 7

West	North	East	South
Hamman	Lauria	Soloway	Versace
—	—	Pass	Pass
1 ♣ ¹	1 ♠	Pass	Pass
2 ♣	Double	5 ♣	Double
Pass	5 ♥	Pass	Pass
6 ♣	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Strong, artificial, forcing

Lauria led high diamonds and the contract went down two, minus 300. Soloway stated, "I guess I should have doubled five hearts. At the time I thought my best action was to pass the decision to Bob. I thought chances were good that we had only one loser in diamonds."

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Rodwell	Bocchi	Meckstroth
—	—	Pass	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Redouble	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♦
4 ♣	4 ♥	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

Clearly this contract did not fare well. It actually went down three tricks – minus 500, and that was a 13 IMP gain for the Italians. That made Italy's lead 21 IMPs with two boards to go. Italy 303-USA 282. Surely, it was all over. Then came more drama.

Board 127. Dealer South. NS Vul.

♠ 7 6 5
 ♥ 7
 ♦ A 9 6 5 2
 ♣ 8 6 3 2

♠ Q 8 4 3 2	♠ A J
♥ —	♥ A K J 10 9 6 5 2
♦ K Q 10 3	♦ J 8
♣ A Q 10 4	♣ 7

♠ K 10 9
 ♥ Q 8 4 3
 ♦ 7 4
 ♣ K J 9 5

After a spade opening from Duboin, West, and a two diamond response showing a strong hand with hearts from Bocchi, the Italian pair explored for slam with a series of relay bids,

stopping in five hearts. That proved to be one too many when the Americans were able to time the defence so that Duboin could not get diamonds set up for a spade discard. Duboin lost a spade, a heart and a diamond for one off, minus 50.

West	North	East	South
Hamman	Lauria	Soloway	Versace
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♦ ¹	Pass
3 NT	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Good hand with hearts

When Soloway essentially made a jump shift in hearts, Hamman ran up a warning flag, which Soloway heeded. Soloway also made ten tricks, but plus 420 and 10 IMPs. Italy 303-USA 292.

Word spread through the Vugraph Theatre that Bocchi-Duboin, who had been finished play for quite some time, had had a poor result on the final deal, and that the Americans had a chance.

Board 128. Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ 2
 ♥ A J 9 3
 ♦ K Q 10 9 8 6 5
 ♣ 5

♠ J 10	♠ A 6 5 4 3
♥ 5 4 2	♥ K Q 10 8 6
♦ A 7	♦ 4 2
♣ K 10 7 6 4 2	♣ A

♠ K Q 9 8 7
 ♥ 7
 ♦ J 3
 ♣ Q J 9 8 3

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Rodwell	Bocchi	Meckstroth
Pass	1 ♦	2 ♦ ¹	Pass
2 ♥	3 ♦	Pass	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Both majors

Rodwell led the diamond queen to the two, jack and ace. A heart to the king held and Duboin ducked a spade to Meckstroth's queen. He played a diamond to Rodwell's eight. Rodwell switched to the heart nine and Duboin went up with the queen. He tried to cash the spade ace, but Rodwell ruffed and cashed the ace of trumps.

Rodwell then led a diamond and declarer had to ruff, but the end was nigh. Duboin could take another trump and the club ace, but his remaining three spades were all losers. Down four, minus 400.

The bidding took an entirely different turn in the other room.

West	North	East	South
Hamman	Lauria	Soloway	Versace
Pass	1 ♦	2 ♦ ¹	Double
2 ♥	3 ♦	Pass	Pass
3 ♥	5 ♦	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Both majors

Soloway started with the club ace and Versace put his dummy down and got up and left the table, either to have a cigarette or to compare scores quickly. The tension on the players' faces was evident for all to see. When Soloway switched to the heart queen, Lauria won this and ruffed a heart, playing his own cards and dummy's as well. He crossed to his hand with a club ruff and led the heart jack, hoping to pin the ten. Soloway covered and Lauria ruffed in dummy. Lauria now played (literally!) the spade king, won by Soloway.

At this point, Soloway could have cashed the good ten of hearts for a two-trick set. That would have given the Americans 12 IMPs, just enough to win the Bermuda Bowl by an IMP. But he didn't – he played a spade! Pandemonium reigned! It was going to be a tie! (Perhaps, perhaps not – more on this later.)

Expecting that Soloway was cashing the good heart, Lauria pulled the seven of spades to discard on the heart. Suddenly he realized that Soloway had played a spade, not a heart! He attempted to replace the spade seven with the queen. If he had been allowed to do that, the contract would have gone down one, USA would have gained 11 IMPs, and the match would have ended in the putative tie. An eight-board playoff would be necessary to determine the World Champions in that case.

The director was called. After hearing the facts, she ruled that the spade seven was a played card, since that was the card Lauria touched, with intent to play it. Plus 300 and 12 IMPs to USA1. USA 304-Italy 303! Incredible!

The Italians appealed, but the Appeals Committee ruled very promptly considering the gravity of the circumstances, agreeing with the director. Both the director and the committee concluded that Lauria had indeed touched the spade seven with the intent to play it. That meant the Italians suffered a two-trick set – minus 300. That was 12 IMPs and the gold medal for the USA.

Because of Lauria's loss of concentration, the Americans still achieved a two-trick set – and the gold medal in the closest Bermuda Bowl final in history. (Amazingly, two World Cham-

pionships have been closer: Germany beat Denmark by ½ IMP to win the World Junior Team Championship in 1993, and the Netherlands beat the USA by the same margin to win the 1999 Venice Cup.)

In the opinion of many, it was astonishing that a player of Versace's experience would leave the table at such a critical juncture in the final of a World Championship. It was the ensuing distraction that caused Lauria's loss of concentration, they felt. Everyone had sympathy for Lauria, for who has not done something similar?

The final was contested by the two best teams in the world, and there was some brilliant bridge. But there was a lot of sloppiness, too. In addition to the Board 128 fiasco, there were two revokes and two mis-claims.

Back to the subject of the potential tie. On one of the revokes, the director's ruling had been to award one trick to the non-offending side, the USA (Hamman had tried unsuccessfully to have the penalty waived!), which resulted in 1 IMP to the USA. Later, the revoker took a trick with the card with which he had revoked. This should have resulted in a two-trick penalty, and, you guessed it, 2 IMPs to the USA. That director ruling was due to be revisited had the committee ruling gone the Italians' way. Whew! What a mess that would have been.

The event was marred by accusations from some Italians of unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of the American players for not allowing Lauria to change his play. The American supporters replied that it was more unsportsmanlike for Versace to leave the table, for whatever reason, then for Lauria to try to change the play of the spade seven, and finally for the Italian team to appeal the director's clearly correct ruling. Nevertheless, it all made for grand theatre, and one could not have scripted a more exciting finish.

The drama of the Bermuda Bowl dwarfed that of the two other finals. It was USA1 Over China in the Venice Cup (yes, Betty Ann Kennedy could win a third Venice Cup 29 years after her first). Lavazza (Italy) beat Fu Zuang (China) in the Transnational Teams final.

2003 Monte Carlo Medal Winners

Bermuda Bowl

Gold USA1: Richard Freeman, Bob Hamman, Jeff Meckstroth, Nick Nickell, Eric Rodwell, Paul Soloway
Silver: Italy: Norberto Bocchi, Giorgio Duboin, Fulvio Fantoni, Lorenzo Lauria, Claudio Nunes, Alfredo Versace
Bronze: USA2: Douglas Doub, Stephen Landen, Dan Morse, Pratap Rajadhyaksha, Adam Wildavsky, Robert Wolff

Venice Cup

Gold: USA1: Betty-Ann Kennedy, Jill Levin, Sue Picus, Janice Seamon-Molson, Tobi Sokolow, Kathie Wei-Sender
Silver: China: Ling Gu, Hongli Wang, Wenfei Wang, Xiaojing Wang, Yalan Zhang, Yu Zhang
Bronze: Netherlands: Carla Arnolds, Marijke van der Pas, Jet Pasman, Anneke Simons, Bep Vriend, Wietske van Zwol

Senior Bowl

Gold: USA1: Roger Bates, Grant Baze, Garey Hayden, Gaylor Kastle, Steve Robinson, Kit Woolsey
Silver: France: Pierre Adad, Maurice Aujaleu, Guy Laserre, Christian Mari, Philippe Poizat
Bronze: USA2: Dennis Dawson, Arnold Fisher, Zeke Jabbour, Clement Jackson, John Mohan, John Sutherland

Transnational Teams

Gold: Italy: Mario D'Avossa, Andrea Buratti, Leandro Burgay, Guido Ferraro, Massimo Lanzarotti, Carlo Mariani
Silver: China: Zhong Fu, Haojun Shi, Weimin Wang, Zejun Zhang, Jie Zhao
Bronze: Netherlands: Jan Jansma, Bauke Muller, Louk Verhees, Simon de Wijs