



BULLETIN

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Editorial

The opinions expressed here are solely those of the Editor and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the IBPA Executive or its membership.

Junior Bridge is under siege. Here are some of the firebombs lobbed at it by the trebuchet:

- The ACBL has cancelled the Junior Camp and World Individual Championship which it was scheduled to host this summer.
- The WBF is considering holding the World Youth Team Championships only every four years, down from the current every-other-year scenario. Additionally, there seems to be some sentiment for eliminating the Pairs.
- Despite there being a World Youth Teams scheduled for 2008, no country has yet come forward to host it.
- The USA, Canada and Israel (there may be others) have all experienced what the authorities consider to be unacceptable behaviour from some of their juniors, causing them to, respectively, reconsider their support of Junior Bridge, deny some members ratification to play, and refuse to send a team to the European Junior Team Championship at all.
- The EBL has removed Panos Gerontopoulos as its Youth Committee Chairman and member of the EBL Executive. This effectively means he no longer serves the WBF in the same capacities.

There are many positives, however. The recent European Youth Championships in Jesolo, Italy were a resounding success, with more total teams entered than ever before. The PABF and South American Zones also had successful Zonal Championships recently. Youth bridge is booming in some countries, notably Poland, Indonesia and the Netherlands, while Italy, France, Sweden, England and Norway, among others, have future stars in their ranks. Some countries, notably Italy, the Netherlands and Brazil seem able to step in at short notice to host World and European Championships.

Let's look at the aforementioned difficulties in order.

a. The ACBL Board of Directors seems to be taking the view that they are spending a lot of money on Junior Bridge, and that the benefits are only realized by a few elite players. The occasional behaviour of a very small number of these has been questionable – alcohol abuse, drugs, and escort services are some of the charges levelled. While some steps may need to be taken to correct the behaviour of those few (even that is moot), it seems irrational to punish a whole programme for their individual behaviour. The future of bridge lies in bringing more young people into the game, not driving them away by diminishing their opportunities.

b. Our view is that there should be a World Youth Championship every year, not once every four. Year 1: Teams; Year 2: Pairs; Year 3: Teams; Year 4: Individual. If this must be done on a smaller scale than currently, so be it. However, one is only a junior for so long – for most players, they would not become accomplished enough to represent their country until they were in their twenties, at which time they might have only one or two chances at it before becoming too old.

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c. Many countries feel that the conditions imposed by the WBF for hosting a World Championship are too onerous, which is perhaps why no suitable candidate has stepped forward for next year's World Youth Teams. Our view is that the WBF must try to make it more financially viable for countries outside Europe and North America to host such events. So far, we have had one each in Indonesia, Brazil, Australia and Thailand, and the other seven in Europe and North America. Japan, China, South Africa, Egypt, Argentina and Chile are all potential hosts with active bridge communities.

d. As for individual behaviour, it is one's demeanour at the table and behaviour toward partner, opponents, NPC and teammates which is important, not a few youthful highjinks. We seniors sometimes forget how we acted in our youth. Besides, what one does in the privacy of one's own home (or hotel room, by extension) is no one

else's business, as long as it does not adversely affect others, or the player's performance at the table.

e. The EBL and WBF must step in quickly to find a replacement for Panos Gerontopoulos. Gianarrigo Rona (Italy), Andrea Pagani (Italy) and Stefan Back (Germany) are the most-often mentioned possibilities. It does seem that the Chairman of the WBF Youth Committee must come from Europe, at least until the other Zones catch up to Europe in Junior Bridge activity, numbers and sophistication.

One further point: a successful youth programme must have *both* a grass-roots component (of which the Junior Camps are a part) and an elite component. We must bring large numbers of young people into the game, while at the same time providing competition for the most talented of these. If we do not, bridge will die out everywhere but Poland, the Netherlands and Indonesia.



Barry Rigal, NYC
John Carruthers, Toronto

When I (JC) arrived in my room at the Eden Hotel in Jesolo, it was a bit disconcerting to find workmen with pneumatic drills putting the finishing touches on the bathroom fixtures. The bridge officials and tournament staff for the Championships were indeed the first-ever guests in the hotel. This gave new meaning to the phrase, "I'm afraid your room is not quite ready, sir!" Nevertheless, as we were in Italy, the food was wonderful and the staff were very friendly. And the hotel was very comfortable after all the screws were tightened.

Jesolo is an attractive beach resort town on the northern Adriatic coast a few kilometres from Venice. The 15-kilometre-long beach is sandy and the very shallow and warm water makes it ideal for families. Unlike urban centres, in Jesolo, the worst traffic occurs on Sundays when thousands of Italian families join the tourists to come to take the sun and sea. A special feature of the town is that the main thoroughfare is closed off to vehicular traffic in the evenings, allowing for a pleasant after-dinner stroll.

There were three Championships to be contested: Juniors (25 and under); Girls (25 and under); and Schools (20 and under). In each series, a complete round robin would be played. Poland was expected to challenge strongly in all three categories, with hosts Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and France also expected to do well. But everyone knew there would be surprises as well. This was not the Bermuda Bowl or Venice Cup,

where one can predict form fairly accurately. But how was the bridge, you ask? Let's see.

Juniors RR5 Germany v Slovakia
Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ 10
♥ A Q 4
♦ J 9 8 7 4
♣ J 8 6 3

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

♠ Q
♥ K 9 3
♦ K 6 5
♣ A K Q 9 7 2

West	North	East	South
	<i>Katerbau</i>		<i>Rehder</i>
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	2 ♣
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	5 ♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West's silence in the face of his partner's one-spade opening is mystifying. He was soon joined in the conservative camp by East, who declined to double three clubs or bid three hearts. When you have 11 spades and are cold for game in the suit, you should get beyond the one-level.

The ten of hearts was led and taken by the ace. Declarer eliminated trumps and hearts, then exited with his spade.

East tried a low diamond, but Rehder put up the king and played another, leaving the defence helpless.

**Juniors RR8 France v Germany
Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.**

♠ J 10 7 5
♥ —
♦ A 10 7 4 3
♣ K 9 7 3

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

♠ 3
♥ J 8 4 2
♦ K 8 2
♣ J 6 5 4 2

West	North	East	South
Smirnov	O. Bessis	Gotard	T. Bessis
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West	North	East	South
Seguineau	Katerbau	Vinay	Rehder
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♠	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

The French were rather unlucky not to win a slam swing on this deal as Paul Seguineau/Adrien Vinay reached the excellent spade slam while Smirnov/Gotard reached the dreadful heart slam.

The natural French auction came to grips with the deal, while the Germans were hampered by the artificiality of their auction. The two-spade response showed either an invitational raise with four hearts or game-going values with three-card support. This locked them into hearts on the 5-3 fit, whereas the 4-4 fit was superior.

However, the bad breaks meant that six spades had no hope of success with no way to avoid losing a diamond.

Against six hearts, Olivier Bessis led the diamond ace without too much difficulty. The next trick took a little longer, however. At double dummy, if Bessis continues with a diamond, declarer could put in the nine to force the king. The diamond jack is now established for a discard and the North hand is beaten to a pulp while West draws trumps.

A club switch fares no better. Declarer can guess clubs immediately and set up a diamond for a spade discard. If he misguesses clubs he comes up a trick short with careful discarding by North, even if declarer transfers the diamond menace by leading the jack to ruff out the king.

On a spade switch, it looks as though declarer can still ruff out the diamond for a club pitch and pick up trumps. However, if declarer wins the spade in dummy, he prematurely uses the entry he needs to cash the diamond jack. And if he wins in hand, he cannot use the spade ace effectively as South will ruff it.

The VuGraph Theatre fell silent (for once) as Bessis considered his options. When he finally emerged with a spade, the slam was down for a push.

Ine Gielkens, the former Dutch international player who was in Jesolo as NPC of the Czech Republic Junior Team, reported this deal to Patrick Jourdain.

**Juniors RRI2 Netherlands v Russia
Board 18. Dealer East. NS Vul.**

♠ 10 9 8 3
♥ 10 7 6
♦ 4 3 2
♣ A 8 6

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

♠ Q
♥ K Q J 9 5 3
♦ K Q 5
♣ J 10 5

West	North	East	South
Macura	Osipov	Kopecky	Dobrin
—	—	1 NT ¹	Double
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	3 ♥
4 ♣	4 ♥	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 11-14

North led a heart, taken by the ace as declarer threw a club. Next came the jack of diamonds covered by the queen and ace. Declarer Milan Macura returned to dummy with a trump to the king felling South's queen. Next came a diamond taken by South's king, and a second heart was ruffed by declarer.

Macura cashed the ten of diamonds, all following, and then played a small club to the queen. This was followed by a third heart ruffed in hand and the last diamond was ruffed by North and over-ruffed in dummy.

A spade to the jack was followed by the last trump, end-playing North into leading a club up to declarer's king. Plus 590 was worth 10 IMPs to the Czech Republic when at the other table Russia made nine tricks in a spade part score.

Second Thoughts Are Always Best

Boldrini and Manno of Italy overbid a little to the spade grand slam on this deal.

Juniors RRI7 Norway v Italy
Board 16. Dealer West. EW Vul.

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

After the heart lead, declarer correctly shortened his trumps and then had to guess how many diamonds to cash before playing on clubs. Specifically, the play went: heart to the ace, spade ace, heart ruff, top spade finding the bad break. Then diamond jack, heart ruff, and a second top diamond, for the moment of truth.

Declarer tried to cash a third diamond and went down. Brian Senior defended this line as being with the percentages as opposed to playing on clubs. Up to a point, Lord Copper; but as the Irishman said when asked how to get to Killarney "If I were you I would not start from here".

The correct line is to start as Boldrini did. Heart ace, spade ace, heart ruff, top spade. But now you play the club jack, cross to the club queen, and reach this ending:

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

At this point in the deal, West is known to have four spades and two plus hearts with two plus clubs, and declarer can succeed on every lie of the cards except a 4=5=2=2 pattern with West - when nothing sensible would have worked.

The key play now is simply to ruff a club, not a heart, to shorten your trumps down to the key length. Then you play the diamond ace and a diamond to the jack, and have two guaranteed winning clubs in dummy to pitch your diamonds on, with the lead in dummy at trick twelve for the trump coup.

Embarras de RICHESSE
Juniors RR20

Unquestionably for me (BR), the best match of the tournament was the VuGraph match between France and Norway. I've seen almost every board of the event and this match packed more fine plays, or opportunities for them, into 20 boards than any other match I've seen.

The first deal where there were opportunities for good play and defence was board six: Norway had already got a decent lead (and but for a defence to three no trump deemed too disgusting even for a Hammer horror movie it would have been more).

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Eide</i>	<i>O Bessis</i>	<i>Livgard</i>	<i>T Bessis</i>
—	—	Pass	1 ♣
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	
West	North	East	South
<i>Seguineau</i>	<i>E Berg</i>	<i>Vinay</i>	<i>Lindqvist</i>
—	—	Pass	1 ♣
Pass	1 ♦ ¹	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Hearts

Both Souths reached three no trump on an auction that persuaded West to lead a diamond, not the spade that would set the game on normal declarer play. Lindqvist won the diamond queen and immediately advanced the jack of hearts - just in case! When West covered - and who can blame him, though ducking might have set the game - Lindqvist found a neat play.

Lindqvist's nine of spades protects him from losing four spades, so long as West is the defender who broaches the suit. The natural play in clubs, of finessing, lets East in. So the riposte might be to cash the king of clubs then the ace. Lindqvist went one step better. He led the three of clubs from dummy - and DUCKED East's six! Well done.

Thomas Bessis won the diamond lead and played ace and another club, finessing the jack as Eide followed up the line in clubs to show preparedness for a spade shift. It pains me (BR) to tell you that Livgard did shift to spades; alas, he selected the jack, when a low spade would have been unambiguous. Bessis covered nonchalantly, and Eide won and reverted to diamonds.

The Bessis brothers then had the chance to shine on defence - and grabbed their opportunity with both hands.

Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Eide	O Bessis	Livgard	T Bessis
—	—	—	Pass
2 ♦	2 ♠	3 ♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

In the Closed Room, Norway had recorded a small plus from one spade, so the fate of three diamonds would swing quite a number of IMPs. Olivier, who had done well not to reopen with a double of three diamonds, led a top spade. Declarer had a nasty decision at trick one, but guessed well to duck. Now declarer was on his way to plus 110, right? Wrong!

Olivier shifted to the heart three - why not the two? - don't ask me! Declarer played the seven from dummy, a small but significant error, and Thomas asked himself why declarer, if he had the heart ace, had not played dummy's nine? Answer: he did not have the heart ace! So Thomas took the heart king and reverted to spades for down one and a round of applause from the audience.

Board 14. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

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

Now we come to my (BR's) favourite board of the event. Everybody knows that one only has a finite amount of energy to waste in agonized thought. So when you identify an 'easy' board you play the thoughtless line and move on to the next without wasting brain-power. That makes Thomas Bessis' performance here truly laudable.

Both Souths propelled themselves to three spades here after opening one spade and hearing West double. The Norwegians did so after North showed a good raise to two spades, by making a game try; the French got there as an obstructive manoeuvre after a simple spade raise over the double.

In both rooms declarer received the lead of three rounds of diamonds, ruffed, then drew two trumps as West threw a club. Declarer number one knew a 'simple' board when he saw it; he led a club to the jack and queen and was favoured with a shift to the eight of hearts. He covered with the nine and thereafter could hold his losers in hearts to one, for plus 140.

Thomas Bessis sat contemplating for five minutes before realizing that rather than rely on defensive error he could generate some real pressure in the ending. He drew a third trump ending in dummy, West pitching a second club and East the heart four- upside down. Now came a fourth trump, East letting go the heart three and West his diamond.

Thomas now 'knew' the opponents' shapes, and led the last trump, subjecting West to real anguish. Eventually he got it right, discarding a club as dummy and West threw a heart each. This was the ending:

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

Thomas now led a heart to the queen, and when that held he made the key play of the club ace. If West unblocks and East wins the next club, he must give dummy the club jack at the end. If he does not unblock, or East does not win the queen, he is end-played to lead hearts at trick 12.

Do you see the key defensive error? West must rise with the heart ace in the diagrammed position. Now declarer must unblock dummy's queen, and a switch to the club king leaves declarer helpless.

Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

This deal indicates that the spirit of low cunning prevalent in the Juniors can be exhibited even on the last deal of a match, where the players are keen to get out and score up.

Imagine the play in four spades on a diamond lead from North. You remember to put on dummy's jack - after all, sometimes they cover! Bingo! South plays the queen and now you play off the two top spades, your remaining diamond honour, then overtake the heart king with the ace to cash the winning diamond and pitch a club. Later you get to lead up to the king of clubs for an overtrick.

Eide played the top spades and top diamonds then led a trump. Olivier Bessis meanly shifted to the club queen! Declarer now subjected himself to a few minutes of torture (fortunately, Thomas Bessis had pitched two clubs so even if he had misguessed he would not have gone down) before recording 11 tricks.

In another match Tomislav Gracin led a heart, which went to the king at trick one. Declarer played three rounds of spades and South, Luka Dondjivic, pitched hearts. Now Tomislav played the club queen, and another club when declarer ducked, and the Russian West misguessed for down one.

Was declarer culpable? Yes; when North leads a low heart from the presumed jack or queen at trick one he won't likely have the queen-jack-nine of clubs, will he?

Double Duck**Juniors RR20. France v Greece
Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.**

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

West	North	East	South
Darkadakis	O. Bessis	Sofios	T. Bessis
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♣	1 ♦	1 ♠	2 ♥
Double	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

When you still have hopes of qualifying for a World Championship, you keep playing your best right up to the end, however slim that qualification chance might be. Take a look at this defence from the Bessis brothers on the penultimate deal of the Junior Series.

The double showed three-card spade support. Olivier Bessis led the queen of diamonds and the Greek declarer won in hand, drew trumps in two rounds with the diamond ace in between, then played dummy's jack of hearts. Thomas Bessis ducked smoothly, and declarer ran the heart to Olivier's queen.

At this point, a spade return allows declarer to pick up the suit for only one loser and make the game, while a diamond gives a ruff and discard, also allowing the game to make. Olivier returned the only suit to give the defence a chance when he selected the nine of hearts. Declarer discarded a spade from dummy and, had Thomas risen with the ace, there would have been two more discards to come on the king and ten of hearts, once again letting the game home. But Thomas ducked again, letting declarer win the trick. The second duck left declarer with no option but to attempt to play spades for one loser and, as you can see, that was not possible on accurate defence.

A very nice piece of defence from the brothers but, alas, no qualification, as France finished only seventh.

The medallists:

Juniors

1. **NETHERLANDS** - Bob Drijver, Merijn Groenenboom, Jacco Hop, Marion Michielsen, Cincet De Pagter, Meike Wortel, Frans Borm (NPC), Kees Tammens (Coach)
2. **ITALY** - Irene Baroni, Andrea Boldrini, Arrigo Franchi, Andrea Manno, Matteo Montanari, Alberto Sangiorgio, Gianpaolo Rinaldi (NPC)
3. **POLAND** - Artur Gula, Piotr Nawrocki, Michal Nowosadzki, Jan Sikora, Mikolaj Taczewski, Piotr Wiankowski, Marek Markowski (NPC)

Schools

1. **POLAND** - Bartolomiej Iglar, Pawel Jassem, Joanna Krawczyk, Artur Machno, Piotr Tuczynski, Piotr Zatorski, Andrej Aleksandrak (NPC)
2. **BULGARIA** - Zhivko Siderov, Stefan Skorchev, Dean Spasov, Ivan Syusyukin
3. **FRANCE** - Marion Canonne, Pierre Franceschetti, Anexandre Kilani, Aymeric Lebatteux, Nicolas l'Huissier, Cedric Lorenzini, Christophe Oursel (NPC), Jean-Marc Davoine (Coach)

Girls

1. **POLAND** - Joanna Krawczyk, Marta Maj, Natalia Sakowska, Kamila Szczepanska, Kamila Wesolowska, Justyna Zmuda, Roman Krzemien (NPC)
2. **NETHERLANDS** - Rosaline Barendregt, Astrid Dekker, Marleen Van Gelder, Jamilla Spangenberg, Maarten Schollaardt (Coach)
3. **SWEDEN** - Freja Andersson, Kristin Nedlich, Sandra Rimstedt, Emma Sjöberg, Tobias Törnqvist (NPC), Pia Andersson (Coach)

Note the performance of Joanna Krawczyk of Poland – gold medals in both the Girls and Schools events. Both Poland and the Netherlands had extraordinary performances, Poland with two golds and a bronze, and the Netherlands with a first, second and sixth place.

We would be remiss if we did not mention that, sadly, this was the final Championship with which Greece's Panos Gerontopoulos will be involved. For two decades, Panos has been the driving force in European and WBF Junior Bridge, following in the footsteps of the Netherlands' André Boekhorst. Under Panos's management, we have seen the introduction of the World Youth Teams Championships, the World Junior Pairs Championship, the World Junior Individual Championship and additional categories for Schools and Girls. He has been the face of Junior Bridge since 1985 and his will be a tough act to follow.

IBPA COLUMN SERVICE

Tim Bourke, Canberra

Members may use these deals as they wish, without attributing the author or IBPA.

397. Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ A K Q 8 5
♥ 10
♦ 8 5 2
♣ Q 10 9 3

♠ 9 3
♥ A Q J 9 7 3
♦ J 10 9 6
♣ 2

♠ J 7 2
♥ K 8 5
♦ A K Q 7
♣ A K 7

West	North	East	South
2 ♥	2 ♠	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♠	Pass	6 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

A simple Roman Key-Card enquiry with spades as trumps saw North admit to two key cards along with the queen of trumps. As South wanted to protect his king of hearts, he placed the small slam in no-trumps.

After West led the jack of diamonds, declarer played his diamond winners straightaway, discovering that it was West who held four cards in the suit. Given West's vulnerable weak two opening in hearts, declarer placed ten red-suit cards on his left. This left at most three cards in the black suits.

So, declarer cashed the ace of clubs, in case West had a singleton jack of clubs, and followed this with the jack and ace of spades. As West followed to all three black suit winners, his original distribution had to be 2=6=4=1. West was now void in clubs, making it a certainty that running the ten of clubs through East would produce a trick. It was then a simple matter to claim twelve tricks.

Of course, if West had shown up with only one spade, giving him an original 1=6=4=2 shape, the odds would have been 2-to-1 that East held the jack of clubs. So, declarer's best play then would still have been to finesse East for that card.

398. Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ A K J 6
♥ A K Q J 8 2
♦ 6
♣ A 10

♠ 2
♥ 7 6 4
♦ A K J 5 3 2
♣ K J 6

♠ 9 7 5 3
♥ 10 3
♦ Q 9 8
♣ 9 8 5 3

♠ Q 10 8 4
♥ 9 5
♦ 10 7 4
♣ Q 7 4 2

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	Double	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♣
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	5 ♠
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Another Roman Key-Card auction saw North discover that South held the queen of spades (five hearts would have denied it) but without a side-suit king.

West led the king of diamonds and then shifted to a heart. After winning the trick with the ace of hearts, declarer cashed the ace of trumps and was relieved to see that the suit was not 5-0. He could count four trumps, six hearts and the ace of clubs, which meant he needed a diamond ruff to make his contract. So he led the jack of trumps from dummy at trick four, hoping that East would follow. When this proved to be the case, declarer overtook with the queen of trumps so that he could ruff a diamond with the king of trumps.

Next, declarer took the marked finesse of the eight of trumps and drew East's remaining trump with the ten,

discarding dummy's club loser. As dummy was now high, declarer claimed twelve tricks.

If declarer had carelessly played the king of trumps at trick four the contract would have failed as there would then have been insufficient entries to ruff a diamond and draw trumps.

399. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♣	Double	4 ♦
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	5 ♥	Pass	6 ♣
Pass	6 ♥	Pass	Pass

When North failed to bid seven over his partner's strong invitation to do so, after having been given multiple opportunities to do so, South settled for the small slam.

West led the jack of clubs and declarer proceeded to give himself the best chance of making twelve tricks. After ruffing the lead with the ace of trumps, he led the ten of trumps to dummy's jack and ruffed a second club with the king of trumps. After returning to dummy by leading the eight of trumps to dummy's nine and ruffing dummy's last club with the queen of trumps, declarer played the ace of spades followed by a low spade.

As the cards lay, West had to win the trick and found himself end-played into leading a pointed suit into a tenace or conceding a ruff-and-discard with a club return. Either way, declarer would have twelve tricks.

Of course, if spades had proved to be 3-2, declarer would have discarded dummy's diamond losers on the long spades and ruffed a diamond in dummy.

The other easily manageable case is when East began with four spades to the queen. In that case, declarer would win the diamond return with ace and cross to dummy with the carefully preserved two of trumps to pick up the spades for four tricks. He would make four spades, six trumps, the ace of diamonds and a diamond ruff.

400. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♥	Pass	5 NT
Pass	6 ♣	Pass	7 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

South had an awkward choice when four hearts was passed back to him. When North removed his value-showing double to four spades, he drove to the grand slam via Roman Key-Card Blackwood when North revealed two aces and, with six clubs, the king of clubs.

West led the king of hearts and declarer won and played a trump to the ace. When East discarded, he could no longer make his contract for, when he tried to cross to dummy in clubs, West ruffed to score the setting trick.

Declarer's error was a failure to count tricks in a way that guaranteed the contract. He should ruff a heart with the ace of trumps at trick two then play the king of trumps followed by a low trump to dummy's jack to ruff a heart with the queen of trumps. Then he plays the four of trumps and draws West's remaining trumps with the ten and nine.

Once the ace of hearts holds at trick one, this plan is a sure-tricker for, without any risk at all; declarer makes four trumps, the ace of hearts, two heart ruffs in his hand and the six top cards in the minors.

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Senior Trials Bethesda, MD July 3-7, 2007

Jim Gordon, S. Burlington, VT

With two boards to play in the Kasle v Assemi semi-final match to decide the USA Teams in the Senior Bowl in Shanghai, Kasle led Assemi by 17 IMPs. This is Board 29, on which the Vugraph commentators predicted that Assemi would win 13 IMPs for staying out of a 'hopeless' slam. Dan Gerstman proved them wrong by making it.

Board 29. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Wojewoda</i>	<i>Sutherlin</i>	<i>Assemi</i>	<i>Gerstman</i>
—	—	Pass	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♣	Pass	3 ♣
3 ♦	3 ♥	4 ♦	4 ♥
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	5 ♠
Pass	6 ♣	Pass	6 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West might have been warned by the bidding that he needed to cash the club ace to avoid being end-played, but he chose the king of diamonds as the opening lead.

Dan Gerstman then played double-dummy to bring home the slam. He won the diamond ace, then ruffed a diamond. He next crossed to dummy with a trump and ruffed dummy's last diamond. He cashed a top heart to extract West's last trump and exited with a small club.

West was left with a choice of ways to surrender the twelfth trick. The position was:

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

On the diamond queen return, Gerstman would ruff in dummy, discarding a spade from hand, cross to the ace of spades, pull the last trump, discarding dummy's spade ten, and take the last four tricks with dummy's clubs. On the actual spade return, he won the queen, pulled the last trump and claimed. This resulted in a well-earned 13-IMP pick-up against the four-heart game bid at the other table.

Why did Gerstman play the way he did when the alternative line of a squeeze-endplay against West (if he'd held the king-queen-jack of diamonds and the spade king) looked very attractive on the bidding? The answer is that East played the deuce of diamonds at trick one, encouraging!

This board put the match out of reach, so Gaylor Kasle-Russ Arnold, Bobby Wolff-Dan Morse and John Sutherlin-Dan Gerstman will be USA 1 in China next October. (USA 2 will be Rose Meltzer-Grant Baze, Alan Sontag-Roger Bates and Bart Bramley-Lew Stansby.)

Syrian Bridge Festival 2007

Brian Senior, Nottingham, UK

Syria doesn't get great press in the UK. One can always look at the same story from two different angles and come up with two quite different explanations but it has certainly meddled in the life and politics of neighbouring Lebanon for a generation or so. One could argue that, had that not been the case, Lebanon might have had a stronger government by now, meaning that Hezbollah would have been weaker, and that therefore there would not have been a Hezbollah/Israel war last summer. Then again, alternative histories are fascinating but rather unpredictable. And an ordinary member of the Syrian public would have little difficulty in coming up with an equally plausible line of reasoning to show what damage British policies have caused in the Middle East.

Anyway, I had a free weekend at just the right time to play in the 2007 Syrian Bridge Festival in Damascus so set off with occasional partner, Nigel Bird. What can I tell you? The airport is old-fashioned, but getting in and out was a lot quicker than at many other places I have visited. Walking the streets of Damascus, you see more men with uniforms and guns than we are used to back home, but there was never any feeling of danger or threat. Far from it, I felt very safe even walking around a strange area late at night. People were very friendly. We called in a shop for a couple of drinks. When the proprietor saw us hanging around in the yard outside drinking, two chairs were quickly produced for us - this was in no way a café or similar, simply someone being nice.

It seemed that during the bridge, we were welcomed to Syria by everyone we met - none of the scowls and silence that a visitor might find at times in an English tournament.

And, as seems to be the case at all bridge festivals in this part of the world, official and unofficial invitations to various meals were a regular occurrence.

Damascus is an interesting city with many historical sites (and sights) - it claims to be the longest continuously inhabited city in the world. You can eat very cheaply and taxi fares are laughably low for those of us used to western capital cities. While there are more Moslems than any other religion, as you would expect in an essentially Arab country, it is possible to drink alcohol without difficulty.

One of the most interesting experiences for me was when we stopped off in a local bar/restaurant on the way home one night after the bridge. There were probably 70 to 80 Syrian men spread among 20 or so tables, playing cards, backgammon, chess, watching TV or just chatting. Not a drop of alcohol in the place, but everyone was relaxed and enjoying themselves. I can't think when I have seen such a place in the UK, where alcohol would surely be involved in any such gathering, yet its absence clearly had no negative effect on the atmosphere. Quite the contrary.

The bridge was held in Le Meridien Hotel and directed by Egypt's top man, Waleed el-Menyawi, aided by Jean Gheia of Syria. Apart from ourselves, there were contingents from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey and Jordan, plus Polish world champion Krzysztof Martens, who has close ties to the area. There were smoking and non-smoking rounds, which might not appeal to everyone, but I did not find that there was sufficient smoking to cause a problem, and there was always the option to request no smoking at the table at which one was playing.

The main pairs event was a three-session play-through. Winners Tefvik Gurkan and Yusuf Isitemiz of Turkey were followed home by pairs from Syria and Lebanon. The teams was won by the Mersin team from Turkey (Alcottin, Erhan, Eatan, Fikret, Semahat, Denis), who were chased home by teams from Egypt and Jordan. Hanna Wattar of Syria and Egypt's Mohamed Heshmat won the Mixed Pairs.

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	<i>Bird</i>		<i>Senior</i>
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 NT
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♠	Pass	5 NT
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	7 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

We didn't achieve anything of note in the teams competition, but it is from there that the following deals come. We got lucky in one six-board match, with these two slam deals.

Nigel's One Heart opening was aggressive – we play a 12-14 no trump and he judged that he should upgrade because he had both majors and good concentration of strength in the two suits. Certainly, any time that partner has a four-card major, the North hand is too strong for a weak no trump, but opening one heart will get to some pretty poor three no trump contracts when partner does not have a major.

Two no trump was a constructive raise to either three or more than game and now our lack of detailed system discussion came into play, as Nigel simply bid four hearts because he wanted to accept the game try, while I expected a different hand-type for this action. Five spades showed two key cards plus the trump queen and six diamonds showed one king - specific kings are much more useful here, but we play together once a year or so and have never agreed to play that way.

Seven hearts seemed as though it should be at worst on a club finesse and possibly cold. The contract was a lot worse than I had expected. Nigel won the diamond lead and played the king, then queen of hearts - it is much more convenient to play to pick up a possible four-one break this way round, given that a ruff is likely to be required in one hand or the other. When the four-one split came to light, he led a club to the queen, cashed the ace, East dropping the king, thought a bit then ruffed a club, finessed the ten of hearts, and was home for a not unfortunate plus 1510.

If our opponents felt aggrieved after that board, imagine their feelings after this next one.

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	<i>Bird</i>	—	<i>Senior</i>
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 NT
Pass	4 NT	Pass	6 ♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

It was my turn to upgrade a 14-count, treating it as 15-17. Two clubs was Check-back and I showed a minimum with neither three spades nor four hearts. Having signed off in three no trump, I decided to accept the slam try when Nigel went on with four no trump. This time the contract was an excellent one, being basically on one of two finesses - which both fail.

I won the heart lead, cashed the diamond ace and club king, crossed to the ace of hearts, and cashed the clubs - throwing dummy's heart loser - ruffed a heart and exited with a diamond. East won and was end-played to give the contract; plus 920.

Technically, this was the wrong way to play the hand. Simply taking diamond and spade finesses works when either king is onside. My line would have been okay whenever the spade finesse worked, but would have failed had the diamond been onside and the spade off, and even when the diamond was offside it required the king to be either singleton or doubleton - East has a safe exit if he holds a third diamond.

I was on hot form as declarer that day, not dropping a trick anywhere, and my gut instinct was telling me to play for the endplay. When you are hot, I think you should trust your feelings if they are strong enough. On the other hand, if you are in poor or average form, just follow the odds. You had to feel a little sorry for opponents who had suffered these two deals in a short six-board match.

My final offering was played by Syria's Khaldoun Sanadiki and is just a little bit special.

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

	♠ Q 9 3		
	♥ K 5 4 2		
	♦ Q 10 6		
	♣ A Q 3		
♠ 8 6 2		♠ K 10 5 4	
♥ Q J 10 8		♥ 9 7	
♦ 7 5 3		♦ 9 4 2	
♣ 8 5 4		♣ J 9 6 2	
	♠ A J 7		
	♥ A 6 3		
	♦ A K J 8		
	♣ K 10 7		
West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2 NT
Pass	6 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

The bidding was short and to the point. When West led the queen of hearts declarer had a number of options to consider. Winning with the intention of end-playing West with the third round of hearts could obviate the need to take the spade finesse should the hearts prove to be three-three and West not have a long minor, or declarer could duck the opening lead, creating the possibility of a squeeze, but leaving himself reliant on the spade finesse.

Khaldoun judged to duck the heart and West continued with the jack. The fall of the seven and nine on his right was sufficient to convince Khaldoun that the hearts were four-two. Also, he judged that East was unlikely to be short in spades so that to play a spade to the jack then cash the ace was unlikely to produce three winners.

Thus, Khaldoun won the second heart in hand, crossed to dummy with a diamond and led the queen of spades to the king and ace. East covered the spade in such an automatic fashion that Khaldoun judged that she would also hold the ten. He backed his judgement by crossing to dummy again and leading the spade nine. That was covered by the ten and jack and the spade plays had transferred the spade menace to West. I have previously seen this transfer of the menace to set up a squeeze done as a single play, but don't remember ever having seen such a double play.

Of course, West was now in control of both major suits and the run of the minor-suit winners crushed him into submission. Not a bad little effort from someone who is clearly a star in Syria.

The Illusionist

Mark Horton, Romford, UK

'There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.' Hamlet act 2 sc 2

I don't know if a single bid can be a contender for the best bid hand of the year - but this is something special.

An illusion is a distortion of a sensory perception, taking advantage of how the brain normally organises and interprets sensory stimulation. Illusions may occur with more of the human senses than vision, but visual illusions, optical illusions, are the best known and understood.

However, some illusions are based on general assumptions the brain makes during perception. On this deal from the 2007 Spring Foursomes, Bulgaria's Valio Kovachev created a most unusual illusion - with the cards he did not hold.

You are playing a 32-board match against very good opponents. After 24 deals your team is 20 IMPs behind. The last eight boards don't start well either - opponent Tony Forrester makes an expert guess to bring home a game with some puny 22 points and a 4-4 fit.

So it looks like you are now trailing by 27-31 IMP depending on whether your team-mates have reached that game (they did!).

Now for the first time in his life, Valio made a psychic double. He was in second position and held:

♠ A 10 8 6 5
♥ 6 5
♦ Q 10 9 4
♣ 9 7

West	North	East	South
Forrester	Kovachev	Bakhshi	Isporski
1 ♦	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 NT	Pass	6 ♦ ¹	Pass
6 ♥	Double	Pass	Pass
?			

1. One ace plus diamond void

When the double arrived to Tony, a great player with a lot of imagination, he agonised for three minutes staring at his hand:

♠ 4
♥ K 7 4 2
♦ A K J 8 3
♣ A J 8

Tell me now dear reader would you pass, and risk facing a dummy like:

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

only to find out that Valio's double contained 5 or 4 good trumps?

Anyway, his final decision was wrong - he moved to six no trump - as often happens, only to be doubled again for down four (minus 800) as he had no stopper in spades. David Bakhshi's hand was:

♠ Q 9
♥ A J 10 8 3
♦ —
♣ K Q 10 6 5 2

Indeed, six hearts has a good play - declarer need only guess the queen of hearts?

The double created a swing of 17 IMPs for our team - just the breath of fresh air that was needed to turn the match around and win 63-60 IMPs.

Most of the time the best way to play the game is to sit and wait for your opponents to make a mistake, but sometimes you need to push them to the brink of the precipice - where sometimes even the best fall over the edge.

A final detail. That great player Forrester turned to Valio after the segment and said, "Great double".

Spring Foursomes Brilliancy

David Bird, Eastleigh, UK

From the Mail on Sunday

Dealer South Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Holland	Brogeland	Armstrong	Sælensminde
—	—	—	1 ♦
2 ♠	Double	4 ♣	4 ♥
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The deal comes from the 2007 Spring Foursomes, with Erik Sælensminde and Boye Brogeland of Norway facing England internationals, John Holland and John Armstrong.

North's double was for takeout and East's bid of four clubs was a 'fit jump', showing a good spade fit and a side suit of clubs. How would you play the diamond game when West leads the seven of clubs to the jack and queen, East switching to the four of hearts?

Sælensminde avoided immediate defeat by rising with the ace of hearts. To prevent the loss of two tricks in the heart suit, he now had to arrange an endplay on the West hand. Aiming to remove West's clubs, he crossed to the queen of trumps and ruffed a club. A trump to the jack was followed by another club ruff, West throwing a spade.

West still had several safe exit cards in spades, so Sælensminde played off his remaining three trumps. On the last of these Holland had to find a discard from king-nine of spades and king-ten-eight of hearts. He could not spare a heart, since declarer would then easily set up two more heart tricks. Holland threw a spade and Sælensminde was then able to remove West's last spade by leading to the spade ace.

In the three-card end position, and with the lead in dummy, South, West and North had only hearts left. Sælensminde played a low heart to his queen. It was the end of the road for West. He had to win with the king and then lead away from the ten of hearts. A fine piece of card play!



Barry Rigal, NYC & Patrick Jourdain, Cardiff

The third version of the European Open Championships was held in Antalya, Turkey during the last two weeks of June. Was it hot? Does a bear...? Never mind. The bridge was great, however - here are a few of the tastier deals.

Une Petite Brioche (BR)

Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Pana</i>	<i>d'Ovidio</i>	<i>Mucha</i>
—	—	Pass	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Both tables in the Mixed Teams Qualifying reached three no trump from the West seat, and both Norths led the spade jack. Philippe Cronier covered with the queen, and South won with the king and cashed the ace. A club shift at that point would have come too late. Declarer can play low from hand and win the king when allowed to, then run the diamonds to triple squeeze North who in the ending must keep the spade ten and four hearts thus no clubs or one club respectively, depending on whether he played the ace or ten first time. When the bad heart break comes to light, declarer exits with a spade or club as appropriate to endplay North to lead hearts into the tenace.

Note that in that scenario, if North wins the club ace and plays the queen next, West must discard a potentially-winning heart on the fourth diamond to keep a spade for the endplay. If the first club is ducked, either a club or a spade will do the job.

In practice, the defenders cashed two spades and shifted to a heart. Cronier won and played a third spade, and

now Pana did well when he exited with a diamond. Cronier elected to win in hand and lead a club to his king for his ninth trick.

In the other room, Alain Levy was allowed to hold the spade jack. He shifted accurately to the club queen, losing to the king, as Sylvie Willard showed four clubs. Now four rounds of diamonds followed, and Levy could afford to let go one heart, a low spade, and the club ten. Declarer had eight tricks but no endplay, since when she was put on lead with the spade king, Willard could cash the spade ace and play a club to Levy's ace. Another club meant down 200 and 13 IMPs to the Mouiel team. Well done both pairs.

Smörrebröd (PDJ)

This next deal was a candidate for deal of the championship:

Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Payen</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Bessis</i>	<i>de Botton</i>
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♥	3 ♦	Double	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

West	North	East	South
<i>Sandqvist</i>	<i>Sussel</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Lustin</i>
—	—	—	Pass
1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♠	3 ♦
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass	—	—

In the Closed Room, Bernard Payen opened a five-card major one heart. After the jump overcall, Véronique Bessis made a take-out double. West repeated the hearts and now Bessis bid spades. Thinking, maybe, that he had already shown six hearts and that partner might be 5-5 in the

blacks, West revealed his three-card club holding. When East passed, they were clearly in an inferior contract which duly failed. However, this would not be serious unless Sandqvist could bring home four hearts.

The defence began accurately: the king of diamonds was led and overtaken by the ace. Christine Lustin returned a diamond won by Sussel's jack. The queen of diamonds was ruffed in dummy with the seven and over-ruffed by the eight. At this point South led a trump. Sandqvist gave it a good look then put up the ace. Next came four more rounds of trumps. This was the six-card ending when the penultimate trump was led:

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

Sandqvist was by now confident the king of spades was offside. Provided North held the spade jack it would not matter who held the clubs. On the penultimate trump North was compelled to throw a spade and the ten of clubs went from dummy. It did not matter what South threw. Sandqvist played a spade to the ace and the queen from dummy. This fetched the king from South and the jack from North. The ten of spades was now good and the ace of clubs was there as the entry to it. Plus 420 to de Botton was worth 12 IMPs.

In a way it was sad that the club honours were in the same hand. The ending is a double trump squeeze - the squeeze works even when the club honours are divided. The defender who keeps three clubs has to give declarer a chance to pick up the spades.

Even if South switches to a club at trick four declarer can succeed by winning the king, drawing trumps, and transferring the spade menace by playing the ace-queen of spades, covered by South. The remaining trump catches North in a simple squeeze.

A Bonny Haggis (BR)

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♠	Pass	3 ♦ ¹
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	

1. Limit raise in spades

Sitting West, you are defending four spades on the auction shown. Partner leads the club ace and you give count with the three. Now comes the heart six to your king and declarer's nine, and the heart ace draws declarer's jack, and partner produces the four. What next?

This was the full story. West continued with a second club, as would we all, I suspect, and Barnet Shenkin wrapped up ten tricks with the aid of the spade finesse.

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

In the other room East led two top clubs so the game was made there too, but all credit to Shenkin for avoiding loss after Veronique Bessis' incisive heart shift at trick two.

See last month's issue for a list of winners or www.eurobridge.org for complete results.

Upcoming Online Transmissions

Aug 5-8	European University Champ.	BBO
Aug 11-12	Governor's Cup, Indonesia	BBO
Aug 16-17	England v Norway, Brighton	BBO
Aug 18-19	All-India Championships	BBO
Aug 25-26	Modalfa Top 12, Amsterdam	BBO
Aug 25	Israeli Team Cup Final	BBO
Aug 26-		
Sep 1	Crete Festival	BBO
Sep 1-2	Netherlands v Ireland (Men) & Denmark (Women)	BBO
Sep 8-9	Onstein Topcircuit	BBO
Sep 21	Inter-Provincial Teams, NZ	BBO
Sep 29-13	World Championships, China	Swan
Oct 9-11	Balkan Championships, BUL	BBO
Oct 13-14	Bulgarian Festival	BBO

Daniel Auby 1955-2007

A good friend and a good man has left us much too early, and he leaves behind a grieving Swedish and global bridge community. Daniel was 52 years old when he passed away in his home in June, leaving behind one brother.

Daniel started his international career in Geneva in 1990, and followed with a bronze medal in the Rosenblum Teams in 1994 in Albuquerque. For the past ten years he acted as NPC, coach, and slave to the Swedish national team.

Daniel introduced a number of previously-unknown components to that captaincy - extensive system notes, bidding practice with monthly reports to the captain, and documented physical training.

However, there was much more to Daniel than bridge. He was keenly interested in other games and classical music. He started out aiming for a career as a teacher, studying history and religion at university. After a few years his father told him to go for a 'real' job, at which point he switched to law. After the law degree and a two-year session in court, he switched to software development, where he spent the last 20 years.

It is mystery to me why Daniel has been taken from us. We shall always remember him as the great and considerate friend he was.

Tomas Brenning, Kungsängen, Sweden

...Correspondence - continued from p. 16

Europe and the USA), with the WBF arranging whatever eliminating events are necessary. If this means that the Bermuda Bowl contains three USA teams and one European team (or vice versa), that is not a negative point: the best players are competing for the premier event.

I have some issues with what is proposed - namely the interest which would be generated with a 4-team World Championship. Also, would the Zones or the WBF be prepared to spend an enormous amount of resources and finances to run zonal qualifications and then inter-zonal qualifications to qualify a mere two teams. I consider this highly unlikely versus the current situation where NBOs send one team to one qualifying event with some expectation of having a team compete in the Bermuda Bowl.

Good to have discussion on a meaningful topic.

Regards, David Stern, Sydney

Ciao John!

Assuming that your info is correct and unbiased (not, in my experience, always the case in African affairs), then the behaviour of the Kenyans, the ABF and the WBF is scandalous. There is probably no way to exert pressure on the Kenyans, nor, probably on the ABF, but it ought to be possible to influence the WBF. How is it that the WBF recognises the NBO which is not recognised by the government of the country involved? And if the WBF only recognises the NBO recognised by the zonal federation (in this case the ABF) then it is high time this policy be changed or at least more carefully implemented. Anyone in a position to do so should try to apply pressure to the WBF to reexamine its decision re Kenya. You have done a good job in, one hopes, starting this process.

Yours faithfully, Jeff Easterson, Berlin

JC,

IBPA members might be interested to know that, in what is believed to be a first, a Junior player will captain a Senior team in a World Championship, in this instance the Canadian Senior Team in Shanghai this fall.

Daniel Korbel of Waterloo, Ontario will be the NPC. Korbel was a member of the Canadian Junior Team at the World Youth Championships in Bangkok last summer and is still eligible for 2008.

The Senior Team is very impressed with the young man's maturity, skills and demeanour.

Joseph Silver, Côte-St.-Luc, QC

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Correspondence ...

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence

Email: ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca

Hi John,

I just read with interest the following comment from the July edition (*from Richard Fleet – Ed.*):

To my mind, Zone 7 is a more extreme case: it is entirely unreasonable that mere geographical accident means that Australia and New Zealand are guaranteed places in the World Championships.

First let me say that I certainly do not entirely disagree with the sentiments expressed here.

However, there are some factors which exist in support of the current situation. Zone 7 currently accounts for 49,095 of the total WBF membership of a total 646,552 or around 8% of the total membership. In the Bermuda Bowl their 2 places out of the total 22 equates to 9% of the entries. Should the Zone be penalised for being as successful as it is in promoting bridge and gaining high participation rates for the game? Here are the extended numbers:

	Places	%	Members	Membership	%
Host Nation	1	4.55	—	—	—
Europe	6	27.27	47	387,684	59.96
North America	3	13.64	3	155,876	24.11
South America	2	9.09	9	3,700	0.57
Asia/Middle East	2	9.09	11	11,980	1.85
Central America/ Caribbean	1	4.55	24	1,811	0.28
Asia Pacific	3	13.64	13	30,098	4.66
South Pacific	2	9.09	4	49,095	7.59
Africa	2	9.09	17	6,308	0.98
Totals	22	100.00	128	646,552	100.00

Why not extend the discussion to South America, which gets 9% of the places with a mere .6% of the registered players worldwide, or to Africa, which gets 9% of the places with a mere 1% of the registered players?

Secondly, although Australia and New Zealand dominate Zone 7 and we accept that other countries in the Zone are unlikely to gain sufficient strength to compete at the highest level, the Zone does include Tahiti and Noumea.

I accept the argument that representation should perhaps be by the number of countries rather than the membership but this does not reflect the realities of bridge promotion around the world and the need to recognise those countries who are doing a great job in that area.

Suggesting greater representation for those countries which dominate the sport simply does not make sense. If they are a 99% chance to win what is the problem with allowing others to make up the field? It is after all a round robin.

It is high time that the World Championships were reorganised to reflect the reality that the winner will almost certainly come from Europe or the USA - to date, there has only been one exception to this rule.

In fact, Iceland won in 1991 and Brazil in 1989 (*Iceland is in Europe – Ed.*). But more importantly, this type of thinking is highly dangerous. Perhaps we should simply exclude all countries outside of Europe and the USA. This would simply have the effect of dampening the enthusiasm for the game outside of these countries. Part of the allure of the game is the opportunity of international representation and this must be encouraged for the game to grow at the top level. If in fact Europe and USA dominate the game then let them beat any others who aspire to topple their reign - like any other sport. Presumably nobody is suggesting that the Olympics should involve only those countries which dominate their disciplines.

The Bermuda Bowl should revert to being an open event for a small number of teams, say four. Of these, one each will come from Europe and the USA and two from anywhere in the world (including