



BULLETIN

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Editorial

To some extent, European bridge is a victim of its own success. The European Team Championships have been for decades one of the purest, toughest bridge tournaments in the world. Each series (Open, Women, Seniors) has been conducted as an all play all event since its inception. Until recent memory 32-board matches were played, but as more countries joined the European Bridge League and sent teams to the Championships, the matches were reduced in length to 20 boards, so that the event could be completed within the standard two-week time frame. Recently, the EBL admitted its 48th member – if all nations sent a team to the European Championships, the event would take 16 days of three matches a day without a break to complete! Something had to be done.

Thus, for the 49th European Bridge Teams Championships in Pau, France, from 14 to 28 June 2008, the EBL will introduce a new, experimental format in the Open series: teams will be split into two groups to play a first round robin. Then the nine top teams from each group will join in a second round robin from which the new European Champions will emerge. Teams finishing tenth or worse will be finished the Championship at the end of the first round robin. It is anticipated that matches will be of 20 boards in length.

Thus, the EBL can better control the number of matches each team plays, ameliorating another huge difficulty for the EBL - they must plan the championship years in advance; however, they do not know until a couple of months before the championship starts how many countries will enter. The past three championships produced 33, 33 and 38 entrants in the Open series respectively. It made planning difficult when anywhere from 30-odd to 40-odd teams could enter. In the new format, the worst (best?) that could happen would be two 24-team sections for the first round robin (8 days), then a further 18-team round robin (6 days). In the old format, two more days would be required.

The two initial groups will be seeded according to the rankings of the preceding three European Team Championships. Although it is a dangerous practice to seed countries rather than players, partnerships or teams, this practice should, in general, balance out. One anomaly could occur if Balicki-Zmudzinski are successful in their attempt to play for Russia with Gromov et al. Poland has finished 6th, 3rd, and 6th at the previous three Europeans, the most recent without BZ, the other two with BZ. Russia has finished 18th, 4th, and 17th in their three previous tries. Averaging their three efforts would give Russia a 13 seed and Poland a 5 seed. Is there anyone who believes that Russia could be the 13th-best nation in Europe with BZ on the team? This is merely one example – there will be other less extreme situations, depending on the team rosters. Additionally, perhaps a

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14-28 January, 2008, Canberra, Australia
 Alan Taylor, New Zealand

Procedural Problems

David Appleton found himself in a slightly unusual situation during the tournament - he opened three clubs, and two rounds of bidding later, had to defend against two no trump!

Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

David's three-club opening ran round to South, who doubled. David passed and North bid one no trump! David's partner Peter Reynolds thought that this was a splendid opportunity to dissuade David from persisting with clubs so condoned the insufficient bid by putting in two diamonds! This went back to North who tried two no trump, which became the final contract. What is the correct procedure for placing the bidding cards if Peter had passed and David had decided to bid two clubs? Does he take bidding cards from under his pile and show:



What if he wants to, instead, repeat his original bid? Does he borrow a card from Peter and show:



Ample scope for bush lawyers here, I think.

Terry Brown's Challenge

Deep Finesse has four spades going down on this deal from the Senior Teams final. Terry Brown challenges you to find the defence to beat it. See if you can do it before reading the solution.

Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

Initially, Brown had been puzzled by Deep Finesse's assertion that the defence should prevail against four spades. After a while, Terry found the necessary defence though any partnership which found it at the table would surely be in line for a brilliancy prize.

On the lie of the cards, the defence has three quick tricks through its aces. Declarer, meanwhile, has four tricks in each of spades and diamonds by weight of cards. In addition, declarer can establish the kings of clubs and hearts with a lead towards each. Also, there is the possibility of a club ruff in dummy. The defence must establish its fourth trick before declarer establishes his two outside the pointed suits.

There are three critical points in the play. The first comes immediately when declarer takes the lead of the diamond ten. If declarer goes after his side suit tricks at this point, then it is a simple matter for West to give East a diamond ruff for the setting trick. Declarer must, therefore, lead a trump. East ducks the first but takes the second trump, thus reducing dummy to a single trump.

This brings us to the second crucial point. East must return a club and West must play the queen. The effect of these plays is to enable either East or West to take the next round of clubs.

The third key position has now been reached. Declarer has four options.

1. He draws the last trump. When declarer tries to set up the king of hearts by leading towards dummy, West steps in with the ace and cashes two clubs.
2. He plays a heart from dummy – West takes this, crosses to East with a club and East removes the last trump. Declarer cannot now score either a ruff or a heart trick.
3. He comes to hand with a diamond in order to lead towards the king of hearts. West takes the heart and gives East a diamond ruff.
4. He plays the club seven. East takes this and draws the last trump and the position is as number 1.

A fascinating defence.

A Superior Line

Dealer East. NS Vul.

♠ A 9 5 3
♥ A Q 6 3 2
♦ 4 2
♣ 9 5

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

♠ Q
♥ J 10 8
♦ A K 6 5 3
♣ Q 8 4 3

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

In the Southwest Pacific Teams Championship, Polish superstar Cezary Balicki declared this hand in four hearts from the North seat. The club seven was led to the ten and West cashed the club king and returned the deuce. Declarer shed a spade and East ruffed with the nine of hearts. The king of spades pinned dummy's queen and was taken by the ace.

Cezary decided that he could not both establish and enjoy the diamond suit if West had king to three or king to four in trumps. So he cashed the ace of hearts, which dropped the king and thereafter played what amounted to a succession of finesses against the seven of hearts. The following cards remained:

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

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

A diamond was played to the ace and a club was ruffed with dummy's two. Back to the king of diamonds and a small diamond was ruffed by the three. A spade from the closed hand was ruffed with dummy's ten and a diamond caught West in an unusual sort of *en passant* position. Magic! (An equally successful line after the heart ace drops the king is ace-king and a third diamond, ruffing. After all, you know East is 6=2=3=2. Even if he is 5=2=4=2, white against red, either Balicki's line or the alternative works. - Ed.)

Losing Track

Have you ever lost track of the cards during the play of the hand. You know the situation where, at trick 11, you have to decide what to keep and what to pitch. Well, In Canberra, we had the player who lost track of the cards at trick one!

"Director!" came the call. TD Laurie Kelso ambled over to meet a distraught Roger Curnow who couldn't find his cards. The lead and dummy were on the table but Roger couldn't join in. He assured Laurie that he'd looked everywhere for his hand but it had just disappeared.

Experienced in such matters, Laurie took up the back-trail. "Did you have them during the auction?" he asked and Roger assured him that he had.

Laurie picked up the bidding box and extricated Roger's hand for him.

Problem? What Problem?

Board 15 in the final round of the South West Pacific Teams Championship produced all kinds of excitement and interesting situations...

Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

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

Holding the South hand, Andy Braithwaite didn't have a problem. He had a club which he'd been carrying in his bag for many years without using it, and now was the chance.

West	North	East	South
—	Rosendorff	—	Braithwaite
Pass	5 ♥ ²	Pass	4 NT ¹
Pass	Pass	Pass	7 ♠

1. Asking for specific aces
2. Heart ace

Braithwaite started with four no trump - a specific ace ask. Partner is required to bid five clubs with no aces, five of the suit in which he has an ace and five no trump with the club ace. Five hearts from Nigel Rosendorff saw North-South bid the spade grand in just three bids with East/West never in the auction.

In the other room...

West	North	East	South
<i>Haughie</i>		<i>Lilley</i>	
—	—	—	1 ♣ ¹
Double ²	2 ♦ ³	3 ♣	6 ♠
7 ♣	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Precision, 16+ HCP
2. Clubs and hearts
3. Balanced 8-10 HCP

...South went more slowly, then too quickly, and lived to regret it. Perhaps three spades would have coaxed a four-heart cue bid from North. As it was, Haughie decided that he didn't have too much defence and offered the sacrifice in seven clubs. North doubled this, no doubt with some confidence. His confidence was not misplaced, but plus 1100 was inadequate compensation for the 2210 collected by Braithwaite and Rosendorff.

A Precision-Club opening bid wasn't always unsuccessful, though Gaby Lorentz and John Lester needed a little push from the opponents. Their auction:

West	North	East	South
	<i>Lester</i>		<i>Lorentz</i>
—	—	—	1 ♣ ¹
2 ♠ ²	Double ³	4 ♣ ⁴	6 ♠
Pass	Pass	7 ♣	Pass ⁵
Pass	7 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Precision, 16+ HCP
2. Clubs and hearts, or spades and diamonds
3. Usually 5-8 HCP; sometimes 9+
4. Pass or correct
5. Forcing

Lester appreciated that the heart ace was precisely what Lorentz needed for the grand slam.

Jan Cormack also had a direct ace ask in her bag, but either couldn't find it or else thought that partner Alan Turner wouldn't remember what it meant! So Jan opened two clubs instead...

West	North	East	South
	<i>Turner</i>		<i>Cormack</i>
—	—	—	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♠ ¹	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♥ ²	Pass	4 ♦ ³
Pass	4 ♥ ⁴	Pass	7 ♠ ⁵
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Balanced 8-10 HCP
2. Natural
3. Sets trumps
4. Cue bid for diamonds
5. Re-sets trumps!

Another variation in the choice of opening bid occurred when South opened six spades...

West	North	East	South
<i>Chadwick</i>		<i>Reitzer</i>	
—	—	—	6 ♠
6 NT (!)	Double	7 ♣	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Sitting West was Ted Chadwick, who describes himself as playing Youth Bridge. He lived up to his own description by producing six no trump. North didn't think that this was making (he was right, to the tune of 3200) and doubled. Jean Reitzer rescued into seven clubs and, after the formality of a double, Jean found her way to minus 1100 and a huge pickup.

Another West tried a different form of deflection at one table. She opened a multi two diamonds out of turn!

West	North	East	South
2 ♦ ^{1,2}	—	—	2 ♣ ^{3,4}
3 ♥ ⁵	Double ⁶	Pass	6 ♠ ⁷
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Multi, weak in one major
2. Unfortunately, 2♦ was out of turn. "Director! South was the dealer!"
3. "I don't think I should accept 2♦, do you?"
4. "I think 4NT would ask for specific aces, but I fear the Memory Coup, either by me or by Partner."
5. "OK, no unauthorised information any longer, I hope."
6. "I have no idea what's going on, but surely this can't make."
7. "I'm too exhausted to bid more slowly."

Perhaps the most exciting situation on the board was at the table were Patrick Carter and Julie Atkinson sat East and West respectively.

West	North	East	South
<i>Atkinson</i>		<i>Carter</i>	
—	—	—	2 ♣
3 ♥ ¹	6 NT ²	Pass	7 NT ³
Double ⁴	Pass	Pass ⁵	Pass

1. I'm not shy
2. Nor am I
3. I'm guessing a bit...
4. ...and you guessed wrongly. DO NOT lead a heart, Partner
5. Why ever not?

This auction left Carter fairly and squarely in the hot seat. He tried the effect of the king of hearts. North-South tried the effect of plus 2490!

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IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra

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425. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

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

While the leap to six hearts was a gamble, not bidding slam would have been unduly pessimistic.

Declarer showed how to make twelve tricks after West led the eight of spades. He played low from dummy and East took the trick with the queen of spades then shifted to a diamond. As he had only eleven top tricks, declarer needed to establish a spade trick for his twelfth. The only hope was that trumps were no worse than 3-1 and East began with no more than six spades. This meant declarer would need two entries to take ruffing finesses against East's spade honours and another to cash the established spade. So, because trumps might be 3-1, he took the diamond switch with the ace and cashed the ace of trumps. When both opponents followed, he led the nine of trumps to dummy's ten, and called for the jack of spades.

If East had followed with a small spade declarer planned to throw the two of clubs from hand. However, East played the ace of spades and declarer ruffed with the king of trumps. The latter play allowed declarer to re-enter dummy by leading the six of trumps to dummy's eight, drawing West's remaining trump in the process. Next the nine of spades was led and East covered it with his king. Declarer ruffed, crossed to dummy using the queen of diamonds and then threw the two of clubs on the established seven of spades.

426. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Declarer made rather a mess of this contract after West led a passive nine of hearts. He took the trick in hand with the jack of hearts and laid down the king of diamonds. When West showed out, he had to lose two diamonds and three black suit tricks.

As usual, the best plays come after counting tricks. There are six top winners and the certainty of developing a trick in clubs. So declarer needed two more tricks from the diamond suit. While this would not be possible if West began with four diamonds, the contract was still certain if it was East who had all of the missing diamonds.

The correct play was therefore to win the trick in dummy with queen of hearts and to lead a low diamond, intending to play the nine whenever East followed with the seven of diamonds. In this were to pass, declarer would always make four diamond tricks.

It would do East no good to play the ten of diamonds for then declarer takes it with the king, while West discards a black card. A low diamond to the eight ensures that declarer will make seven red-suit tricks and a club will provide the ninth trick.

Notice that if the first trick is won in hand and a low diamond is played, the contract still fails because declarer lacks the entries to pick up the diamond suit with the loss of only one trick.

427. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2 NT
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♥*	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♠	Pass	6 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

This deal occurred in the 2008 South West Pacific Teams Championship in Canberra last January.

West led the six of hearts and declarer won in the dummy and played a trump to the king, West showing out. He then fell from grace by playing two more rounds of hearts, throwing a club from dummy. His intention was to give up a club and then ruff a club in dummy. Alas, East ruffed the third heart and shifted to a club. His partner's ace of clubs was the setting trick.

Once trumps proved to be 4-0, the chance of West holding six hearts was greater than normal. So, declarer should have planned to reverse the dummy, ruffing two diamonds in hand. After cashing the king-ace of diamonds and ruffing a diamond, the contract becomes a certainty when this key suit actually proves to be 4-3. Declarer crosses back to dummy with a trump to the ten and ruffs the last diamond. As he has one trump left and dummy two, he can draw the remaining trumps while discarding the three of clubs from hand. Then a club is conceded and declarer makes four trumps, three hearts, two diamonds, two diamond ruffs and a club.

If East has five diamonds, there are two choices; play the king of clubs next and hope to scramble through or to play as above, hoping that West has the ace of clubs. As the latter is a better chance it should be adopted. When East has only two diamonds, declarer should try the effect of king of clubs before embarking on any more diamond ruffs.

Once the trumps proved to be 4-0, the recommended line succeeds over 80% of the time compared to about 65% for the line chosen at the table.

428. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	3 ♠	Pass
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

North easily brushed aside East's pre-emptive overcall in spades and drove to the small slam in diamonds, using Roman Key Card Blackwood along the way.

The question declarer faced was how to make twelve tricks after West led the five of spades to East's jack. He took the first trick with the ace of spades, drew trumps in two rounds and, seeking to make all thirteen tricks, played hearts from the top. When the suit proved to be 5-1 and the club finesse was wrong, declarer was held to eleven tricks.

Declarer missed a simple safety play to guarantee his contract. After cashing the queen of hearts, he should have finessed the ten of hearts on the second round of the suit. On the given layout declarer scores a spade, a spade ruff, four hearts, five trumps and the ace of clubs. If West had three or four hearts to the jack, declarer would make all thirteen tricks. If East happened to take the ten of hearts with the jack, then dummy's remaining ace-king-seven would provide three club discards.

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Bermuda Regional 2008

January 26-February 2, 2008
John Carruthers, Toronto

When travelling, I always have an eye out for unusual little things that I've never seen anywhere else. One of these little vignettes appeared soon after my arrival in Bermuda: I was enjoying a libation in the hotel bar when a woman hobbled slowly into the hotel lobby aided by her walking stick – and carrying her motorcycle helmet!

Since Bermuda is one of the most densely-populated places on Earth, the government makes it difficult for automobile ownership by (i) adding tremendously-high import duties to vehicle costs, (ii) forbidding foreigners from driving, (iii) disallowing rental cars. Thus the ubiquitous motorcycles and mopeds.

However, since no building is taller than about six storeys, there is no real feeling of being crowded, as for example there is in Hong Kong, Rio de Janeiro or Monte Carlo, and the islands are truly beautiful, not least because of the beautiful beaches and scenery, the pretty houses painted in pastel colours and none of the tawdriness one sees on other island nations. Its being a world centre for banking and reinsurance has made Bermuda a fairly affluent place.



Horseshoe Bay

What about the bridge tournament? Ah yes, a number of things make the annual Bermuda Regional the most brilliant gem on the ACBL's calendar each year (although for WBF purposes, they are in Zone 5 – Caribbean and Central America). Firstly, the Bermudians – they go out of their way to make all visitors welcome. Secondly, the schedule itself, with some major events taking place only in the evenings, allows visitor to explore the islands and partake of their pleasures. Thirdly, there is a gala

Closing Banquet and Prize Giving unequalled at any other tournament – magnificent food, great prizes, wonderful entertainment. It's more like a World Championship, except they do it better in Bermuda! Fourthly, it's a bit of a throwback to a time when people at bridge tournaments dressed better, were more polite – there are actually a few formal-dress evenings.

There are other highlights as well: David Ezekiel hosts fantastic Panel Shows; the Committee brings Bermudian Market Day right to the players, with Bermudian crafts for sale at the tournament; there is high tea every afternoon; and this year there was a book signing with Edward MacPherson, author of 'The Backwash Squeeze'. All in all, the Tournament Committee does a fantastic job of making sure the experience is enjoyed by all.

You can check it all out at www.bermudaregional.com. Next year is the tournament's 50th birthday and the plans are already underway to make it better than ever.

How about a couple of declarer play problems?

Problem 1. IMPs. Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ A K 9 6 4 2
♥ 5 3
♦ 8 6
♣ A 7 3

♠ Q
♥ A J 10 4
♦ A 9 5
♣ K Q J 10 4

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♦
Double	4 ♠	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♥	Double	6 ♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

You bid so beautifully. Can you back up your beautiful bidding with some masterful declarer play?

West leads the three of hearts. (Thank goodness your opponents don't bid as beautifully as you do.) The double of five hearts has saved you from a diamond lead which would almost certainly have been fatal. Can you make East pay for that fatuous double of five hearts?

Problem 2. IMPs. Dealer South. NS Vul.

♠ 10 7
♥ A Q 10
♦ A K 9 2
♣ A 10 8 3

♠ 8 6
♥ K 9 7 6 4
♦ J 10 7 5
♣ Q 9

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

Your partner North obviously felt that his hand was just too good to open a 15-17 no trump, then felt constrained to raise hearts rather than rebid two no trump with two low spades.

West leads the two of spades (standard leads) and East wins the king, cashes the ace, and shifts to a heart (three, four, two, ten). How would you play?

(Solutions at the end of the article.)

Defenders' Revenge

One of the most annoying things that can happen to you as a defender is for declarer to squeeze you out of a trick, especially a game- or slam-going trick. Thus it is a great pleasure when the defenders are able to put the squeeze on declarer. Watch how Allan Graves and Bill Souster cooked declarer's goose on the following deal.

Board 16. Dealer West. EW Vul.

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

Graves led his fourth-best spade to the queen and king. Declarer tried a low heart, but Graves hopped up with the queen and played another spade. Declarer won the jack and played the heart king, which Souster allowed to hold the trick, and another heart, Graves ditching a diamond (there was no diamond in his hand which would have insisted that Souster switch to one). Souster won the third heart and returned his last spade, declarer winning the ace in dummy while discarding a diamond from hand. West now cashed his heart trick (Graves discarding another diamond) and took the club finesse, which lost to Graves' king. When Graves cashed his spades, declarer had to discard from king and another diamond and the ace-jack of clubs on the last of them. He could either discard a winner or unguard the king

of diamonds. When he chose to discard a diamond, Graves cashed the diamond ace, dropping the king and his diamond queen was the setting trick.

Note that if Souster wins the second heart, declarer has an idle heart to discard on the run of the spades. This is what happened at the other table, so Eric Murray made one no trump.

A Little Nap

The defence lulled declarer into a false sense of security on the following deal.

Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠ ¹	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	3 NT	Pass	4 NT ²
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass

1. Inverted, game-forcing
2. Quantitative

West led the jack of clubs and declarer won the ace to take the losing spade finesse. Now, West, seduced by that three-heart bid, played a heart for her partner to ruff. Declarer won the jack and considered his next plays carefully. He was up to 11 tricks and needed to take a ruff in one hand or the other if trumps were 4-1. If they were 3-2 he was cold. So he cashed two high diamonds from hand and played ace and another spade ruffing in dummy. Both defenders followed to the spades.

So far, so good. Unfortunately, cashing the two high diamonds from hand meant that he could not now afford to overtake dummy's remaining high diamond without creating a trump winner for East.

"No problem," thought declarer, "I'll just cash dummy's diamond, lead a heart to the jack, draw the last trump and claim."

Oops! All he had to do, of course, was cash a high diamond from each hand, keeping two high diamonds in the South hand so that he could draw trumps safely.



Riddell's Bay

Solutions to Declarer Play Problems

Solution 1. There are four reasonable lines of play:

1. Win the heart, play the spade queen and a club to the ace and try the ace and king of spades to discard two diamonds. If that passes off successfully, play a heart from dummy, and assuming East ducks, try to ruff a heart in dummy.
2. Play one or two high clubs from hand, unblock the spade queen, then a club to the ace, then spades from the top.
3. Return the heart jack immediately to East's king. Win the diamond return and discard dummy's second diamond on the ten of hearts. Ruff a diamond, come back to the spade queen and ruff your last diamond. Discard your fourth heart of the ace of spades. If that all has passed off successfully, claim.
4. Overtake the spade queen in dummy to lead a heart. If East wins the king, you are ok. It is rather complicated if he ducks.

The first two lines basically depend on spades 3-3 plus other decent breaks. Line three needs hearts 4-3 and spades no worse than 4-2, a seemingly more promising proposition. Which line, if any, would have been successful? Take a look at the full deal:

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

Notice that filthy trump break! Also note that line three was successful, West having to follow helplessly to two spades, three hearts and three diamonds. Did you make East regret his double?

At the table, declarer did start out on line three, playing a second heart at trick two, but he fell from grace by changing his mind and trying to split the spades 3-3.

What about line 4? If East ducks the heart (good play!), you duck a diamond and ruff a diamond and a heart, discarding a heart on a spade, except when West wins the diamond and plays a spade. Then you are down.

What about ruffing a heart immediately, then ducking a diamond to West? That would work, but what if East plays the diamond jack? (great play!) You can't let him hold it. If you have not cashed the second spade, East can play the fourth heart for West to discard a spade; if you have taken away West's second spade, East can lead a third spade for a trump promotion.

So, you must win the diamond ace and give West a diamond. Does that do it? No, West gets out the nine of clubs and you have no entry to your hand to ruff that diamond without establishing a trump trick for West.

Okay, down one. That would have been a fantastic defence of ducking the heart and playing the jack of diamonds.

Solution 2. If you think that this does not look like a hand on which you need only one of two finesses to win, you are right. It's even better than that!

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

A priori, this hand needs either the club king or diamond queen on your left. Why is that? You draw trumps by winning the ten and the ace; when both follow you overtake the queen with the king, then lead the club queen. If West has the king, you are home: he covers and you win the ace. Look at the power of those intermediate clubs. You now play a club to the nine and jack. Once the jack is gone, the ten and eight provide discards for two diamonds.

Now suppose the queen loses to the king. East will return a spade for you to ruff. You lead the club nine to the ace for your second (albeit slim) chance: that the jack will fall. If it does you have your discards again. If the club jack does not fall under the ace, you cash the ace of diamonds (just in case the queen is singleton), ruff a club back to your hand and take the diamond finesse. You could go down an extra trick if East has the

doubleton queen of diamonds and the club king, but that's an impossibility?

Why impossible? Return to the bidding. East passed over Partner's one diamond opening. He would not have done so with the ace-king to five spades (recall West led the fourth-best two), the diamond queen and the club king. In fact, it's almost a bridge certainty that the club king is with West because any player would also overcall with ace-king to five spades (and maybe the jack as well) and the club king.

So you see, it was quite a way better than the 75% chance of either finesse. What did declarer do at the table? He took a diamond finesse.

The Prize Giving Dinner and Dance was emceed with his usual wit and aplomb by David Ezekiel. The food was sumptuous, the entertainment was superb and the prizes were wonderful. Who could ask for more?



13th NEC CUP
February 6-10, 2008
Barry Rigal, NYC
Rich Colker, Wheaton, MD

Once again, NEC and the Japan Contract Bridge League fêted a star-studded field of international and Japanese teams in this prestigious event. And once again, Israel (Israel Yadlin, Doron Yadlin, Michael Barel, Migry Zur-Campanile) won. They're the 2008 NEC Cup Champions for the third time in the last four years; they have reached the NEC Cup final four times in the last five years. Is there no one who can stop this runaway freight train? The runners-up this year were The Latin (Frankie Frontaura, Federico Goded, Gonzalo Goded, Diego Brenner).



The Host Hotel - Yokohama Grand Inter-Continental

The teams played 8 x 20-board Swiss matches to select 8 qualifiers for knockout play. Matches of 40, 40 and 64 boards determined the winner.

The fourth qualifying match produced this gem.

Swiss Match 4. Board 6. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Tanaka	Arlovich	Naito	Zhuravel
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Double
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Olanski	Akama	Vainikonis	Maruyama
—	Pass	2 ♥ ¹	Pass
2 NT ²	Pass	3 ♥ ³	Pass
3 NT	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 5+ hearts and 5+ any other suit, weak
2. Forcing
3. Hearts and spades

In the match between Naito and the Lithuanians, four hearts made in one room and five hearts was defeated in the other. The defenders to five hearts led a club. Declarer played a spade, and South won to find the heart shift. Declarer made a reasonable play when he rose with the ace and tried to dispose of his four spade losers via a ruff and dummy's four minor-suit winners. But North could ruff in and spoil the party.

Declarer does best to duck the heart shift in dummy. If North wins the king to return a trump, declarer wins the ace, ruffs a diamond, draws the last trump and now he has the four discards he needs in the dummy, because of the fall of the diamond queen. This line always makes the hand whenever clubs split (as before) but also provides the additional chance in diamonds. If North plays back a spade, declarer can take the ruff, come back to hand with a diamond ruff, and is in complete control. And if North plays back a club declarer runs the clubs at North and can over-ruff and draw trumps whenever he chooses to ruff in.

So North must duck the heart king to stand a chance of defeating the game. Declarer now does best, both at single- and double-dummy to draw a second trump himself and ruff a diamond. Then he goes to dummy with a top club and cashes two diamonds; if the queen has not appeared he needs clubs 3-3. When it does appear he has to decide who has the last trump. If South, he must cash two clubs then the diamond jack; if North, he must take the diamond before playing on clubs. So I guess it is all down to the tempo at trick three. If North ducks his heart king without a flicker he deserves to beat you!

The top qualifiers were: **Mahaffey** 161, **The Latin** 147, **Not the Empire** 146, **Israel** 144, **Canada** 141, **Lithuania** 139, **YOI Returns** 139, **Geller** 132

In the quarterfinal match between Israel and Canada, Migry Zur-Campanile and Michael Barel of Israel were defending a two-spade contract by Nicholas and Judith Gartaganis of Canada. Here's the situation they faced.

Quarterfinal. Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ A Q J 8 7 2
 ♥ Q
 ♦ K 8 5
 ♣ J 3 2

♠ K 6
 ♥ A 8 6
 ♦ A J 9 4 2
 ♣ A Q 6

♠ 5 4 3
 ♥ J 10 9 7 4
 ♦ Q 7 6
 ♣ 8 5

♠ 10 9
 ♥ K 5 3 2
 ♦ 10 3
 ♣ K 10 9 7 4

West	North	East	South
Barel	N Gartaganis	Campanile	J Gartaganis
—	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Double	2 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Campanile, sitting East, led a club and received her ruff at trick three. In this same position, defenders at other tables shifted either to a high or low heart, but whatever they did, declarer was able to build an entry to dummy to play diamonds or to reach club discards for the diamond losers.

Campanile realized that the auction had marked declarer with precisely 6=1=3=3 and she needed to kill the diamond ruff. So she shifted to a low spade and now it was Barel's turn to shine. He ducked! Now try and make it.

The Quarterfinal match between Mahaffey and Geller saw the following (see top of next column). Geller made an overtrick in six diamonds when Fredin led a spade. The other table was more interesting...

Quarterfinal. Board 18. Dealer East. NS Vul.

♠ 10 9 8 6 4 2
 ♥ 10 9
 ♦ J
 ♣ Q 10 7 2

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

♠ A K Q
 ♥ K 8 4
 ♦ A 9 5
 ♣ K J 5 4

♠ J 7 5 4
 ♥ Q 5 3
 ♦ 7 4 3
 ♣ A 6 3

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Geller	Fredin	Ogihara	Fallenius
—	—	2 NT	Pass
6 ♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Nyström	Abe	Bertheau	Yamazaki
—	—	1 ♣ ¹	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT ¹	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥ ¹	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 ♣ ¹	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	3 NT ¹	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	4 NT ¹	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	6 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Relays

One can overdo cliches such as “the play's the thing” but here was just such a deal. Bertheau relayed six times to discover that the optimal biddable contract was six no trump (Nyström bid diamonds first). Yamazaki led a spade, letting declarer, after great thought, win and cash a second spade rather than play a club to his king (sometimes it holds with the king offside). He then ran six diamonds, both defenders pitching spades, and now led a heart to the king and the last spade winner. In this four-card ending:

♠ —
 ♥ 9
 ♦ —
 ♣ Q 10 7

♠ —
 ♥ A J
 ♦ —
 ♣ 9 8

♠ Q
 ♥ 8
 ♦ —
 ♣ K J

♠ —
 ♥ Q 5
 ♦ —
 ♣ A 6

Abe kept the queen-seven of clubs and a heart, pitching his club ten, and South kept his hearts and the club ace.

Declarer now misguessed the ending, playing a heart to the ace and a club. South claimed the last two tricks. Bertheau always sits West by the way, and he felt that this declarer play problem had only come his way because he had angered the card gods by sitting in the wrong chair.

The quarterfinal results were:

Mahaffey	113	Geller	58
The Latin	124	Lithuania	57
YOI Returns	99	Not the Empire	93
Israel	112	Canada	71

Here is a deal from the semifinal matchup between Mahaffey and The Latin.

Semifinal. Board 28. Dealer West Neither Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fredin</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Fallenius</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
1 NT	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠ ¹	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		
1. Relay			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Nyström</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>
1 NT	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♣	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

It was easy to see why Fredin drove to slam facing a slam try, less clear why Fallenius made a try at all. After stripping the hand of the majors Fredin led the ace of clubs and a club to the queen; Frontaura played a diamond. Had Brenner put up the king he would have survived; when he ducked, declarer won cheaply and ran the trumps to squeeze South in the minors.

In the other room Federico Goded ran the trumps after a spade lead to come down to this position.

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

On the last trump he pitched a club from dummy and South threw a diamond and North a (not so innocuous) spade. Declarer exited with ace and a second diamond to force a club play from South, but the club king was wrong for declarer so he went down one. As the cards lay, he could have succeeded by playing the queen of diamonds from hand, which would have endplayed North on the second round of the suit. How could North pitch a spade if he had the diamond king? Would he not pitch a club and cash his spade when in with the diamond? And why not keep a spade in any case – declarer can hardly have ace-jack to three clubs and have followed this line of play.

The Semifinal results:

The Latin	91	Mahaffey	75
Israel	94	YOI Returns	50

Final. Board 8. Dealer West Neither Vul

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>Brenner</i>
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	Double
Pass	1 NT	2 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>G Goded</i>	<i>D Yadlin</i>	<i>F Goded</i>	<i>I Yadlin</i>
Pass	Pass	2 ♥	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

In the first segment of the final, Barel found a light opening bid that let them buy the contract at a low

level. Campanile played two hearts on a top spade lead. Brenner shifted intelligently to a top diamond, then led a low spade when that held. Frontaura and played a third spade. That helped Campanile, if she needed it. She ruffed, crossed to the club ace to run the queen of hearts, ducked all round, then ruffed a club to hand, crossed to the ace of diamonds to ruff a club, and exited in diamonds. In the three-card ending she could ensure two trump tricks. There were Portuguese mutterings from the South seat about pearls before swine, but North was not listening; it was, after all, only plus 110, and as we shall see, North's defence, while not best, was not critical.

There were much higher stakes in the other room. Israel Yadlin led a top spade, shifted to a top diamond, went back to spades, and Doron as North took the spade ace and played a second diamond. That took an entry out of dummy prematurely; necessary, but was it sufficient? Declarer passed the heart queen, ruffed a spade, and played the third diamond. South won and exited a club; declarer was trump-bound in the four-card ending and had to lose two hearts for down one. All declarer had needed to do was to play two rounds of clubs before exiting with the diamond, and the defenders would have had to reduce declarer's trumps for him, to execute the trump coup.

The defence to beat two hearts legitimately is surely impossible to find; Israel either has to lead a diamond or Doron has to overtake the spade king with the ace at trick one to shift to diamonds; that does break up the trump endplay.

Final. Board 35. Dealer South EW Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>F Goded</i>
—	—	—	1 ♠
2 ♠ ¹	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♥ ²	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Michaels Cue Bid
2. Hearts and clubs, max

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>D Yadlin</i>	<i>Brenner</i>	<i>I Yadlin</i>
—	—	—	1 ♠
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

In the third set, both tables made the Michaels Cue Bid that, even at unfavorable vulnerability, seems to be the mainstream action. Campanile's two-no-trump relay got a three-heart response to show clubs and a maximum, but they were surely on their way to four hearts anyway. Alas for Israel, getting West to be declarer made the spade ruff far easier to find. Barel did not drop the spade king at trick one; had he done so South might have returned the suit (since West was 5-5, there could be no slow diamond trick if he had a singleton spade) but you never know.

In the other room, Israel Yadlin led a diamond, declarer unblocked diamonds, crossed to the club ace, and discarded that awkward spade loser. On the first trump play, Israel rose with ace and played the ace and another spade; Brenner had no sensible losing options: but he did not know that. He eventually ruffed with the heart seven, drew trumps and played a club towards dummy to bring home ten tricks.

Final. Board 47. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>	<i>G Goded</i>	<i>Campanile</i>	<i>F Goded</i>
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Frontaura</i>	<i>D Yadlin</i>	<i>Brenner</i>	<i>I Yadlin</i>
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Both tables played four hearts and both declarers committed the error of winning the first club, not that it was necessarily going to matter today. Gonzalo Goded played on spades without touching trumps. West got two over-ruffs in and the club and the heart ace meant one down. If declarer had taken one round of trumps early, his heart king would have lost to the ace, letting him draw a second round of trumps and avoiding all danger.

In the other room, Doron Yadlin (who explained to me later that his idea behind winning the first trick was to play on clubs before spades) did lead a heart to the king at trick two - and Brenner ducked! This was truly excellent defence. If declarer now followed the normal line of ruffing spades he would run into the buzz-saw of the over-ruffs. Now you see why ducking trick one is so important.

No; throughout this tournament the Yadlins have demonstrated their ability to do the right thing at the right time (or to make the wrong play only when it does not matter). On this deal, Doron's choice of going to the king of spades to lead a second heart might have been fatal if spades were 4-2 and East had the ace-jack of hearts, if the clubs did not come in. Not today, it was the winning line.

The final score was Israel 144 – The Latin 105.

NEWS & VIEWS

Sweden Wins Yeh Bros Cup

Peter Betheau-Fredrik Nyström and Björn Fallenius-Peter Fredin have won the 2008 Yeh Bros Cup in Taiwan. The Swedes take home \$60,000 in prize money. We'll have a full report on this event next month.

WBF Directory Available

As part of its 50th year celebrations, the WBF has produced a directory of information and services. A limited number of these directories have been made available to IBPA members on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Christine Francin at the WBF Secretariat for your no charge copy: cfrancin@community.fr

23rd Portugal Grand Prix

Estoril will be once again the site of this excellent tournament. Open Swiss Teams will be held April 15-17 in the Casino and Open Pairs April 18-20 in the Estoril Convention Centre next door to the Casino. Generous prize money is on offer and hotels in the 75-200 Euro range are available. www.fpbridge.pt

...*Editorial*- continued from page 1

weighted ranking would be better, giving 100% weight to the previous European result, 75% to four years previously and 50% to six years previously.

One thing not specified in the Rules and Regulations for Pau is whether the results of the first round robin will count toward the second. There are four methods that could be used: (i) count all matches full value, (ii) start over, (iii) use a % of each nation's VP total as a carry forward, or (iv) weight the first round robin matches unevenly, giving more weight to matches between the teams that qualified for the second round robin, for example, 100% weight to matches versus qualifying teams and 50% weight to matches versus non-qualifying teams. Arguments can be produced for any of the four choices.

Next on the agenda must be a method of going forward. Again, although this is not specified, it seems the intention is to continue using the past three European Championships as a basis for seeding the two groups in future championships as well. An alternative might be to use the example provided by football. Thus, for the 2010 Europeans, the teams finishing in the top 18 in 2008 become Division 1, playing only among themselves, while the remainder of the teams, plus any new entrants, become Division 2. The teams finishing in the bottom four, say, of Division 1 are then relegated to Division 2 for the next championship, while the top four from Division 2 are promoted to Division 1 for next time. This method would actually produce some interest and excitement for players and followers of the 10th to 30th-ranked teams as the tournament progressed, something normally lacking in round robin play. All those teams would be playing to either avoid relegation or to achieve promotion. If it became expedient to increase the number of teams in Division 1 to 20 teams, six teams could be promoted and four relegated.

Two divisions would also allow either of two alternatives: (i) a double round robin within each division, or (ii) an increase in the length of matches.

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Correspondence...

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Dear John,

Bobby Wolff, an old friend of mine, has kindly sent me a copy of his new book, "The Lone Wolff". As it happens, there are a few errors of fact and emphasis in the chapter in the book entitled "The Special World of the WBF" which I would like the opportunity to set straight.

- * Bobby credits me with negotiating the sponsorship deal with NEC. While it is correct that I handled the actual sponsorship details on behalf of the WBF, the credit for obtaining this generous sponsor belongs to Alberto Calvo, then the ambassador from Panama to Japan and to Tetsuji Hikawa of the JCBL.
- * References to the failure of a proposal to host the 1992 Olympiad in Brighton which place the blame for this at my door, are quite wrong. One of Jimmy Ortiz-Patiño's legacies was the awarding of the 1992 Olympiad to Seville. As time passed, I became increasingly concerned that the Spanish Federation did not have the infrastructure or experience for this task and that the tournament would need to be sited elsewhere. These misgivings were raised at the WBF Executive Council meetings in Perth in 1989. With time running out, I later got in touch with Grattan Endicott, for obvious reasons on a confidential basis, to sound out interest in the BBL staging the Olympiad in Brighton. As a result, I had a cordial meeting in 1990 with BBL officials, who quite reasonably expressed concern about the costs involved. No firm understanding was reached. We later met in Brighton with the people responsible for the venue. To my complete surprise, I was told that they had received a letter from Jose Damiani, the president of the EBL (also first vice-president of the WBF) to the effect that the EBL would not support the Brighton proposal. That rebuff and the subsequent ructions in Geneva explain why the Brighton proposal came to nothing, not because I "made demands on the Brighton volunteers that turned them off"! How Bobby picked up that canard is a mystery to me. To complete the story, the Italians later very generously came to the rescue and held the 1992 Olympiad in Salsamaggiore.
- * Bobby's description of my difficulties with Jimmy during the Ocho Rios championships in 1987 is incorrect in part. When Jimmy refused re-election in Miami in 1986, despite repeated requests, from me included, to continue as president, I understood that he was sailing off to conquer the world of golf. Instead, in October 1987, he sailed into Ocho Rios harbour, with the WBF flag fluttering on the masthead of his yacht, and proceeded to hold a series of meetings and functions with bridge officials. I remonstrated with Jimmy about these divisive activities before he left Ocho Rios, but there was no exchange of "vitriolic, angry letters". Those came later, as the process of destabilisation grew apace. In this context, Bobby's observation that Jimmy's support was responsible for my election in 1986 is absolutely correct.

- * While Jimmy was certainly not in my corner in 1990 in Geneva, Bobby's comment that this was what cost me the WBF presidency is a little off the mark, as is the statement that I was re-elected in Geneva by a vote of 7 to 6. In fact the vote was 8 to 6. Ernesto d'Orsi and Mazhar Jafri voted for José, almost certainly against the wishes of their respective Zonal Conferences. But with a visit by José Damiani to the ACBL to ask for the support of their delegates having been unsuccessful, José's election bid fell short. Tout de suite to stage two, with the EBL's boycott of WBF affairs during my presidency being announced and with the four EBL Councillors leaving the Executive Council meeting as soon as the election result was known. The threatened boycott was the reason for my resignation. Hanging tough was certain to damage the WBF, and in particular the interests of the players. Bobby's recollection of other events at this time is also slightly astray.
- * For the record, I don't understand Bobby's claim that I sent him a letter in 1994 criticising his presidency. I had then and have no view now on Bobby's time as WBF president.

Bobby has been a great champion and a committed administrator. I wish him and his book every success.

Denis Howard, Sydney

Hi Denis (and John),

I've done some preliminary checking on what prompted me to write and conclude the paragraph on page 135 concerning your visit to Brighton, England.

In my zeal to write an unbiased analysis of all of the "top dogs of the WBF" mainly you, Jimmy and José I, perhaps wrongly but perhaps not, wanted to depict you as having meticulous habits and a hard-line negotiating posture. Those two qualities gave both Jimmy and José the opportunity to depict you as "hard to work for and, at times, feeling like employees dealing with their boss". This possibly led to the Brighton people complaining that they didn't have a proper opportunity to show what they could do and eventually convince you that Brighton could handle the championship. Whatever, it is to me an oft-told story of when NO is the final answer there are always excuses, and sometimes worse, left to be said by the ones who are told NO.

I am sure that subconsciously I was hoping you would accept that depiction as only that of any successful leader who demanded an adequate site, proper conditions as well as quality workers, and didn't have forever to find it.

In my investigation I gave José a chance to criticize me rather severely for my depiction of him as favoring the Europeans during the episode of the "Losing Team Wins". The reason he voted for the Germans was because of the possibility of, after several hours, the losing team may buy their way back into the event by bribing the real winners to concede. He

went further and reminded me that I, in The Lone Wolff, admitted receiving just such an offer.

He then went further to say that when an appeals committee that I chaired in Albuquerque in 1994 during the Rosenblum, ruled against his team to cause them to lose (and be eliminated) to Israel by 2 IMPs I was accused by some (not him) of being part of a Jewish lobby assuring Israel of victory. I only vaguely remember that appeal, but do remember at the time I was quite convinced that we ruled justifiably. I, of course, will try and reconstruct that appeal, but it will take me some time and effort to do it.

Sincerely, I do apologize to you for my words. I am not by nature a writer nor by any sense of the word a real intellectual, but it seems to me that the average intelligent reader is probably more interested in determining who the person depicted really is, rather than closely examining the exact nature of any random event. That said, my remembrances of you are pretty much as I mention in my book - brilliant, hard-working, dedicated, totally honest, painstakingly fair and tough. If you would rather be thought of as a pussycat, I suggest you save that for your very special Robin.

Always your friend and supreme admirer, Bobby Wolff, Las Vegas

John,

Regarding David Stern's article on the "future of bridge", and specifically youth bridge, please refer to:

www.atlantajuniorbridge.org

www.bridgeiscool.com

www.youthnabc.org

Phillip Alder has a great column in my newspaper today about a hand played by the winners of the Georgia Youth Open Pairs State Championship held in Roswell, Georgia, on December 8th. The winners were aged 7 and 10. The declarer was the 7 year old (Andrew).

This speaks to David Stern's items #1, 2, & 3. Atlanta has a huge program in schools. As you may know Flo Belford has a very successful program in the Toronto schools. David should contact Flo at: fbelford@sympatico.ca

The organizations helping to support these programs are the ACBL Educational Foundation, and the ACBL Education Department. The ACBL Educational Foundation has granted \$8,000 to Atlanta Youth Bridge for 2008, and granted \$9,000 in 2007.

The problem with David's item #1 is that the \$500,000 from the WBF would be spent for marketing companies and then in all likelihood nothing would happen. Much better to give grants, based on very specific guidelines, for the teaching of bridge in schools, senior centers, or community centers. This would be more work for the WBF but than nothing comes for free.

Best regards, Jerry Thorpe, Tacoma WA

Dear John,

After completing the new versions of Windows Bidding System in Chinese and English, we created the website www.rr-joy.hk that published the WBS as an e-book. We intend only to give another bidding system choice for bridge

players, which we believe is good for the game. Thank you very much.

Robert and Rosa Lui, Vancouver BC

Dear John,

Re: Weinstein in USAI v. South Africa, here's what Law 9A says ("Procedure Following an Irregularity"):

2. During the play period,

(a) Declarer or Either Defender,

Unless prohibited by law, declarer or either defender **may** call attention to an irregularity that occurs during the play period. (*My emphasis.*)

Note the use of the permissive "may"; clearly, the Law expressly contemplates that a player has the option not to call attention to an irregularity. Law 11A ("Forfeiture of the Right to Penalize") provides that, "The right to penalize an irregularity may be forfeited if either member of the non-offending side takes any action before summoning the Director." Again, the phraseology seems crystal clear - a non-offending player or pair may choose to forfeit its right to redress.

Since, under Law 64 and Law 10A, the penalty for an established revoke may be implemented only by the Director, and the players have the right not to call attention to an irregularity and thus avoid the need to summon the director, there is no mechanism for forcing the players to apply the penalty.

Law 73D ("The Proprieties - Communication") urges players to maintain an even tempo and cautions players to "be particularly careful in position in which variations may work to the benefit of their side". Habitually slow players thus do the game a service when they decline to reap advantage when their breaks of normal tempo engender undeserved possibilities of gain. Weinstein's action earned the admiration and respect of his opponents and encouraged and supported the promotion of ethics in sport as well as ensuring that the spirit of fair play prevails.

Allan Falk, Okemos MI

John,

Had I been Weinstein, I would have called the TD because the Laws require me to. Had I felt that I had contributed significantly to the revoke (i.e., because of my tempo break), and I can fully understand that he might have felt this, I would have had the option of asking the TD to waive the penalty. (I doubt whether I would have done so but that is by the by; I play by the Laws and expect my opponents to do so).

What I would not have done was to breach the Laws myself by arbitrarily doing something which is specifically forbidden. Sportsmanship means trying one's best to win, not arbitrarily ignoring the Laws of the game.

It is preposterous to suggest that taking one's time on a difficult hand might constitute a breach of the proprieties. The only breaches that occurred were when (a) the players at the table ignored Law 72A1 (obligation to play in strict accordance with the Laws); and (b) when the revoke penalty was waived at Weinstein's own initiative (Law 72A3).

Richard Fleet, Berkhamsted, UK