



BULLETIN

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Editorial

Donna Compton and Paul Hackett (the Captains for the USA and Europe respectively) have finalised their lineups (more on this later) for the upcoming Buffett Cup in Louisville, Kentucky in September. Both are formidable teams.

USA

David Berkowitz-Alan Sontag*
Björn Fallenius-Roy Welland
Richard Freeman-Geoff Hampson
Steve Garner-Howard Weinstein
Bob Hamman-Zia Mahmood
Janice Molson-Tobi Sokolow

Europe

Sabine Auken (DE)-Marion Michielson (NED)
Michel Bessis-Thomas Bessis (FRA)
Boye Brogeland-Espen Lindqvist (NOR)
Tom Hanlon-Hugh McGann (IRE)
Tor Helness-Jan Petter Svendsen (NOR)
Michal Kwiecien-Jacek Pszczola (POL)

* Roger Bates and Alan Sontag (originally announced) have terminated their partnership as of the end of the Las Vegas NABC. Sontag has recruited David Berkowitz as a replacement on the Meltzer Team (Larry Cohen has retired from serious tournament bridge for the moment to concentrate on his myriad other bridge activities, freeing Berkowitz to play with Sontag), but the partnership has not been confirmed for the Buffett Cup at press time. It is very likely, however, according to Bob Hamman, that they will compete as a pair.

Conspicuous by their absence from the European Team are the Italians. How could Hackett have ignored Lauria-Versace, Duboin-Sementa, Fantoni-Nunes and Bocchi-Madala in his selection? The answer is that he did not. Hackett wanted at least one, and possibly two, of the aforementioned Italian pairs in his lineup for the second edition of the Buffett Cup.

The reason given for their unavailability is a clash with a First Division weekend for the Italian Bridge Federation. Since the Buffett Cup dates are known at least three years in advance (the four days preceding the Ryder Cup, see later for 2010 in Wales), one would have thought arrangements could have been made that would have allowed at least one of the leading Italian pairs onto the 2008 European team. The Buffett Cup attracts extra and favourable publicity for bridge because of its association with the Ryder Cup, benefitting all bridge organisations.

The European Bridge League suggested at one point that they take over the organisation from Paul Hackett, who initiated the inaugural one in Dublin, and were rebuffed. We trust this is not the reason that the Italian pairs are unavailable as it would be petty for any bridge authority not to cooperate with the venture.

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Additionally, and regrettably, Paul Hackett reports that he had a television deal on target with a major European network until the absence of the Italians caused them to back down. If so, bridge has indeed suffered badly from their unavailability.

We wish Hackett, Compton and both teams continued success and are certain they will rise above these difficulties in the future. All the top Italian players have assured the organisers they will be available next time, come what may. Let's hope so.

The dates of the Buffett Cup in 2010 are Monday, 27th September to Thursday, 30th September at a hotel near Cardiff with our own IBPA President as Secretary of the Local Organising Committee. So the WBF, FIGB and other bridge organisations cannot say they have not been given plenty of warning. All bridge authorities should put those dates in their calendar NOW and make sure their leading players are available if needed.

And let's hope also that the network's executives have not been permanently soured on the idea of bridge on television.

THWARTING GABRIEL

From Oscar Gonzalez, *bridge.la*

Gabriel Chagas has been playing for Brazil and winning South American Championships since the 1960's. He has made many great plays in that time – he has won the championship 28 times. However, the 2008 final between Brazil and Chile in Lima, Péru ended in a draw at 119 IMPs - they were declared joint champions. It was a sweet victory for Chile, having suffered heartbreaking losses by 1 and 5 IMPs in recent South American Championships. This board was critical...

Board 9. Dealer South. EW Vul.

♠ J 8 4
♥ 6 4 3
♦ A Q 10 9 4 2
♣ A

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

♠ A 9 6 2
♥ A J
♦ 8 6
♣ K Q 9 3 2

West	North	East	South
Pacareu	Villas Boas	Robles	Chagas
—	—	—	1 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Joaquin Pacareu led the seven of hearts to Benjamin Robles' queen and Chagas won the ace. Chagas ran the diamond eight to Robles' king and he returned the heart nine to the jack and king. Pacareu cashed the heart ten and when Chagas showed out he paused to take stock. Realising that declarer had to have the spade ace and king-queen-jack of clubs to make up his 15 HCP (what's a stray jack among friends?), Pacareu found a way to take advantage of the club blockage and prevent Chagas from making his contract.

Pacareu saw that if he continued with a fourth heart, Chagas would discard dummy's ace of clubs! Then he would take the major-suit aces and seven minor-suit tricks to make his game, using the spade ace as an entry to the clubs in hand. Thus Pacareu shifted to the king of spades, knocking out the entry to the clubs before the ace could be unblocked. There was no way for Chagas to reach the stranded clubs. One off and 10 IMPs to Chile when three no trump was successful at the other table.

VACANT SPACES, FUZZY LOGIC & THE CAMROSE

Michael Akeroyd, Bradford, UK

The Irish team came from behind to win the Camrose Trophy ahead of England for the fourth consecutive year in Dublin in March 2008. The fight back started with 14 IMPs on board one of the second half of the England-Ireland match.

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ K Q
♥ A 10 8 5 4
♦ A 3
♣ Q J 10 9

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

♠ A J 5
♥ Q 7 3
♦ K J
♣ A K 6 3 2

The Irish bidding (Garvey-Carroll) was commendably in old-fashioned Acol style:

West	North	East	South
—	1 NT ¹	Pass	2 ♠ ²
Pass	3 ♣ ³	Pass	5 NT ⁴
Pass	6 ♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 14-16
2. Clubs
3. Encouraging for clubs
4. Pick a slam

East led a heart but a diamond would have made no difference as declarer can draw trumps and then eliminate the hand.

The English (Holland-Armstrong) bidding:

West	North	East	South
—	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 NT ¹	Pass	6 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 15-17

This time the diamond nine was led and with eleven top tricks John Holland had the problem of how to play the side heart suit for two tricks while only losing one. He would not have the advantage of East-West conceding a ruff-and-discard that Tommy Garvey would have had in six clubs.

When this problem occurs in a slam with A10x opposite Qxx or A10xx opposite Qxx, the answer is well known: lead low to the queen, and, if it loses, finesse the ten on the way back. This has a better-than-75% chance against the 55% chance of the alternative simple plan of cashing the ace first and then leading to the queen.

However, the presence of the extra heart(s) and the additional knowledge that the clubs broke 3-1 led Holland to adopt the 'simple plan' of ace and another and lose 14 IMPs by going down. He played five rounds of clubs then a low heart to the ace. Was he playing with the odds?

The presence of the 5-3 heart fit increases the chances of a West singleton heart king to 3% and the chances of an East doubleton jack to 10%, still not enough to justify a change of plan. At the moment of decision, Holland had seen one round of diamonds and three diamond discards from East. Nine of the thirteen diamonds has been counted. Originally East had a 50% chance of possessing five diamonds or more and a 20% chance of possessing three or fewer. However, the fact that this last possibility is now impossible boosts the probability of five plus to 60%, balancing out the effect of the 1-3 club break.

Contrary to the advice given in *Bridge Odds for Practical Players* (Hugh Kelsey and Michael Glauert, Master Bridge Series), declarer can and should take this information into consideration. The extra unknown cards ('vacant places') in the East hand have been occupied by diamonds and the heart suit should behave as the normal odds predict.

In the absence of this discard information, the theories of Emile Borel and Andre Cheron in *The Mathematical Theory of Bridge* state that the presence of a 3-1 club

break alters the traditional odds relating to a five-card heart suit split. The chance of East holding four hearts now goes up from 14% to around 17% and of West holding four down to 11%. The chance of West holding the singleton king also goes up.

Unfortunately, the extra chance of East holding Jxxx is already accounted for by counting up West's potential bare heart king and the probability of East's holding a favourable Jx is obviously reduced. All this effectively cancels out. Correctly applied, the Theory of Vacant Places indicates that the 'simple plan' is still inferior and Holland should have persevered with the 'traditional plan' of low to the queen.

Had Holland just been looking for the heart king, the Theory of Vacant Places would have stated that it was 12:10 on East now holding the missing heart king, and had the clubs broken 4-0 then the odds would change to 13:9. But when you are missing both the king and the jack the situation becomes more complex and neither Borel & Cheron nor Kelsey & Glauert are helpful. I have had an article published in Mark Horton's *Bridge* magazine in late 2007 on the diamond discard situation outlined above and would remark that the subject 'Fuzzy Logic' (where partial information is processed and then utilised) has become academically more respectable since 1980, the original publication date of Kelsey's book.

LATE INSPIRATION

Barry Rigal, NYC

The location of the strongest rubber bridge game in the world is open to debate. But one of the games that has a claim to that title meets in New York at the big game in the Regency Club. Regular participants in that game include a series of national champions, but the deal that follows was too much for the players at the table. It was only subsequently that one of the players spotted his chance for immortality.

Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Nazamian	Westheimer	Stein	Rigal
—	—	Pass	1 ♣
2 ♦	3 ♦	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The normal contract was reached in an unusual fashion, Nazamian electing to apply pressure with his jump overcall rather than bidding two no trump to show his two-suiter.

The bad splits in the black suits appear to doom three no trump, but Nazamian found the defence we would all have done, I suspect, leading out the king, then the queen of hearts. On the third round of hearts he attempted to clarify the position in the suit by leading the heart jack. How do you think the play should have gone from there?

At the table, Ethan Stein pitched a low club. Declarer cashed one top club and then led towards his club jack. Stein ducked but declarer won in hand, crossed back to the club king and now knew the diamond ace had to be on his right. He led up to his diamond king and eventually lost just one diamond and one club; contract made.

In the post mortem Stein wondered if a low diamond discard at trick three would have helped. Not so, said declarer. He cashes one top club to find the bad news, then leads a diamond up. East can win and exit with a spade, but declarer cashes the diamond king in this ending:

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

East has to make a discard still and either black suit is fatal.

But was there any chance for the defenders? Yes, if East infers from partner's decision to play the heart jack at trick three that he has his actual 5-6 hand pattern, and not the diamond king or else the defence is easy. Essentially the problem becomes a double-dummy affair; in the long reaches of the night, inspiration struck Stein. He must discard the diamond ace!!

The key difference is that this prevents declarer from rectifying the count for the squeeze. He can, for example, at trick four, lead a low club towards his jack. East still has to be careful; he wins the queen and must exit in

diamonds to remove declarer's late entry to his hand. Declarer wins the king and cashes his three top spades; East must unblock his high spades or else declarer can cash the top clubs in dummy and exit with a spade to East to endplay him to lead into the jack-nine of clubs. But the blockage in clubs means that the defenders prevail if East leaves himself with the spade three. Dummy must give the last two tricks to West.

NIBU GEM

Andrew Robson, London

From The Times

The Northern Ireland Bridge Union (NIBU) and the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland (CBAI) celebrate their 75th anniversaries this year. Bridge in Ireland is really flourishing, led by the Irish international team which finished second in the 2006 European Championships, putting the other Home Countries to shame (England finished 10th out of 33, Scotland 17th and Wales 27th. (Ireland has also defeated the other Home Countries four times running in the Camrose Trophy competitions. – Ed.)

Here is a fascinating deal from a recent NIBU Congress, given to me by their leading player David Greenwood.

Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

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

West led a low spade to East's king, East switching to a trump (best). Winning dummy's queen, declarer tried to cash three rounds of clubs. East tellingly discarded a diamond on the third, indicating no clubs, but also no trumps.

Declarer shed his singleton diamond and ruffed a fourth club. He was just about to ruff a spade and lead a winning fifth club, throwing his penultimate spade, when he saw that although West would be ruffing at the cost of his natural trump trick, he would then lead his last spade and receive another spade from partner for a trump

promotion. Can you spot the winning counter for declarer in this position?

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

Declarer must lose a spade to prevent the trump promotion – but to East, who has no second trump. He leads the queen of spades and discards a diamond from dummy (key play). East wins but can do no better than to return another spade.

Declarer ruffs in dummy and, as planned, leads the fifth club and throws his last spade. West ruffs at the cost of his natural trump trick, but declarer can ruff his diamond return and draw his remaining trumps. Ten tricks and game made.

COACH CALLING

Mark Horton, Romford, UK

I have been doing a modest amount of work with Canada's Linda Lee & Isabelle Smith (heaven help them!) in preparation for Canadian and World Championships and when I encountered what I considered to be an awkward bidding problem at the Santé Fe Sectional I sent it to them to test their methods.

Dealer West. EW Vul.

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

The keys to this hand are to discover the quality of partner's trumps and to establish that a club control is present. My first thought, after one spade by West, was to set spades with two no trump and then use ERKCB, but I was fairly sure that my partner the Rabbi did not include that in his armoury.

Rejecting a classical approach via three hearts, I dubiously marked time with two clubs and when that suit got raised, I was confident we were not off a club control, but now found it difficult to discover the nature of partner's spades and eventually settled for a routine six spades – surprisingly worth 13 IMPs against the game(!) reached at the other table. Could my protégés do better?

West	East
Lee	Smith
1 ♠	2 NT ¹
3 ♠ ²	3 NT ³
4 ♦ ⁴	5 ♣ ⁵
5 ♠ ⁶	5 NT ⁷
7 ♠	Pass

1. Game force with four or more spades
2. No shortage
3. Control asking
4. Three controls
5. Club-asking bid
6. Club ace with 2/3/4 cards
7. Spade ask

Test passed with flying colours! Will that prove to be the best auction of 2008?

'OUT-DUBOINING' GIORGIO

Raman Jayaram, Baroda, India

(This is an extract from Jay's forthcoming book, "The Romance of Bridge," due for publication later this year.)

Board 2 of the 17th and last round of the recently concluded 49th European Championships at Pau, France presented us with a gorgeous analytical exercise, partially double dummy though it may seem to be. Among eighteen tables, eleven East-West pairs played in three no trumps, nine of them with East as declarer, and two with West as declarer. Both Wests went down one, whereas eight Easts made the contract.

On the table where Germany's Josef Piekarek was East as declarer, Giorgio Duboin of Italy (South) made an almost inconceivable lead and defeated the contract. It is worth mentioning that Germany was on top of the field at the end of the penultimate sixteenth round with a tally of 281 VP and Italy was seventh on 254 VP and in danger of being knocked out of qualification for next year's Bermuda Bowl. Italy, however easily won the match 25-5 and both teams have indeed qualified.

Round 17. Board 2. Dealer East, NS Vul.

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

Josef Piekarek-Alexander Smirnov as East and West respectively, had bid thusly: one club-one spade-two

clubs-two diamonds-two no trumps-three no trumps. *Giorgio led the king of diamonds, ostensibly cutting off all communications.* Josef made the mistake of winning on the table, after which he played on clubs to somehow scrape through with eight tricks, down one.

Let us now go through the dream sequence. You are East and you duck the diamond king. The best defence for Giorgio is to continue diamonds which you win on the table with the ace (smothering your second diamond honour) and cash the ten of the suit, jettisoning the ace of spades. You now have four diamond tricks and three or four spade tricks depending on what Giorgio discards on those diamonds when you cash them. At the end of eighth trick (one to the defence, seven to you), Giorgio has the option to keep three spades, the queen of hearts and the king of clubs OR two spades, queen-ten of hearts and the king of clubs.

Both end positions are fascinating, *IF you have taken care to keep the same number of cards North has kept in hearts-clubs; if North holds on to three hearts and two clubs, you must also come down to that and if he has two hearts and three clubs, you must have an identical holding.* If Giorgio is holding on to 3=1=0=1, you leave the spade ten winner in dummy and play a heart; North cannot go up with the ace, because then both king and jack of hearts (there is a second heart in dummy as well) will make trick numbers eight and nine.

So, he has to duck; you go up with the king (your trick number eight, four diamonds, three spades and the heart) dropping Giorgio's queen and play a club to his king. As is clear, North cannot afford to overtake the club king with the ace, because that also will give you nine tricks. And, if North allows South's club king to hold, Giorgio has only spades and dummy's ten will be your ninth trick.

In the second end position where Giorgio is holding on to 2=2=0=1, you cash the ten of spades as well (your trick number eight), discarding whatever suit North discards, and then play a heart. Giorgio may get an undeserved spade trick all right, but your king of hearts OR the jack of clubs must make with the choice left to North!

Tell me, my dear reader, how many times do you or I get an opportunity to 'out-Duboin' Giorgio Duboin at the bridge table? *What a great feeling of triumph it would be when you or I nullify his brilliant lead?*

AN IMPOSSIBLE CONTRACT, EXCEPT THAT IT WASN'T

Phillip Alder, Hobe Sound, FL

The White House Junior Championship, so called because it is played in the Witte Huis in Amsterdam, was held from March 10 to 15. The diagrammed deal was drawn to my attention by Roland Wald from

Denmark, who is the commentator coordinator for Bridge Base Online (www.bridgebase.com). It occurred during the round-robin qualifying match between Norway and Poland U25.

Dealer East. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Nawrocki	Berg	Sikora	Reistad
—	—	1 ♣ ¹	1 ♠
1 NT	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	
1. Polish Club, usually 12-14 balanced			

At the other table, Harald Eide (East) opened one diamond; Piotr Wiankowski (South) overcalled two diamonds, a Michaels Cue-Bid showing at least 5-5 in the majors; and Erlend Skjetne (West) raised to three diamonds. After two passes, South doubled for takeout to show extra values and, probably, 5=5=0=3 distribution. Michal Nowosadski (North) passed, hoping for a sizable penalty, but with only one point in diamonds and a working club king, perhaps he should have bid three spades. The declarer was able to take eight tricks to go down only one.

West led the club nine against four spades. Polish players lead second- or fourth-highest, which meant either that the club nine was a singleton or that West had the club ten as well. (With nine-doubleton, West would have led his lower card.)

Since there was only one club entry to the dummy for a single heart play toward the South hand, the contract was in theory unmakeable. But declarer spotted a chance. Under East's club ace, he dropped his jack.

East shifted to a low diamond, ruffed by South. Now declarer led his low club and finessed dummy's eight. When that held, South played a heart to his king, overtook his club queen with dummy's king and called for another heart. East rose with his ace and led another diamond, but declarer ruffed and played his heart queen, ruffed low by West and overruffed by dummy.

South trumped a diamond in his hand and ruffed a heart on the board (West discarded his diamond ace) to give this position:

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

Reistad completed a brilliant performance by ruffing a diamond with his spade ace and leading his last heart to guarantee one more trump trick. Minus 100 and plus 420 gave Norway 8 IMPs.

West missed an opportunity to defeat the contract. When South led his low club at trick three, West had to put in his ten. This entry-killing coup is described in many books but is rare at the table, and a defender finding the play is even rarer.

A CLONE OF MY OWN

Bruce Cook, Conner MT

Mark Horton's article on the "[The Perfect Bridge Partner](#)" (No. 522, p. 3) put me in mind of my own 'perfect' partner. You see, I once had the chance to create the perfect bridge partner by having a clone made of myself. It was an early experiment at the University of Southern California Medical Center, but unfortunately it was not successful. My clone could not play slams very well and he also had a very foul mouth. Look at this deal:

Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

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

My clone ruffed the diamond ten opening lead and drew three rounds of trumps. When clubs split 4-1, he was down one.

I pointed out that after the ace and queen of trumps, he should play the ace of clubs and a low club to the king. If West ruffs, he ruffs a loser – and if he discards, dummy wins the king of clubs and concedes a club. Then a safe club ruff with dummy's king of spades establishes the clubs and he could claim 12 tricks.

My clone said, "If the #@#** trumps had broken 2-2 or if the #@##** clubs had broken 3-2, I would have made the slam."

Well, I was sick of this. So I took him to the top of the tallest building in town and pushed him off. And then I got arrested for making an obscene clone fall.

LADY MILNE

Michael Akeroyd, Bradford, UK

Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

The recent English trials for the Lady Milne Cup contained a lot of new faces. This seemingly innocuous-looking deal caused some interest.

In the closed room Suzanne Cohen passed as dealer and ended up in two no trump, making eight tricks. In the open room Catherine Draper opened one club in the modern aggressive style.

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

The opening lead was heart five. Draper raised some eyebrows by cashing the club ace, then finessing the club seven instead of playing the normal ace, king, then the seven towards the queen-ten. She landed an unlikely contract and qualified (with Anne Rosen) to represent England in the Lady Milne and also in the 2008 European Women's Championship.

Continued on page 10...

IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra

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445. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	1 ♥ ¹	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. 5-card major			

West led the six of hearts. Declarer could count nine top tricks and the only source of a tenth was in clubs. As East was likely to have the king of clubs he had to find a way of making sure that East led clubs first.

His first step was to cover the lead with nine of hearts, preventing East from letting West hold the lead and switch to clubs. East took the trick with the queen of hearts and switched to the two of diamonds which was covered by the ten, jack and ace. As East now had an entry to West's hand in diamonds, declarer cut that link by leading the king of hearts and discarding his remaining diamond under East's ace of hearts. East saw that playing a red suit would only aid declarer's plans and so exited with a trump, which was taken in dummy with the nine.

Declarer ruffed dummy's remaining diamond with the ace of trumps and then led the jack of trumps to dummy's queen to ruff a heart with the king of trumps. Next, he led the four of trumps to dummy's five to play dummy's last heart, throwing a club from hand. As a result, East found himself on lead with the unhappy choice of leading into dummy's club tenace or conceding

a ruff-and-discard. No matter which one East chose the club loser in declarer's hand would disappear.

446. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

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

West led the eight of spades and declarer played with some abandon. He took the first trick with the ace of spades and played a spade to his king. West ruffed this with the two of trumps and exited with the nine of trumps. A third round of spades was led and West ruffed in, forcing declarer to overruff with dummy's queen. Next he cashed the ace and king of diamonds and ruffed a diamond high. When he led his last spade, West ruffed in with remaining trump and shifted to clubs. The defenders took their two club tricks and declarer finished down one, instead of making a hoped-for overtrick.

Declarer should have been aware of the danger that the spades might be 6-1 and the trumps 4-1. All he had to do to make his contract was to withhold the king of spades at trick three, allowing East to win the trick. Then, no matter how the defence played, declarer would have been able to ruff the five of spades in dummy. He would make ten tricks; two spades, a spade ruff, five trumps and the ace-king of diamonds.

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447. Dealer South. E-W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	3 ♦	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

South was of the belief that trial bids involved bidding games and then trying to make them. West led the five of diamonds and East took the trick with the king. Since now either partner or declarer was out of diamonds, East continued with a low diamond. Declarer ruffed and drew two rounds of trumps with the jack and ace, discovering the 4-1 break in trumps.

Obviously, it would be foolish to draw all West's trumps and then take the club finesse as that would lead to certain defeat on the given layout. Instead, declarer ran the queen of clubs, which East ducked smoothly. This was the second danger point of the hand; if the club finesse was repeated here, East would win with the king and give his partner a club ruff, leaving declarer with an unavoidable heart loser and only nine tricks. Declarer countered this possibility by playing ace and another club.

After winning the king of clubs, East advanced the ace of diamonds. This was the third danger point for declarer. He could not ruff this for that would leave West with two trumps to his one, ensuring that the contract would fail. As declarer had to lose a heart no matter how he played, he kept control of trumps by parting with a heart on East's winning diamond.

As declarer had to have the ace of hearts, East played a fourth round of diamonds. Declarer threw a heart from hand and ruffed this with dummy's ten of trumps. After re-entering hand with the ace of hearts, he drew West's remaining trumps and then cashed his good club. He made five trumps, one heart, a diamond ruff in dummy and three clubs.

448. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1 ♠
2 ♣	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Declarer saw the best line for ten tricks after West began the defence with the ace, king and queen of clubs. The chances were that West had overcalled on a six-card suit, something which East's high-low in the suit confirmed.

As the cards lie, ruffing the third club in the dummy sees the contract fail as East overruffs and there is then an unavoidable diamond loser. Sensibly, declarer called for a diamond from dummy at trick three.

West saw that a fourth round of clubs would be pointless and shifted to the two of diamonds. Declarer took East's jack of diamonds with the ace, drew the trumps in three rounds and then unblocked the ace of hearts. Next he ruffed a diamond in dummy and showed his hand, indicating that he would discard his remaining diamond losers on the king and queen of hearts. He had ten tricks; five trumps, three hearts, the ace of diamonds and a diamond ruff.

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This deal encompasses a number of modern topics: restricted choice, vacant places, inferential judgement and table presence.

1. The information that West has dropped the club nine is irrelevant to any possible restricted choice considerations as she would do this automatically from jack-nine or jack-nine-small.
2. According to the theories of Borel and Cheron, the known fact that the heart suit is breaking at least 6-2 alters the standard book distribution of the opponent's five clubs. But there is a long way to go before you can rely on East's jack-to-four being more probable than West's combined jack doubleton plus jack-to-three. So if West had made a weak jump overcall there is no reason to abandon the normal way of tackling the club suit.
3. However, Draper had extra inferential information. West's strong bidding vulnerable, yet failure to lead spades indicated that she must have a holding like king-queen-low or ace-jack-low. There are now fewer vacant places left for her to hold jack-nine-low.
4. East played the five then the two of clubs when following suit. Draper now enquired about her opponent's count signals, decided that they were likely to be honest, and elected to finesse as East had played the five then the two. Table presence is a vital attribute in bridge and was successfully used on this occasion but it was not strictly necessary. After the drop of West's club nine, the best line of play is to cash two rounds of diamonds before the moment of decision. If both opponents follow twice then West has now only one vacant place to East's three, and now it is 75% that East has the jack and the finesse is now correct. These are the sort of odds needed to fully justify finessing in this situation rather than playing the ace-king and low toward the queen-ten.

PETIT COUP

Barry Rigal, NYC

This is the second time in my life I've played for the smother coup from very early on.

North Dealer. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	Pass	Pass	1 ♦(?)
1 ♥	Double	2 ♥	2 ♠(?)
Pass	3 ♥(!)	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

I might have made my life easier at an earlier stage on this deal from the afternoon game at Honors Bridge Club in Manhattan. Margo Sinclair was North and perhaps should have passed two spades, but lulled into a false sense of security by her partner's eccentric bidding she invited game and three spades was the inelegant final contract.

West led the club king, and now I should perhaps win and play on diamonds. However, I elected to win in hand and knock out the heart ace. West won and returned a club. That was won in dummy and East flew with diamond ace to lead a third club - letting West ruff with a potential trump trick. However, a heart back to the jack and queen re-established the trump trick in a way.

I ruffed the heart and led out winning diamonds. This was the ending:

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

On the diamond-jack play, West ruffed in to force the spade ace. I overruffed and cashed the king of hearts, pitching a club, then led dummy's spade eight. East carefully covered, not such a good idea. I ducked, and the bare spade king took the trick.

On the forced heart return dummy's five-three of spades trapped East's jack-two. Whether East ruffed high or low, she could not get another trump trick!

THE LEAST

Andrew Robson, London

From The Times

The least-declared bridge contract of all has to be five no trump. An auction that ends in five no trump almost certainly has to have seen the wheels fall off en route.

This deal from a holiday rubber in Tangiers was an exception. North-South conducted a well-controlled auction to five no trump, when game was down two in any trump suit and it was almost impossible to stop in

three no trump or four no trump because of the wildness of the deal.

Dealer West. NS Vul.

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

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

Unsure of the best attack, West led the ace of hearts to have a look at dummy. What he saw, together with partner's discard of a small club, made it fairly clear to switch to the eight of spades, hoping to keep declarer permanently from his hand and its winners.

Declarer cashed just three rounds of spades. When East discarded on the third of these, declarer knew that West held seven hearts and five spades.

It is bound to be fatal for declarer to cash all his spades and play against East in diamonds. His basic strategy must be to throw West on lead with dummy's two of spades on West's last spade, at a point when West has to give South access to declarer's hand. If West's thirteenth card is a diamond, declarer has to have cashed dummy's ace of diamonds to strip West of this exit card before playing the spade deuce.

There is a subtle reason why declarer cannot afford to a fourth spade at this stage: if he does so, then cashes the diamond ace, West should discard his fifth spade. Then declarer will have lost his crucial exit card.

Cashing the ace of diamonds after only three spades (key play) avoids the problem, as declarer is able to adapt his play according to whether West follows suit or discards (and whether he discards a spade or not a spade). West chose to discard a heart and the way was then clear. Declarer cashed a fourth spade, then played the two of spades (he would have exited with the two a trick earlier if West had discarded a spade on the diamond ace).

West won his three (he has classily followed with the eight-seven-six-five on the first four rounds of the suit), but his forced heart or club exit gave declarer the remainder. Eleven tricks and game made.

ROUGHHOUSE TACTICS OR PERCENTAGE PLAY?

Michael Akeroyd, Bradford, UK

Jie Zhao (known as Jack in the West) and Zhong Fu, winners of the World Open Pairs Championship at Verona, had a success on the following hand in the penultimate session that was explained on the grounds of 'pressing for good results'. However good judgement played a greater role.

Dealer West. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Zhao</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Fu</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Double
2 NT ¹	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Four-card limit raise in hearts

With the hearts 2-2, a 22-point game was cold, and Zhao-Fu scored plus 420 for 89%. Lucky? Well, if South had passed, yes. But South had doubled for takeout, which allowed Zhao to upgrade his hand to a "good raise to three hearts" on the losing trick count (only 8 losers since the club queen is now 'working').

With an obvious minimum double, South can be reckoned on as being unlikely to hold 3-4 hearts, so the chances of a 2-2 trump break increase from 40% to over 50%. Although in isolation East's hand rates as 7½ losers, the extra information and the 'solid' heart sequence rate promotion to a 6 loser hand. So the raise to four hearts shows good judgement. Obviously Fu was lucky that Zhao's club queen pulled its full weight, but the spade queen instead would have been as good.

Upcoming Online Transmissions

Aug 7-8	Australian Championships	BBO
Aug 11-14	English Trials	BBO
Aug 30-31	FOSS Tournament, Norway	BBO
Oct 3-18	Mind Sports Games, China	Swan



Sin City Nationals

July 18-27, 2008

Brent Manley & Dave Smith, Memphis, TN et al

Twenty years ago, if anyone had suggested that bridge players from the then-Eastern Bloc countries such as Russia and Poland, and Asian countries such as India and China, would be winning major titles such as the Spingold and Wagar Teams, the Intercollegiates, and the Open Pairs at ACBL Nationals, they'd have been laughed at. Poland, it was true, played bridge, but Russia was not even on the bridge map at that time.

Well then, what about China and India? No way; they played go and table tennis in China and chess and cricket in India. The cognescenti might have conceded you The Netherlands and Norway, however. That was possible. Have a look at the winners of major events at the recent NABC in Las Vegas – in addition to all the aforementioned countries, North American Championship winners also came from Israel and Canada, and a world champ came from France, if you count bits and bytes.

Grand National Teams:

Warren Spector, Mike Becker, David Berkowitz, Larry Cohen, Jeff Meckstroth, Eric Rodwell

LM Pairs:

Jan Jansma, Ricco Van Prooijen

Truscott USPC Senior Swiss Teams:

Reanette Frobouck, Allan Graves, John Carruthers, Mark Lair, Fred Hamilton

Wernher Open Pairs:

Sunit Chokshi, K. R. Venkataraman

Chicago Mixed Board-a-Match Teams:

JoAnna Stansby, Lew Stansby, Chris Willenken, Migry Zur-Campanile

Wagar Women's Knockout Teams:

Lynn Baker, Lynn Deas, Karen McCallum, Beth Palmer, Irina Levitina, Kerri Sanborn

Fast Pairs: Doug Doub, Adam Wildavsky

NABC Open Swiss Teams:

Phil Gordon, Josh Donn, Jason Feldman, Terje Aa, Joergen Molberg

Spingold Knockout Teams:

Andrew Gromov, Aleksander Dubinin, Cezary Balicki, Adam Zmudzinski

NA Collegiate Team Championship:

California Institute of Technology - Cheng William Hong, Roger Lee, Hsi-Chun Liu, Chien-Yao Tseng

US Junior Team Trials:

For the Patino Cup (26 and younger) in Beijing:
Victor Chubukov, Eric Mayefsky
Kevin Fay, Roger Lee

US FISU Team Trials:

For the World University Bridge Championship in Lodz, Poland: Victor Chubukov, Eric Mayefski, Jared Fournier, Jeremy Fournier

World Computer Bridge Championship:

Wbridge5 (France)

Here are some of the more interesting deals from the tournament. More will appear next month.

No Blockhead at Blocking

Erez Hendelman and Melih Ozdil defended three no trump on this deal from day two of the Spingold Knockout Teams.

Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

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

Ozdil led a low heart, and the ten forced the queen. Declarer tried a club to the queen and a low spade from the dummy – and Hendelman played the king! Now what can declarer do? If he ducks, a heart through the South hand leads to immediate defeat. If he takes the king with the ace, he can never get back to his hand after clearing the suit.

False Trail Barry Rigal

Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ J
♥ J 9
♦ K J 10 6 4 2
♣ Q 9 6 4

♠ Q 7 3
♥ A K Q 10 8 2
♦ Q 5 3
♣ J

West	North	East	South
1 NT ¹	Pass	3 ♠ ²	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	
1. 13-15			
2. Weak.			

The winners of the NABC Fast Open Pairs are no slouches at deception. On this deal from round two of the Spingold Knockout Teams, Doug Doub found a play I've not seen before. See whether you can manage to match him for low-down cunning.

The opening lead of the king of clubs gets the two from East (upside-down count). After some thought, West shifts to a heart to dummy's nine as you drop the eight. What should you do now? Doub realised that he needed to attack diamonds. If he found the suit 2-2, he would be home, but how could he make it if diamonds were 3-1? The point was that if West – who surely had the diamond ace – ducked the first diamond holding three of them, there was no lie of the cards that declarer could cope with.

Doub found an ingenious solution. He led the king of diamonds from dummy and dropped the queen under it as East played the nine. West took the ace and decided that his partner had three diamonds, so he needed to try to cash out the clubs. Contract made. The full deal:

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

Suicide Winkle

On this deal, Simon Kantor had fun with a rarely seen play - a winkle. He was playing with Murray Melton.

Dealer East. Neither Vul.

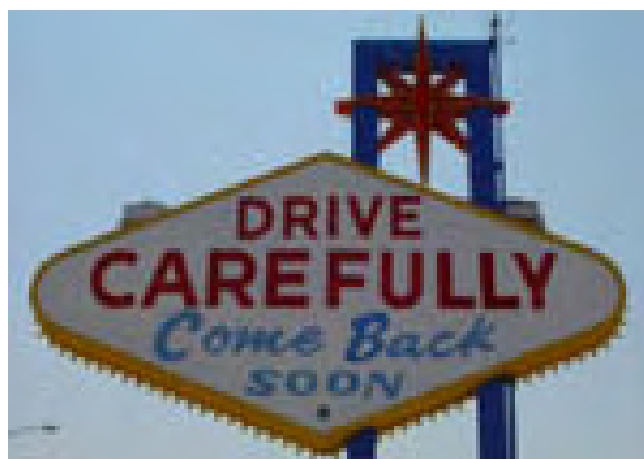
♠ K 6 4 ♥ 10 6 4 3 ♦ 5 3 ♣ J 6 3 2 ♠ A 10 9 8 ♥ A 9 ♦ 9 4 2 ♣ K 9 8 7	♠ J 7 3 2 ♥ K J 7 2 ♦ 10 8 ♣ A 5 4 ♠ Q 5 ♥ Q 8 5 ♦ A K Q J 7 6 ♣ Q 10
--	--

In second seat after dealer passed, Kantor, South, opened one no trump and got to play it there. West led the spade ten; four, two, queen. Kantor then rattled off six diamond tricks, pitching three hearts and a club from dummy to reach this position:

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

Kantor exited with a low spade to West's now-singleton ace. West played the eight of clubs to East's ace, and East switched to the jack of hearts, covered by the queen and ace. West now cashed the club king and played the nine of hearts. Kantor discarded the king of spades from dummy and the defenders were fixed.

If West was allowed to hold the trick with the nine of hearts, he would have to give Kantor his eighth trick by playing a club to the good jack in dummy. If East overtook the heart nine with the king, he would be left with only the heart seven to play to Kantor's good eight. Plus 120 was good for about 80% of the matchpoints.



NEWS & VIEWS

London Inter-National Teams

As one of the special events to celebrate the Young Chelsea Bridge Club's 40th anniversary, a teams competition was held on June 21-22 for non-British players who live or work in London.

Eighteen teams from 11 countries played in the main event. Three additional mixed-nationality teams played in the Trans-National consolation event on the Sunday. Altogether 94 players from 16 countries took part. The standard of bridge was very variable - some players were using IMP scoring for the first time.

The Inter-National event was won by Poland (Katerzyna Kitowska, Greg Sokolowski, Pawel Rolczak, Szczepan Smoczynski, Eryk Gozdowski) ahead of Iran Green and USA Stripes. Katerzyna has only been playing bridge for two years. She and Greg (a Polish junior champion) met seven months ago playing bridge on-line at BBO and she moved to London two months ago.

The Trans-National event was won by a team from Austria, Canada, New Zealand and Singapore. Prizes were also awarded to the Netherlands, USA Stars and Poland for wearing the most nationally colourful outfits.

Errata

On page 6 in No. 522, in the article on the 49th European Championships, we noted one of the authors as Erdal Sidor. It should have been Erdal Sidar. Mr. Sidar is editor of the Turkish Bridge World.

Brazil and Chile were co-champions of South America, not Brazil as noted on page 1 of last month's number. The venue was Lima, Peru.

White House Teams Demise

After five consecutive years' sponsorship of the White House Bridge Teams Top 16, a highly successful world class bridge tournament, Messrs. Max Abram and Herman Drenkelford have decided to redirect their focus to young bridge players and to Dutch top bridge.

As a consequence, the White House Bridge Teams Top 16 has been wound down and additional efforts will go into the White House Juniors, the already existing international youth tournament. At the same time, the sponsors, together with the Dutch Bridge Federation, are considering more projects involving top bridge. This has already resulted in sponsorship of the 7th White House European Champions' Cup, to be held in Amsterdam, November 2008.



Correspondence ...

The Editor reserves the right to abridge and/or edit correspondence

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To the Editor:

This is in response to the July 2008 Letter to the Editor by Paul Marston, of Australian bridge fame, that alleged inaccuracies and distortions in Chapter 11 of The Lone Wolff. I shall address his objections and state the facts, so that readers may judge for themselves.

1. Paul first approached me privately in San Francisco in the late Fall of 1996, introducing me to both Grand Slam Bridge and Bob Nargassans, whom he led me to believe was a philanthropist willing to throw perhaps millions of dollars at bridge if we could find the right way for him to do it. In May of 1997, after a dinner meeting, this dapper, silver-tongued gentleman was anxious for me to confer with Paul about something important. When I did, Paul confided that when he originally confronted me in SF, he was merely trying to get my attention and that actually it was he, Marston, not Nargassans, who was bankrolling the whole venture and that he had made all the money he ever wanted to make. Since this was the case, why did Paul not donate his celebrated player-rating system for all the bridge clubs of the world to enjoy as his tribute to the game?

2. After saying he had checked out who Bob Nargassans was and who he claimed to be, Howard Piltch was either unwilling or unable to present any evidence of previous successful enterprises by this 'promoter' to substantiate a claim that he was qualified to promote bridge in the way proposed.

3. When I suggested that Paul and Bob meet with Jimmy Cayne, I had no ulterior motives and no idea that Jimmy would take over and perform an immediate background check on Mr. Nargassans. Following up on this, Jimmy learned that the close friendships with prominent people Bob claimed to have were either highly exaggerated or nonexistent. That, together with Paul's attention-getting ruse to arouse my interest, led me to tread warily.

4. As I had not discussed this with any of the twenty-five ACBL Board Members before their decisive meeting in Chicago in May, 1997, I doubt that I was instrumental in the outcome. I fully admit that after my New York experience, I would have opposed the proposal ... but as I was no longer a Board Member, my personal views mattered not. By the way, when the proposal failed, it was I who might have stood to lose the \$100,000 annual salary (along with a New York office and a secretary at my disposal) if I had accepted the offer of the glamorous job as Commissioner of Grand Slam Bridge!

5. These events occurred over ten years ago and no one seems to have heard anything of the supposedly-altruistic Nargassans, not even his whereabouts.

6. Allow me to refute Paul's claim that "... bridge clubs are not even a blip on Bobby Wolff's radar". On the contrary, I owned and operated a bridge club in San Antonio for eight years. Local clubs are the grass roots of bridge. While on the ACBL Board of Directors (1981-1992), I urged the ACBL to promote and encourage club attendance by naming in the Bulletin each month as "current masters" those players who earned high masterpoint totals in the clubs. Alas, some Board Members feared that jealousies would arise between clubs, and the Board voted my proposal down. I also have been outspoken against the proliferation of Regionals because of the diminished attendance at nearby bridge clubs immediately before, during and after. I agree with Paul that bridge clubs are the heart of our existence and deserve our unending support. By the way, my wife Judy and I play twice weekly and enjoy the people and duplicate games of Las Vegas.

7. Since Mr. Marston's Letter to the Editor, I have contacted current and former key ACBL people who were very much in-the-know about the GSB goings-on that began in late 1996 and dramatically gained momentum in 1997. They vividly recalled those who supported the promotion of the Grand Slam Bridge venture to revamp and revitalize the League, corroborating the details of my report in Chapter 11. In a recent message from Roy Green, ACBL CEO at that time, he states, "I support whole-heartedly the general thrust of the remarks in your book regarding the Nargassans proposal." He further offered that he was kept out of the loop by vocal Board supporters "who were aware he believed it was against the ACBL's best interests and tantamount to 'pie in the sky,' but nevertheless the plan was enthusiastically received by many individuals", some of whom anticipated personal gain.

Very truly yours, Bobby Wolff, Las Vegas

Dear Editor,

Paul Marston's letter in the July 2008 issue puzzles me. At first glance, Mr. Marston appears to be going head-to-head against Bobby Wolff as to who said what to whom more than a decade ago. Bobby cites Mr. Marston as having presented Robert Nargassans as a "philanthropist" who was so enamored of the game that he wanted to "throw ten or fifteen million at bridge." Mr. Marston now says that Mr. Nargassans was a "promoter" with a business plan and accuses Bobby of being "disingenuous" now ... presumably because Bobby learned since then that Mr. Nargassans was seeking to feather his own nest. Given the absence of philanthropic motive, I would conclude that the only disingenuity was Mr. Marston's own at the time.

Mr. Marston goes on to say that he and Mr. Nargassans planned to "raise money from advertising and sponsorship" ... and make money for themselves as well as the ACBL in that way. In giving a broad outline of their plan, Mr. Marston claims to correct what he says is a factual error in Bobby's book. He says it is not true that the plan entailed the ACBL putting up almost \$2 million. I do not know the details of the plan well enough to say one way or the other, but the clues that Mr. Marston supplies lend credibility to the estimate of \$2 million determined by a "review" of the proposal.

Up front, we see a \$450,000 fee paid directly to Messrs. Marston and Nargassans. Add to that the "normal" expenses Mr. Marston cites: as described in Bobby's book, these expenses included an office in New York with a secretarial staff ... and the hiring of stretch limousines to chauffeur important people and their dates to plush restaurants for dinner meetings. Add to that also the "commissions" to be paid from "new memberships": presumably the dues of new ACBL members whether recruited personally by Messrs. Marston and Nargassans, stimulated to join by advertisements (on which Messrs. Marston and Nargassans would also earn "commissions"?), introduced by friends, or just wandering into a neighborhood bridge club and becoming addicted to the game like the rest of us. We can see easily how the salaries, expenses and commissions could come to \$2 million for the first two years.

Large profits for Messrs. Marston and Nargassans, and large expenditures for the ACBL were built into the proposal. What was lacking, apparently, was evidence that their methods for "assisting" some 4,000 ACBL-sanctioned bridge clubs in recruiting and retaining new members would work, and evidence that they were the right people to implement these methods.

Might "an overwhelming majority of the bridge clubs of North America" wish that the deal had been made, as Mr. Marston is "sure" they would? Who can say, especially when by "bridge clubs" we do not know whether he is referring to bridge club owners and managers or the players who attend the clubs. I suspect, however, that neither group would have been pleased by the consequences of the deal: the taking over by Messrs. Nargassans and Marston of the ACBL's Memphis office, the staff reductions they had proposed, and the depletion of the ACBL treasury to pay the exorbitant salaries, "expenses" and "commissions" of the two wheeler-dealers.

As for Mr. Marston's personal slur ("bridge clubs are not even a blip on the Bobby Wolff radar"), nothing could be farther from the truth. You can read in *The Lone Wolff* about Bobby's concerns for local clubs when he discusses the effects on them of numerous Regional tournaments, and about his concerns for all bridge players when he discusses fair procedures and the ethics of the game.

Danny Kleinman, Los Angeles

World Bridge Calendar

DATES	EVENT	LOCATION	INFORMATION
2008			
Aug 1-10	Festival Aix-les-Bains	Aix-les-Bains, France	www.ffbridge.asso.fr
Aug 3-9	Wachauer Bridgewoche	Loiben, Austria	www.bridgeaustria.at
Aug 7-10	Pesta Sukan	Singapore	www.scba.org.sg
Aug 8-17	Summer Congress	Brighton, England	www.ebu.co.uk
Aug 8-17	XVIII International Festival	Slupsk, Poland	bridgefestival@go2.pl
Aug 9-16	32 nd International Bridge Festival	Varna, Bulgaria	bcv_varna@hotmail.com
Aug 14-17	1 st Pakistan Mind Sports Competition	Karachi, Pakistan	ameerhasan75@hotmail.com
Aug 21-23	KEPRI Governor's Cup	Batam, Indonesia	www.gabsi.or.id
Aug 22-31	International Festival	La Baule, France	alain.bihouix@wanadoo.fr
Aug 25-Sep 6	23 rd International Festival	Mamaia, Romania	www.eurobridge.org
Aug 29-Sep 7	6 th PABF Congress/1st Asian Cup	Surfer's Paradise, Australia	www.qldbridge.com
Sep 2-9	4 th World University Championships	Lodz, Poland	www.unibrIDGE.org
Sep 4-7	HCL International Tournament	Delhi, India	www.cba.org.in
Sep 6-13	47 th International Bridge Festival	Pula, Croatia	www.crobridge.com/pula
Sep 10-14	Festival del Bridge	Venice, Italy	www.federbridge.it
Sep 15-19	2 nd Buffett Cup	Louisville, KY	www.buffettcup.com
Sep 19-28	Guernsey & Senior Congresses	Guernsey, Channel Islands	www.ebu.co.uk
Sep 26-28	Vilnius Cup	Vilnius, Lithuania	k.vasauskaite@transp.lt
Sep 27-Oct 5	New Zealand National Congress	Hamilton, NZ	www.nzcba.co.nz
Oct 3-18	13 th World Bridge Games (ex-Olympiad)	Beijing, China	www.worldbridge.org
Oct 3-18	1 st World Mind Sports Games	Beijing, China	www.worldbridge.org
Oct 3-18	12 th World Youth Championships	Beijing, China	www.worldbridge.org
Oct 5-7	Oltania Team Cup	Gura Vaii, Romania	www.ecatsbridge.com
Oct 9-14	Mercian Dubrovnik Congress	Dubrovnik, Croatia	www.ebu.co.uk
Oct 12-16	VII Torneo Internacional	Punte del Este, Uruguay	torneosdebridge@vtr.cl
Oct 12-19	Bridge Week in the High Tatras	Tatry, Slovakia	www.bridgetatry.sk/turnaje/tae.htm
Oct 21-25	18 th Sun, Sea & Slams	Barbados	www.cacbf.com
Oct 22-30	Australian Spring Nationals	Sydney, Australia	www.abf.com.au
Nov 1-2	62 nd Lederer Memorial Trophy	London, England	www.metrobridge.co.uk
Nov 6-9	7 th European Champions Cup	Amsterdam, Netherlands	www.eurobridge.org
Nov 7-9	4 th Monaco International Teams	Monte Carlo, Monaco	www.federation-bridge.mc
Nov 12-21	Golden Jubilee (50 th) Winter Nationals	Kanpur, India	www.cba.org.in
Nov 13-23	14 th Red Sea International Festival	Eilat, Israel	birmand@inter.net.il
Nov 15-22	8 th Cuba International Festival	Havana/Varadero, Cuba	www.cacbf.com
Nov 20-23	29 th International Bridge Festival	Brasov, Romania	bridge-club-brasov@as.ro
Nov 20-30	ACBL Fall NABC	Boston, MA	www.acbl.org
Nov 24&26	European Simultaneous Pairs	Clubs in Europe	www.ecatsbridge.com
Nov 28-30	Sicily Open	Cefalù, Italy	www.federbridge.it
Nov 30-Dec 7	Festival de Mar del Plata	Mar del Plata, Argentina	www.bridgeargentino.org.ar
Dec 6-8	Città di Milano International Teams	Milan, Italy	www.federbridge.it
Dec 8-12	ASEAN Bridge Club Championships	Bandung, Indonesia	www.gabsi.or.id
Dec 12	Lords v. Commons	London, England	www.ebu.co.uk
Dec 13-16	Tolani Grand Prix	Mumbai, India	tcpant@hotmail.com
Dec 19-21	Junior Channel Trophy	England	www.ebu.co.uk
2009			
Jan 14-26	Summer Festival of Bridge	Canberra, Australia	www.abf.com.au
Jan 24-30	50 th Bermuda Regional	Southampton, Bermuda	www.bermudaregional.com
Feb 26-Mar 2	Yeh Bros. Cup	Broadbeach Island, Australia	gttully@bigpond.net.au
Mar 1-7	Gold Coast Congress	Broadbeach Island, Australia	gttully@bigpond.net.au
Mar 12-22	ACBL Spring NABC	Houston, TX	www.acbl.org
Apr 7-12	114 th Canadian Nationals	Toronto, Canada	www.toronto-bridge.com
May	CACBF Zonal Championships	Guadeloupe, WI	www.cacbf.com
Jun 12-27	4 th European Open Championships	San Remo, Italy	www.eurobridge.org
Jul 23-Aug 2	ACBL Summer NABC	Washington, DC	www.acbl.org
Aug 29-Sep 12	29 th World Team Championships	São Paulo, Brazil	www.worldbridge.org
Nov 26-Dec 6	ACBL Fall NABC	San Diego, CA	www.acbl.org