



BULLETIN

www.ibpa.com
mail@ibpa.com

President:

PATRICK D JOURDAIN
8 Felin Wen, Rhiwbina
Cardiff CF14 6NW WALES UK
(44) 29 2062 8839
president.ibpa@gmail.com

Chairman:

PER E JANNERSTEN
Banergatan 15
SE-752 37 Uppsala, SWEDEN
(46) 18 52 13 00
ibpa@jannersten.se

Executive Vice-President:

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

Organizational Vice-President & Bulletin Production Manager:

DILIP GIDWANI
401 Mariden, 16th Road Bandra West
Mumbai 400 050 INDIA
(91) 22 98205 47150 Fax: 22 26002241
dilipgidwani@hotmail.com

Secretary:

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

Treasurer:

MARIO DIX
Flat 1, 41 Tigne Seafront
Sliema SLM15 MALTA
(356) 9949 3167 Cell; 2132 2433 Tel/
Fax
mario@bridge.org.mt

Membership Secretary:

JEREMY DHONDY
50 Great North Way
London NW4 1HS, UK
(44) 20 8203 2119
j.dhondy@btinternet.com

Honorary General Counsel:

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

Awards Secretary:

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

Sponsored Members' Secretary:

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

Presidents Emeritii:

TOMMY SANDSMARK (NORWAY)
HENRY FRANCIS (USA)

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Editor: John Carruthers

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Guest Editorial - Paul Marston, Sydney

Bidding Regulations – The Cancer of Bridge

In his New Year message, WBF president, Jose Damiani, said "...as I am sure you are all aware, the WBF is strongly committed to the development of youth bridge. Young people are the future of our wonderful sport."

If that is the case, bridge is in more trouble than the Sumatran Tiger. The Australian Bridge Federation has about 33,000 registered players and youth players can join for free. In addition there are virtually unlimited funds available for the teaching and supporting of youth bridge. Yet in all of 2009, only 81 youth players earned master points. And the recent national youth championship attracted a field of less than 50. In other words, youth bridge in Australia is close to extinction.

The situation seems to be the same elsewhere. When you go to tournaments around the world, all you see is grey hair. Bob Jones, who runs Jourdan's Bridge Club in Florida, said, "When I started to play duplicate in 1971, I was the youngest guy in the bridge club (22), but not by much. There were many other players in their twenties to make friends with and to play bridge with. Today, almost 40 years later, I am still the youngest guy in the bridge club. These regulations have turned bridge into an activity for the elderly."

I know there are places where there are successful youth programs and quite a few play online, but the trouble is that few of these players make the transition to the mainstream bridge community. I also know that we have some quite successful youth tournaments, including the WBF's good effort in Beijing. But these events are like Hollywood sets. They might look good but they are all front.

I do not buy the argument that this is a sign of the times. The U.S. Chess Federation grew steadily from when it was formed in 1939 until 1972. Then, with the arrival of Bobby Fisher, it doubled in size to 60,000 but declined with his departure. However, in the last few years and despite financial difficulties, it has risen to more than 80,000. A recent scholastic tournament in Nashville, Tennessee drew more than 5,000 young people.

If chess is thriving in these times we have to look for a different reason to explain the decline of bridge. The reason is not hard to find – it is the red tape that now binds the game.

In the U.S. Nationals, you can open two diamonds to show the majors and 10+ HCP; you can also open two hearts to show 3-11 HCP and the majors but you have to provide the opponents with a written defence, which they can read at

Continued on page 15...

Address all IBPA Bulletin correspondence to: JOHN CARRUTHERS
65 Tiago Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M4B 2A2, CANADA
Tel: +1 416-752-7034
email: ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca

THE 15TH NEC CUP

Barry Rigal, NYC
Richard Colker, Wheaton, MD
John Carruthers, Toronto

The 2010 NEC Cup in Yokohama, February 9-14, boasted its strongest-ever field, with LAVAZZA (Bocchi-Madala, Duboin-Sementa, Ferraro-Lavazza) and ZIMMERMANN (Balicki-Zmudzinski, Fantoni-Nunes, Multon-Zimmermann) as co-favourites, followed by Bermuda Bowl-calibre teams from the Netherlands, Bulgaria, China, Australia, England and others. Oh yes, the reigning Venice Cup champion Chinese women were also the NEC Cup defending champions. Despite the star-studded field, one of the Daily Bulletin editors was allegedly offering 3-1 on a Lavazza-Zimmermann final. Naturally, this came to light only after the semifinal matches were completed; he might not have had many takers anyway.

The format was a 12-round Swiss Team qualifying over three days, then 32-board quarterfinals and semifinals followed by a 64-board final. It looked and felt like a mini-Olympiad. For Match #1, the field of 48 teams was seeded into two halves, then each team in the top half was randomly drawn against one in the bottom half. After that, normal Swiss Team draws aligned opponents.

The Swiss Qualifying

SQ3. Board 14. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ J 2
 ♥ A K 9 8 6 4
 ♦ A 10 2
 ♣ Q 8

♠ Q 9 6 3
 ♥ Q J 10 3
 ♦ J 9 6
 ♣ K 9

♠ K 10 7 5
 ♥ 7 5
 ♦ K Q 7 3
 ♣ 5 4 3

♠ A 8 4
 ♥ 2
 ♦ 8 5 4
 ♣ A J 10 7 6 2

West	North	East	South
Yokoi	Nunn	Furuta	Hans
—	—	Pass	Pass
Pass	1 NT	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

As one no trump was allegedly 14+-17, Sartaj Hans simply blasted game. Since their counterparts had sensibly stopped in two hearts but had gone down a trick, a lot depended on whether Tony Nunn of Oz Two could wheel in three no trump. He received a spade lead, ducked to the queen, then the spade nine

continuation, so he ducked again and won the third round. Declarer played a heart to hand in order to tackle clubs by leading the queen from hand. Hiroki Yokoi (Japan Open Team) ducked smoothly, won the next club, and could soon inscribe plus 200 for down four on his scorecard. This was the only table out of the 13 where three no trump was declared that it was beaten.

SQ5. Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

♠ J 8 2
 ♥ A K J 10 6 3
 ♦ 3 2
 ♣ K 2

♠ A
 ♥ 8 2
 ♦ J 10 8 5
 ♣ A Q 10 9 5 3

♠ Q 7 4
 ♥ 9
 ♦ K Q 9 4
 ♣ J 8 7 6 4

West	North	East	South
Fantoni	Apteker	Nunes	Gower
—	—	2 ♣ ¹	Pass
2 ♦ ²	2 ♠	3 ♣	3 ♠
4 ♥	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass
1. Clubs, 9-13 HCP			
2. Relay			

West	North	East	South
Sylvan	Balicki	Wrang	Zmudzinski
—	—	1 ♣	Pass
1 ♦ ¹	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Double	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
1. Hearts			

Balicki's double of five clubs was well-judged (at least, so thought Zmudzinski). When it works, we all say we'd have found it, but would we all take the winning action in the heat of battle? Declarer won the spade lead and passed the ten of clubs. A good start, but even so declarer could not find a way to escape for less than 800. He cashed one top heart, ruffed a spade, crossed to the top club and ruffed another spade, but all he had done was to get his eight tricks quickly rather than slowly.

In the other room, Nunes led a heart against four spades doubled and Fantoni shifted to a trump to Nunes' ace. Now Nunes tried to cash the ace of clubs. Apteker ruffed and had a pretty good idea about both opponents' shape now. He knew he could not ruff two hearts in dummy without promoting the jack of spades to a trick, but he did not need to. Instead, he imaginatively ducked a heart, ruffed the club continuation, felling the king, to trump a heart on the board, then ruffed a club

to hand and drew the last trump. In the four-card ending he'd squeezed East in the minors. Well played, but for a 5-IMP loss.

SQ7. Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

♠ A 10 9 8 7 4
♥ K 9 7
♦ J
♣ A J 7

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

♠ K
♥ Q J 3
♦ A 9 3
♣ Q 10 6 5 4 2

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

Both Howard Weinstein and Ron Klinger sat West and saw North reach four spades on equivalent unopposed sequences. Both Matt Mullamphy and John Carruthers led a top diamond. Declarer won the ace, unblocked spades, then led a low heart from the board. Both Wests hopped up with the ace and fired a low club back, putting on their best “I have a singleton” face. Both Norths fell for the bait and rose with the ace, hoping to hold their spade losers to one. Oops. Nicely done, gentlemen.

Later in the same match...

SQ7. Board 14. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ K 9 3
♥ A K 9
♦ K 6 5
♣ A 7 6 2

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

♠ 8 5 2
♥ J 10 8 4 3 2
♦ A 10 7
♣ 5

West	North	East	South
Weinstein	Drijver	Carruthers	Groenenboom
—	—	Pass	2 ♦ ¹
Pass	2 NT ²	Pass	3 ♥ ³
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass

1. Multi Two Diamonds
2. Forcing, relay
3. Minimum with hearts

Howard Weinstein defended four hearts as West after a Multi from South, following which that player showed a minimum. Despite his success on Board 11, Weinstein was not done on his tour of deception. He led his queen of spades while again assuming his best ‘innocent abroad’ face. When that held, the jack of spades appeared on the table and South ducked again. One can only assume that when the spade ace came next, North uttered the Dutch equivalent of “Fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me”. (In the event, North and South maintained their composure and uttered not one word. –JC)

SQ8. Board 25. Dealer North. EW Vul.

♠ 6
♥ A K Q 9 8 7 3
♦ 8 4 2
♣ Q 9

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

♠ K 9
♥ J 10 6 4
♦ Q 10 6 3
♣ 8 5 4

West	North	East	South
Stockdale	Kopecky	Brown	Macura
—	4 ♥	Double	Pass
5 ♠	Pass	7 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		
West	North	East	South
Koike	Senior	Miura	Dhondy
—	1 ♥	2 ♦	3 ♥
3 ♠	4 ♥	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	5 ♥	5 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Koike and Miura both had a little in reserve for their auction. Brown’s leap to seven spades is exuberant, but understandable because of the apparent source of tricks in diamonds, but maybe she was a trump honour short of that action, and maybe six hearts would have been enough. We can all see that the action jeopardized a 13-IMP swing, but if we could all visualize what our teammates were doing we would never sleep at night.

Stockdale ruffed the heart lead in dummy and led a low spade to the queen (yes, running the jack gives her an extra entry that she might need to establish diamonds, if South withholds the king). Then she drew trumps, ruffed out hearts, played the top diamonds and ruffed a diamond, and ran trumps. When she crossed to the club king, South had been squeezed out of a club. In the two-card ending she had to work out if North had started life with 1=7=3=2 or 1=7=4=1 shape. He either had the diamond queen or the club queen remaining. She wisely played him for the more common pattern, and dropped the club queen offside: 17 IMPs in.

SQ 10. Board 28. Dealer West. NS Vul.

♠ A K Q
♥ K Q 8 5
♦ J 8 5
♣ A J 3

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

♠ J 4
♥ A 9 4 2
♦ A K 10 9 4
♣ 10 7

West	North	East	South
<i>Iliev</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Stefanov</i>	<i>Madala</i>
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♦ ¹	Pass	3 ♠ ²
Pass	4 ♥ ³	Pass	4 ♠ ⁴
Pass	5 ♣ ⁵	Pass	5 ♦ ⁶
Pass	5 ♠ ⁷	Pass	6 ♦ ⁸
Pass	6 ♥ ⁹	Pass	Pass

1. One/both four-card major/s
2. Hearts
3. Agrees hearts
4. RKCB
5. 0 or 3 key cards
6. ♥Q?
7. Yes, and the spade king
8. Third round diamond control?
9. Sorry, no

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Isporski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Kovachev</i>
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♦ ¹	Pass	3 ♠ ²
Pass	4 ♥ ³	Pass	4 ♠ ⁴
Pass	5 ♣ ⁵	Pass	5 ♦ ⁶
Pass	5 ♠ ⁷	Pass	5 NT ⁸
Pass	6 ♥ ⁹	Pass	Pass

1. One/both four-card major/s
2. Hearts
3. Agrees hearts
4. RKCB
5. 0 or 3 key cards
6. ♥Q?
7. Yes, and the spade king
8. Anything further to say?
9. Sorry, no

On this deal, after an extraordinary pair of auctions with six rounds of bidding with precisely one different bid, several lessons present themselves. The first is that a 5-3 fit is occasionally better than a 4-4 fit. Not many pairs can find a minor-suit slam after uncovering such a major-suit fit. The second lesson is East's lead problem – East needs to be rather aggressive to find a club lead in the

face of strong bidding from North. In the event, neither East led a club – can you blame them? And the third lesson is the play in six hearts, which both declarers got right, although it is not trivial.

Both declarers guessed trumps, not surprisingly, and drew them all. Both declarers then crossed to hand on a spade and took a first-round diamond finesse – the West defenders could duck this trick, but not the next, after which the declarers had an entry within diamonds to dummy's suit. Note that declarer must not play off a high diamond initially – then West can shut out the suit by ducking the next one. The defenders scored their diamond winner but that was it.

The play on a diamond lead is also very interesting; declarer cannot duck the trick and now after drawing trumps there are no entries to the South hand if West ducks the next diamond. There seems to be no pressure on the defenders – West can pitch spades as the trumps are drawn, and there is no way to establish a second club trick.

Kudos to the defenders from the East seat who found the club lead and also well done to the pairs who bid to six diamonds – which is a somewhat better slam.

The final standings in the Swiss Qualifying were:

1	Zimmermann	240
2	Lavazza	231
3	The Netherlands	222
4	Oz Players	221
5	Bulgarian All-Stars	205
6	South Sweden	202
7	Sara	196
8	Kendrick	195
9	CANUKUSA	195
10	World Youth	194
11	China Evertrust	193
12	England Ladies	192
13	Oz Two	191
14	Japan Open	189

Kendrick (Senior-Kendrick, Cooke-Garvey) won the tie-breaker with CANUKUSA (Bakhshi-Gold, Weinstein-Carruthers) on IMP quotient, 1.26 to 1.25. One IMP either way in the last match of the Swiss Qualifying would have seen the England/Colonies team through. It was the closest tie-break anyone could remember. For the quarterfinals, the first three would choose from among fourth through eighth for the quarterfinals. Zimmermann chose to play SARA (Teramoto, Fu, Sasahira, Mizuta, Kobayashi, Tanaka), Lavazza chose Kendrick, and the Netherlands chose Oz Players (Klinger-Mullamphy, Del'Monte-Bach), leaving the Bulgarian All-Stars (Kovachev-Isporski, Iliev-Stefanov) to do battle with South Sweden (Apteker-Gower, Sylvan-Wrang). Everybody else would look at the standings and bemoan their fate.

The Quarterfinals

QF. Board 14. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ A Q J 6 5
♥ 7
♦ Q 9 7 4
♣ 9 4 2

♠ 9

♥ Q J 6 5 4

♦ K J 8 6

♣ 10 6 5

♠ 8 4

♥ K 3

♦ A 10 3 2

♣ Q J 8 7 3

♠ K 10 7 3 2

♥ A 10 9 8 2

♦ 5

♣ A K

West	North	East	South
<i>Klinger</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Mullamphy</i>	<i>Groenenboom</i>
—	—	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	3 ♦ ¹	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Constructive spade raise

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Bach</i>
—	—	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	4 ♥ ¹	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♣ ²	Pass	5 ♦ ³
Pass	6 ♠ ⁴	Pass	Pass

1. Splinter raise

2. One or four key cards

3. Spade queen?

4. Yep

Four spades wrapped up 480, but against six spades, Verhees did really well to lead his singleton trump. Declarer now won in dummy - the fatal error - and played the heart ace, heart ruff low, club to the king, heart ruff high, club to the ace. At this point he needed a low heart ruff and was over-ruffed. Had he won the first trick in hand, he would have been able to survive the 5-2 break. I'm not sure whether there are other more mundane lies of the cards where declarer needed to win the first trump in dummy; maybe against 3-0 trumps. No doubt Del'Monte would console Bach that he had made the right play but the bottom line was a huge 11-IMP swing to The Netherlands instead of 11 the other way. Fantoni-Nunes made slam here (on a diamond lead). Apteker made slam by guessing correctly at trick one on a trump lead, which was worth 14 IMPs when Isporski-Kovachev went down, again on the trump lead.

In a terrific innovation used, as far as we know, only in the NEC Cup, the team finishing ahead of the other in the Swiss Qualifying receives a ½ IMP carryover to obviate the need for any knockout tie-breakers. No such small margins were necessary in the quarterfinals,

even though the team finishing ahead of the other in the Swiss Qualifying won every match...

Zimmermann	98	Sara	35
Lavazza	90	Kendrick	64
Netherlands	117	Oz Players	39
Bulgarian All-Stars	84	South Sweden	73

Zimmermann would play Bulgaria in one semifinal while Lavazza and the Netherlands would face off in the other.

The Semifinals

The last board of the first half presented a familiar and stressful situation...

SF. Board 16. Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ Q 10 4
♥ K 10
♦ A K Q 10 6
♣ 9 7 6

♠ A J 5 3 2

♥ 9 5 4

♦ J 5 3

♣ A K

♠ K 9 7

♥ J 8 2

♦ 9 8 4

♣ 8 4 3 2

♠ 8 6

♥ A Q 7 6 3

♦ 7 2

♣ Q J 10 5

West	North	East	South
<i>Verhees</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Prooijen</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1 ♠	1 NT	Pass	3 ♦ ¹
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Hearts

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Groenenboom</i>
1 ♠	1 NT	Pass	2 ♦ ¹
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Hearts

North/South bid to three no trump at both tables and had ten tricks available - if only they could get in to take them. Of course, they can take them if they guess spades correctly. Would they? In the Open Room, van Prooijen led a low spade to the ace and Verhees returned the deuce, putting Bocchi to the test. As a retired teacher, I (RC) can say with some assurance that he would not receive a passing grade for his play of the queen at trick two. Down three. But the same fate befell Drijver in the other room and the board ended up a push at minus 150 for North/South. Lavazza took a commanding 7-IMP lead into the second half.

Both tables also played three no trump in our other match. Yet another big swing went to the Z-squad when Stefanov won his partner's spade lead (the systemic nine) against three no trump and shifted dramatically to a heart. Unimpressed, Multon claimed his game a

few moments later and the All-Stars had had enough; down 82-28, they conceded the match and repaired to an early dinner.

The Netherlands-Lavazza semifinal remained close and low-scoring throughout, with Lavazza eventually emerging with a 41-34 win. Zimmermann, with a ½-IMP carryover, awaited them.

The Final

Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

♠ 6 5
♥ 7 4 2
♦ Q 10 9 3
♣ Q J 4 3

♠ A J 10 4
♥ A K Q 5
♦ 6
♣ K 10 6 2

♠ 7 2
♥ J 10 9 6 3
♦ J 8 5
♣ 9 8 5

♠ K Q 9 8 3
♥ 8
♦ A K 7 4 2
♣ A 7

West	North	East	South
Madala	Fantoni	Bocchi	Nunes
—	—	Pass	1 ♠ ¹
Pass	1 NT	Pass	2 ♦
Double	3 ♦	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	3 ♥	4 ♣
Pass	4 ♦	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	
1. Natural, FIR			

West	North	East	South
Zmudzinski	Sementa	Balicki	Duboin
—	—	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The Closed Room produced a simple auction: Zmudzinski, at the vulnerability, was surely right to pass, hoping that the auction would not die. Alas for him, it did, and after two rounds of hearts, ruffed, declarer set up dummy's queen-jack of clubs and had an entry to them via the diamond queen. He emerged with three minor-suit winners and four trump tricks.

Nunes had a very cultured auction to four diamonds – our regular readers will observe the TTASL (Teach Them a Sharp Lesson) try of four clubs. If they re-open me in partscore, I try for game. Fantoni was the spade ten away from an acceptance.

Against four diamonds, the defenders led two rounds of hearts then ducked the spade king to cut declarer's communications. Nunes drew three rounds of trumps, squeezing West down to three spades and four clubs. Nunes ducked a spade to West, won the club return with the queen, unblocked the club ace, and led the third spade, discarding dummy's losing heart and endplaying West to give him a spade or a club trick.

Very nice! Plus 130 was good for 2 IMPs for Zimmermann, up 4½-0.

Board 26. Dealer East. Both Vul.

♠ 6
♥ K Q 3
♦ A J 4 2
♣ A K 9 5 3

♠ 9 5
♥ J 8 7 6 4
♦ 9 6
♣ Q J 6 4

♠ K 8 7 4 3
♥ A 10 9
♦ 10 8 7
♣ 10 7

♠ A Q J 10 2
♥ 5 2
♦ K Q 5 3
♣ 8 2

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Fantoni	Sementa	Nunes
—	—	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	4 ♦	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♣
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	Pass

West	North	East	South
Z'mann	Bocchi	Multon	Madala
—	—	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♦	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♣	Pass	5 ♠
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	Pass

Strangely, it was Fantoni-Nunes who, after their one no trump (any balanced or semi-balanced weak no trump)-two clubs (relay), had a mostly natural auction to their slam. Four no trump was Turbo, showing two key cards – five clubs cooperated in the slam venture, allowing North to jump to six diamonds. On a heart lead and trump shift Nunes followed a simple line: he tried to ruff out clubs, then took a ruffing finesse against the king of spades. His rationale was that East's failure to shift to a spade at trick two argued for the spade king to be with West. The line was simple, the operation unsuccessful, and the patient died.

Madala and Bocchi had three natural bids: one spade, four diamonds and six diamonds. The rest of the auction consisted of relays by Bocchi to discover that Madala was 5=2=4=2 with good spades and diamonds in a minimum hand. Bocchi received a trump lead. He won in hand with the ace, not the jack, which turned out subsequently to be critical, and took an immediate spade finesse (Bravo!). Then he played the ace of spades and

ruffed a spade, to get the bad news, followed by three rounds of clubs, ruffing in dummy as East pitched a heart. On the fourth spade, West made the difficult-to-foresee but fatal error of discarding a heart (see below), so declarer was allowed to ruff low and had reached this ending: the lead is in North, and declarer can afford one loser...

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

Declarer led a high heart - East could win the ace and play a trump to stop the cross-ruff, but declarer would draw the last trump and squeeze West in hearts and clubs (hence the necessity to unblock the diamond ace at trick one to leave the lead in South). If East ducked the heart ace or won and played a heart or spade, declarer would have a high cross-ruff left.

Had West ruffed the fourth spade, forcing out declarer's diamond jack, East would have had two defences in the ending: win the heart ace and return a heart; then pitch the spade king when declarer ruffs a round-suit loser in dummy; or duck the heart queen, and again to pitch a spade when declarer ruffs his club.

Double-dummy, there is no defence after the winning spade finesse if at trick three declarer plays on clubs. He can establish the long club using a trump and heart entries to do so. It is not clear to do that. But it is also not clear that Bocchi's decision to play on spades at once was better than Nunes' line - except, it was 17 IMPs better on the scoresheet. Zimmermann 71½-37.

After 40 boards, Zimmermann led 95½-49, then Lavazza put on a charge, closing to 101½-91 at the end of the third quarter. We were in for an exciting finish.

Board 59. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
—	—	—	2 ♦ ¹
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	
I. 9-13 HCP			

West	North	East	South
<i>Zmudzinski</i>	<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Balicki</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
—	—	—	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	5 ♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Nunes' limited opening bid saw Fantoni scrambling for a sensible spot to play and clubs was it. Sementa forced to game facing a 'real' opening, and the partnership did well to avoid three no trump - or indeed four hearts, which is not without play, in the abstract. A trump lead might have worked well against five clubs today, but Zmudzinski's (and Madala's) spade lead would surely avoid criticism from all but the harshest critic (initials CB). The only other lead to set the hand is the jack of diamonds - also not high on our 'most likely lead' list.

Both declarers played perfectly. They put in the spade jack, covered all round, knocked out the ace of hearts, won the spade return and took their discard, ruffed a heart, played the diamond ace and ruffed a diamond, ruffed a spade and led a third diamond. When West pitched his last heart, they had reached this position:

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

<p>♠ —</p> <p>♥ —</p> <p>♦ 10 7</p> <p>♣ Q 10</p>	
---	--

Now both declarers ruffed a heart with the queen of clubs, and when that could not be over-ruffed they could lead a diamond to dummy to force West to ruff in with club jack. They over-ruffed and led a heart to score one of the club ten or nine at the death. Well played and 6 IMPs Lavazza, trailing now 123½-122.

With a board to go, Zimmermann was leading 127½-126. Could that ½-IMP carryover possibly determine the match? No, it did not. On Board 64 Madala went three off vulnerable in two hearts, while Zmudzinski did a trick worse - 3 IMPs (and the match, and the championship!) for Lavazza, 129-127½.

IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra

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

509. Dealer West. E-W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
3 ♣	Double	5 ♣	Pass
Pass	6 ♣	Pass	6 ♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The vulnerability dissuaded East from sacrificing in seven clubs, which would have finished only down one. Instead, he decided to take his chances on defending against the diamond slam. West tried the jack of clubs as his opening lead, hoping that East would win and return a heart.

Those hopes were dashed upon viewing the dummy, but declarer was not up to the task anyway. He ruffed the jack of clubs with a low trump, drew trumps, and then played on hearts. As East had kept all five hearts, a club and the king-ten of spades, declarer could not avoid losing two tricks.

To make his contract, declarer should have ruffed the opening lead with dummy's ace of trumps and crossed to hand with a low trump. Next he ruffs his second club with dummy's king of trumps. All that would remain would be to overtake the ten of trumps with the jack and draw West's trumps. The only loser would be in spades.

You should note that only a club lead allows the slam to be made. If West started the defence with the lead of a trump or a spade, declarer would be held to eleven tricks, even without careless play.

510. Dealer West. E-W Vul.

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

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

Although East-West were playing five-card majors, East preferred to start proceedings in third seat by opening in his best suit. South showed a powerful hand by doubling and then bidding three spades, giving North an easy raise to game.

West leads the three of hearts to East's queen. After ruffing the heart continuation, declarer saw that he could not afford to draw trumps until the diamonds were established; if he did so he would go down on the above layout because he would then have no way of stopping the defence cashing two heart tricks.

So, declarer crossed to dummy's king of diamonds. A diamond finesse would be dangerous now, as West would win and give East a diamond ruff. Instead declarer played the ace of diamonds from hand and cashed the ace of clubs before exiting with a diamond. West was now powerless to defeat the contract. If he continued with a third heart, declarer would ruff the heart and then crossruff the red suits; he would make three top tricks in the minors and seven trump tricks. If instead West exited with a trump, declarer would just draw trumps and cash his two remaining diamonds; he would make five trumps, four diamonds and the ace of clubs.

IBPA Website/Blog/Forum?

Is there a member who could manage/control such a site? We are looking for someone experienced in managing a forum. Please make yourself known to barryrigal@mindspring.com

511. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2 ♣
4 NT	Pass	5 ♣	5 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West showed a wild hand with both minors with his leap to four no trump. Not wanting to bid the same hand twice, West passed at his second turn and led ace and another diamond. As West would have continued with the jack of diamonds if declarer had unblocked one of his honours, declarer had followed with his diamond nine. After winning the second diamond in hand with the king, declarer cashed the ace of trumps. West's discard was annoying. By way of a counter-measure, declarer tried to reach dummy in spades. He cashed the ace of spades and continued with the ten. If East had taken this with the queen, there would be a sure entry to dummy with the jack of spades to pick up the trumps, by running the nine. Declarer would lose only a diamond and a spade.

At the table, eventually, East let the ten of spades hold. Declarer countered by cashing the king of spades and then throwing dummy's remaining spade on the queen of diamonds. East ruffed in and returned a club. Declarer ruffed this, ruffed his last spade in dummy and then took the trump finesse to pick up the suit; he made three spades, six trumps, a diamond and a spade ruff for eleven tricks.

Of course, if East had refused to ruff the queen of diamonds, declarer would ruff the eight of spades in dummy and only lose a diamond and a trump.

A point of trivia – there is only one card West can lead to defeat five hearts, the jack of diamonds!

512. Dealer South. E-W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♦
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♠
Pass	5 NT	Pass	7 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

After North forced to game with two clubs and set trumps with three spades, his five no trumps was a grand slam try, which South was happy to accept. West led the king of clubs and declarer paused to consider his options. As dummy's king of hearts would take care of his club loser, all that he needed to do was to establish the diamond suit and draw trumps.

After winning the first trick with the ace of clubs, declarer crossed to the ace of diamonds and led another diamond. When West discarded a heart, declarer ruffed low in dummy; it would have done West no good to ruff for declarer would overruff and have an easier time in making his contract. Declarer continued with a heart to the ace and ruffed a second diamond with the ace, to maintain a trump entry back to hand. After cashing the king of trumps, declarer held his breath and advanced the king of hearts, discarding his club loser from hand. When West could not ruff the second heart, declarer led the seven of trumps to the ten. After drawing West's remaining trumps, declarer had the rest.

Upcoming BBO Online Transmissions

Fez Festival, Morocco, Mar 12-17/17
 Swedish District Championship, Mar 14
 Catalonia Teams, Spain, Mar 15
 Filbyter Cup, Sweden, Mar 15/22/29/Apr 12
 Vanderbilt KO, Teams, USA, Mar 16-22
 Portuguese Trials, Mar 19-21

Banie Cup, Romania, Mar 20-21
 White House Jr Intl, Netherlands, Mar 22-26
 TGR Super League, England, Mar 24/Apr 14/28
 French Open Trials, Apr 3-5
 French Women's Trials, Apr 4-5/7-9
 French Senior Trials, Apr 21-22/27-29

2010 SINDH CHAPTER TRIALS

Syed Ameer Hasan, Karachi

The following hand was dealt in the trials to select the five teams from the Sindh Chapter of the Pakistan Bridge Federation for the final phase of the 2010 Pakistan National Team Trials. These five would join three other teams, one each from Lahore, Islamabad and Rawalpindi in the eight-team final. Of the 16 tables in play in Karachi, 13 stopped in five diamonds or three no trump. At the other three tables, however, East-West landed in six diamonds – two of the three declarers succeeded, one from East, one from West, where North had, on both occasions, pre-empted in spades.

Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

♠ K Q J 10 7 6
♥ 4 3
♦ 2
♣ 5 4 3 2

♠ 8 5 2
♥ Q J 10
♦ 7 6 5 4
♣ Q J 10

♠ A 4 3
♥ A K
♦ A K J 10 9 8
♣ A K

♠ 9
♥ 9 8 7 6 5 2
♦ Q 3
♣ 9 8 7 6

West	North	East	South
<i>Khalid</i>	<i>Asghar</i>	<i>Gulzar</i>	<i>K.K.</i>
<i>Mohiuddin</i>	<i>Naqvi</i>	<i>Bilal</i>	<i>Suri</i>
—	2 ♠	Double	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	6 ♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

At the first of these tables, Khalid Mohiuddin, who has already made his mark in the last World Bridge Championship playing for Pakistan, was the declarer. He won the opening king of spades lead with the ace, noting that South followed with the nine. At trick two, he cashed the diamond ace, both the defenders following low, then cashed the heart and club honours on the table, and played a low diamond, ending play South, who had failed at trick two to realize the trap and jettison the queen. Khalid Mohiuddin was home.

At the second table, also after a two-spade pre-empt, East (Raees Ahmed) simply blasted to six diamonds and here too, he received a spade lead and made the identical play of diamond ace, aces and kings of clubs and hearts and a low diamond, again trapping South.

In both the cases, South failed to jettison the diamond queen. I wonder if you think that it was easy at trick two.

At the third table, North did not pre-empt two spades and here a heart was led. West, being the declarer, won and played two rounds of trumps and both the aces and kings of clubs and hearts. Declarer exited with a low spade, in the vain hope of finding a defender with a singleton spade king. This did not work.

ST. MORITZ, HEAVEN IN WINTER

Jan van Cleeff, The Hague

For 69 years in a row St. Moritz has hosted one of the oldest bridge tournaments in the world. The festival is a joint effort of a number of five-star hotels in this fashionable and picturesque ski resort high in the Swiss Alps.

It all started way back in the Forties of the previous century when Count Fabricotti, an avid bridge player, together with his dear friend Hans Badrutt, owner of the well-known St. Moritz Badrutt Palace Hotel, decided 'to do something' with bridge. This led to a longstanding, annual, tradition of a great tournament in January. For decades, some of the best players in the world like Maria Erhart, Sabine Auken, Zia Mahmood, Christian Mari and in former times Rixi Markus, loved to show their faces and their bridge skills in the traditional Suvretta House, the stylish Carlton Hotel, the exclusive Kulm and of course in the magnificent Badrutt Palace Hotel.

Your reporter had the following heavenly experience. Finishing my last downhill run on the St. Moritz Olympic ski track, the people of Badrutt – in official uniform – took my skis off, helped me out of my boots, pushed me into the hotel Rolls Royce, offered me hot chocolate and Swiss sweets in the back seat of the limousine, and drove me the half mile back to the hotel. Decadence galore. One hour later I was in top shape to play the tourney, which presently is run by the count's widow, Contessa Helga Fabricotti, and her family. After all these years, the organisation is alive and kicking and Helga is proud to announce that next year the festival will celebrate its 70th edition!

The 2010 St. Moritz teams was won by a squad led by Herman Drenkelford. His teammates were Hazi Gwinner and Nikolas Bausback from Germany. On this board they were a bit unlucky. Still the hand might be a good candidate for the Romex Best Bid Hand.

Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Bausback</i>		<i>Gwinner</i>	
—	—	—	Pass
2 ♣ ¹	Pass	2 NT ²	Pass
3 ♦ ³	Pass	4 ♦ ⁴	Pass
4 ♥ ⁵	Pass	7 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Weak with diamonds; or strong
2. Invitational plus, enquiry
3. Maximum weak two in diamonds, no shortage
4. RKCB
5. 1 or 4 key cards

From the bidding Gwinner knew that his partner had two or three hearts. From his perspective, the grand in hearts had a good chance to be made by ruffing diamonds high. He therefore deliberately opted for a possible 5-2 fit in hearts.

When South led a spade declarer rightfully refrained from ruffing the third club in dummy. After drawing trumps Gwinner first tried to develop diamonds and when that failed, he fell back on Plan B, the club suit. When the jack of clubs did not drop, the slam was doomed. The bidding deserved a better fate, I would say.

For info on the St. Moritz Bridge Festival contact Karin Deilmann (Karin@deilmann.ch).

**PATRICK JOURDAIN'S
X-RAY VISION
Michelle Brunner, Stockport, UK**

Leading partner's suit will usually see you well-placed in the post mortem should it backfire. On this particular deal, the spade ten was not actually the defenders' best shot at beating Patrick Jourdain's game contract, but, together with East's decision to insert the spade queen at trick one, it did allow declarer to effect a rather neat end-play to amass nine tricks and a possible award! Allow

me to set the scene and replay the deal which proved to be 'the hand of the match'.

The event was the final of the Welsh Cup where two rival international squads, led by Adrian Thomas and Filip Kurbalija, clashed. Alas, by the time board 40 hit the table, the match was all but won by Adrian's sextet. Our hero, however, IBPA's President, continued in his quest to take home the trophy for the best journalist's hand-of-the-match award, which he duly did with a skillful display, bringing home a contract that appeared doomed due to the adverse lie of the cards.

Board 40. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Shields</i>	<i>Ratcliff</i>	<i>Denning</i>	<i>Jourdain</i>
—	—	1 ♠	1 NT
2 ♥	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

As is often the case, the bidding was helpful to declarer. Jourdain ducked the spade queen at trick one and East, Paul Denning, switched to the heart nine, covered by the jack and queen. In an effort to cut communications, West, Pat Shields, returned the diamond two, which South won with the queen. Jourdain forced out the heart ace and the defence's diamond continuation revealed the expected bad news.

Undaunted, Jourdain cashed dummy's third diamond winner, pitching a club, and then took the spade finesse. Eight tricks had been played, five of them won by declarer, and out of the remainder Patrick had to work some magic to turn three more certain winners into four! The dénouement:

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

Declarer now played the winning eight of hearts, throwing a diamond from the table. What could East discard? If he were to release a club, declarer would be able to establish an extra club trick with ease, so East parted with a spade. Jourdain prepared to turn the final screw by cashing the spade ace rendering his right-hand opponent helpless. He now led a small club from hand and finessed against West's hoped-for ten by inserting the nine. Success! Denning won the trick but, stripped of his exit cards, had to concede the last two tricks to the jack and ace of clubs!

Our esteemed President's heroic effort netted his team a much-needed 10 IMPs, but he could not prevent his arch-rivals from striding to victory. In hindsight, one can see that this contract might have been beaten had the defence switched to clubs at some stage, but with jack-nine-two on the table, that prospect would have looked unattractive to any West. However, taking advantage of defensive errors and playing with foresight are the hallmarks of a top-class declarer. With this in mind I submit this hand for the IBPA best-played hand of the year award.

Bermuda Regional 2010

Barry Rigal, NYC

Each year, at the end of January, many North Americans and a few Europeans escape the winter blahs for a vacation, good food, beautiful scenery, golf and perhaps a little bridge in Bermuda. The tournament site is the magnificent Fairmont Southampton Hotel, shown here...



They say that the looker-on sees most of the game. On this missed opportunity from the Compact Knock-Outs, the spectators were able to exchange knowing looks at deal-end.

Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

Since many of you will be eating your breakfast and feeling slightly delicate, I won't bother you with the auction, except to say that when North and South had conspired to do equally absurd things, South finished in the moderately sensible final contract of three diamonds, after East had bid spades.

The defenders began, reasonably enough on the bidding, with the ace of spades, and shifted equally sensibly to a club. East played three rounds of the suit; declarer won in dummy and crossed to her heart queen as East (not unreasonably) ducked. Now came the trump finesse, and a repeated finesse to find the bad news. This was the ending:

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

With the lead in the North hand and declarer needing five of the last six tricks, try the effect of a spade to the king, a heart to the ace, ruffing a spade low, and giving up the third heart to East. That player has a choice of exiting with either a spade or a club, in either case giving a ruff and discard to all three players at the table.

However, declarer is down to the jack-nine of diamonds, dummy has the diamond ace and a heart, and when South ruffs in he gives West the choice of losing his trump king on this trick or the next. A perfect smother coup!

And at the table...? South conceded one down when East discarded on the second trump!

Let's taste an amuse bouche:

Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

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

Uncultured maybe, but a decent contract. Ladies and Gentlemen, faites vos jeux: should the contract make against best defence?

Let's start with the easy analysis first. On a non-trump lead declarer wins, cashes the diamond ace and ruffs a diamond to hand, then leads a heart up. If North takes the ace declarer has two discards for his club losers. If North ducks, declarer wins and shifts to clubs, planning to ruff the fourth club high in dummy.

So the best lead is a trump. Declarer wins in hand and plays a diamond to the ace and ruffs a diamond, then a heart up. Again North must duck or the club losers both go away. Declarer ruffs another diamond, this time with a high trump, and notes whether the suit splits 4-3. If it does, as here, then declarer simply draws trumps, crosses to a top club and ruffs a diamond, then pitches one loser on the fifth diamond. If diamonds do not split, declarer is down to his last chances; he needs clubs 3-3 or North to hold diamond and club length, along with the heart ace..

Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 NT
Pass	4 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass	—	—	—

Imagine you play four no trump here either on a heart lead – as happened at quite a few tables – or on a low diamond lead, when East should play the eight to the first trick, not the jack (this is the right play when declarer has any of ace-king, ace-queen, king-queen, king-nine, or queen-nine and only wrong when declarer has ace-nine).

How should you play to generate four tricks by force for your side in the club suit? What is the strategy for the best play – the play that gives you the highest expectation of five tricks while also giving you an excellent chance of four tricks?

The safety play in the club suit to ensure four tricks is to lead out the ace of clubs then cross to dummy with a spade and lead up to the club jack – this way you pick up either defender's remaining three-card suit for one loser, guaranteed.

The best play for five tricks while not seriously jeopardizing four tricks is to cross to a top spade at trick two and to lead a club to the jack. This loses only to the singleton club queen in West. And remember that if West has led his long suit at trick one and that appears to be only four cards in length, then HE is much more likely to have four clubs than East! You see (as did rather too many of the Souths when they declared) that playing a club to the king and a club back to the king-jack is an exceedingly bad idea. A diamond shift or continuation would hold you to nine tricks now.

On the very final deal of the Knockout Teams, Bill Souster found a nice play to flatten the following deal and preserve the victory.

Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

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

Souster won the top heart lead in dummy and ran the ten of spades, losing to the king. Back came a top heart so he ruffed, crossed to the spade jack and ruffed the last heart. Now he planned to go to dummy with a top diamond and duck a diamond to West to exploit a 3-3 split or to get that player to open up clubs for him; but

on the second round of the suit East played the ten. So Souster changed tack, winning his ace, and leading a low club from hand. West went up with an honour but was now end-played. A heart back would give a ruff and discard and let declarer pitch a minor from dummy and ruff in hand. A club back would surrender the defenders' second trick in that suit.

Winners of the main event, the Knockout Teams, were Jean Johnson-McKenzie Myers, Alan Douglas-Ian Harvey, Bill Souster-Joe Wakefield.

On our next deal, the operation was a success, but unfortunately, the patient died...

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

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

♠ K 10 8
 ♥ A 8 7 5 4 3
 ♦ A 3
 ♣ A Q

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

How would you feel about your chances in six no trump on a diamond lead? Pretty good I'd say! Curiously, though, the lead is the ten of diamonds and East discards at trick one, so West's opening lead has brought in the whole suit! With 11 top winners you need only develop a trick in one of the black suits. You run six diamonds, just for show, and East in some distress, releases two clubs and a spade and three hearts, while on the last diamond, West throws a heart. The original distribution for West now appears to be 1=4=5=3, so your best play must be to take a first-round spade finesse. Bert Newman duly led a spade to the ten and...

Disaster!! You have managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory and it will be no consolation that you played with the odds. Meanwhile, note that if West had led a club you do not really have the entries to take the losing play in the spade suit. Only the lead of the spade jack or an impossible heart would beat you.

So what happened in the other room? North declared four spades (the auction must be suppressed!) down four on the poor lie of the cards - 4 IMPs to Newman's team.

HERVÉ MOUIEL 1949-2010



Hervé Mouiel of France, one of the world's great players, has passed away. Mouiel excelled in world competition over the past 30 years, and was a World Grand Master.

After numerous successes on the French national scene, Mouiel won his first European Championship as a member of the victorious French team in Wiesbaden 1983, and took the bronze medal at the World Championship (Bermuda Bowl) a few months later in Stockholm. With Mouiel, France was runner-up at the 1984 World Team Olympiad in Seattle, and took the gold medal four years later in Salsomaggiore, and again at the 1996 World Team Olympiad in Rhodes. The year after, in Tunisia, France with Mouiel, won the Bermuda Bowl, for the first time after 41 years.

Mouiel scored well in pairs tournaments too, and was distinguished in Mixed Pairs competitions with his favourite partner Sylvie Willard. At the 2004 World Masters Individual in Verona, he finished a credible 5th among the 52 of the world's top players.

Besides his successes at the bridge table, Hervé Mouiel will be remembered very fondly for his work with the young players of France. Since 1998, he had worked to help train French youth teams, inspiring Juniors to come to bridge and enjoy the game.

Editorial - continued from page 1.



Photo: Jonathan Steinberg

Guest editorialist Paul Marston of Australia

the table. (That's group bonding, not competition!) However, you can't open two diamonds to show this same (weak) hand. Where is the sense in all of this? Why do you need to regulate bidding in any way? Bidding is a collection of ideas – to regulate bidding is to legislate against thinking and to curb imagination.

What good will come of forcing the new generation to do things the old way? The trouble is that each new generation wants to use its own ideas. Consider the music business. If the WBF ran music, hip hop and rap would be completely banned and you could only play rock and roll after midnight in sleazy venues. They might let you play Bob Dylan but only to show that they are broad-minded. In practice, however, they would frown on you if you did so. Deep down they would expect you to stick to Frank Sinatra, Glenn Miller and other stuff that was part of their youth. How popular would music be with the young under this regime? I'll tell you – about as popular as bridge is right now.

The WBF began regulating bidding in the 1980s. Some say that those who use unusual methods gain an unfair advantage from their opponents being unprepared. What is unfair about taking advantage of your opponent's lack of preparation and knowledge? I thought that was the whole point in any top-level sport. Some say you have to get rid of artificial bidding methods so the public can understand what is going on, but this argument is disingenuous. All the top pairs these days have system notes that span hundreds of pages, even those whose first round bids are natural. It therefore follows that all top-level bidding requires explanation before it can be properly understood.

The current regulations are made all the worse by their lack of common sense. For example, there are strict rules about when you can open one diamond to show hearts but you can respond one diamond to show hearts whenever you feel like it. The reason for this is that the authorities only license the familiar, so we now have a set of ad hoc regulations that simply entrench old ways. I would also point out that the current habit of allowing any method but only in long matches late in an event is tantamount to a ban. It is not practical to switch systems in the middle of an event.

Bridge can learn from rugby, which is also going badly. In the last three years the average live TV rugby audience in Australia has dropped from 617,555 to 386,287. And

the average attendance at games has dropped by 1300. Meanwhile, rugby's main rival has grown by 300 per game. It's much the same in England. In 2006: 74% of schools offered rugby while in 2008 it was only 66%. The reason is the rules. Rugby has become the most over-regulated game in the world with a rule book that is 185 pages long. It is widely accepted that it is this that is killing the game.

What is bridge to do? The answer is simple. Let the game evolve. Get rid of all bidding regulations – the lot. Take the yellow systems, blue systems, red stickers, green systems, brown stickers, HUMs, mid chart, super chart etc, and burn them all. This will not appeal to the self-interest groups who had their way with the WBF, but that doesn't matter. They have no right to hijack the game. The point is that we are opening the game up to new generations.

As a footnote, I would observe that the news is not all bad. Despite bridge now having no standing as a competitive sport, there is no shortage of people who are willing to learn. They see it as a way to meet new friends and to exercise their minds. In other words, it is not too late to fix the game up.

(P.O. Sundelin notes that in the Nordic Junior Pairs Championships, there are no system restrictions at all, and he believes the juniors like it that way.)

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World Bridge Calendar

DATES	EVENT	LOCATION	INFORMATION
2010			
Mar 7-14	Dead Sea Bridge Festival	Eilat, Israel	birmand@inter.net.il
Mar 11 -13	5 th International Ayelet Games	Eilat, Israel	www.bridge.co.il
Mar 11-21	ACBL Spring NABC	Reno, NV	www.acbl.org
Mar12-18	7 th International Bridge Festival	Fes, Morocco	www.bridgefes.com
Mar 19-23	12 ^{eme} Festival de Palavas	Palavas, France	www.ffbridge.asso.fr
Mar 21-26	White House Jr International Teams	Amsterdam, Netherlands	keestammens@email.com
Mar23-28	Kitzbüheler Bridgetage	Kitzbühel, Austria	www.bridgeaustria.at
Mar 30-Apr 4	115 th Canadian Nationals	Toronto, ON	www.unit166.ca
Arp 2-5	36 th Inter-Guineas Championships	Cayenne, W.I.	www.cacbf.com
Apr 2-5	Easter Festival	London, England	www.ebu.co.uk
Apr 3-8	Festival Calvi	Calvi, France	www.ffb-competitions.net
Apr 21-25	Längsee Open	St. Georgen, Austria	www.bridgeaustria.at
Apr 24-May 2	Lambourne Jersey Festival	St. Helier, Channel Is.	www.ebu.co.uk
Apr 28-May 2	International Berlin Championship	Berlin-Spandau, Germany	bridgelvberlin@aol.com
May 1-8	III South American Transnational	Mar del Plata, Argentina	www.confsubridge.org
May 1-8	South American Youth Championships	Mar del Plata, Argentina	www.confsubridge.org
May 7-9	19 th OECS Championships	Anguilla, W.I.	www.cacbf.com
May 7-9	Grand Prix of Kosice	Kosice, Slovakia	vojtechbelcak@iol.sk
May 7-20	Festival du Soleil	Juan les Pins, France	www.festivalsdusoleil.com
May 8-16	South of Ireland 67 th Open Congress	Killarney, Ireland	www.cbai.ie
May 12-13	25 th Bonn Nations Cup (Invitational)	Bad Godesburg, Germany	www.bridge-verband.de
May 13	30 th Bonn Cup (Open Pairs)	Bad Godesburg, Germany	www.bridge-verband.de
May 14-16	1 st German Bridge Teams (Open)	Bad Godesburg, Germany	www.bridge-verband.de
May 17-23	XXIII Torneo Int'l Costa Calida	Menor, Murcia, Spain	www.bridgecc.com
May 19-24	Festival de Palavas	Palavas, France	www.ffb-competitions.net
May 21-29	PABF Championships	Hamilton, New Zealand	www.gabsi.or.id
May 30-Jun 6	12 th German Festival	Wyk auf Föhr, Germany	www.bridge-verband.de
Jun 3-6	50 th Poznan Bridge Congress	Poznan, Poland	www.kongres.brydz.wlkp.pl
Jun 5/6	Worldwide Bridge Contest	Clubs Everywhere	www.worldbridge.org
Jun 18-Jul 2	50 th European Team Championships	Ostend, Belgium	www.eurobridge.org
Jun 29-Jul 11	Festival International de Biarritz	Biarritz, France	www.biarritz-bridge.com
Jul 1-3	European Transnational Pairs	Ostend, Belgium	www.eurobridge.org
Jul 7-11	Salzkammergut Bridgetage	Gmunden, Austria	www.bridgeaustria.at
Jul 22-Aug 1	ACBL Summer NABC	New Orleans, LA	www.acbl.org
Jul 30-Aug 5	Chairman's Cup	Orebro, Sweden	www.svenskbridge.se
Jul 30-Aug 7	Norwegian Bridge Festival	Lillehammer, Norway	www.bridgefestival.no
Jul 30-Aug 8	16 th Swedish Bridge Festival	Orebro, Sweden	www.svenskbridge.se
Aug 1-7	Wachauer Bridgewoche	Loiben, Austria	www.bridgeaustria.at
Aug 2-9	5 th World University Championships	Kaohsiung, Taiwan	www.worldbridge.org
Aug 6-9	Pesta Sukan Asian Championship	Singapore	www.scba.org.sg
Aug 6-15	Summer Congress	Brighton, England	www.ebu.co.uk
Aug 6-15	20 th Solidarity Festival	Slupsk, Poland	www.polbridge.pl
Aug 10-15	Hong Kong Inter-City	Hong Kong, China	www.hkcba.org
Aug 14-`5	Selangor Congress	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	www.gabsi.or.id
Aug 20-28	38 th Warsaw Grand Prix	Warsaw, Poland	www.polbridge.pl
Sep 4-5	Torneo Open de Bridge	Barcelona, Spain	www.tennispremia.com
Sep 4-23	25 th Mamaia Festival	Mamaia, Romania	www.frbridge.ro
Sep 5-16	49 th Internatioonal Bridge Festival	Pula, Croatia	www.crobridge.com/pula/eng
Sep 9-12	Isle of Man Congress	Douglas, Isle of Man	www.ebu.co.uk
Sep 13-16	3 rd Buffett Cup	Cardiff, Wales	www.buffettcup.com
Sep 16-19	37 th Vilnius Cup	Vilnius, Lithuania	erikas.vainikonis@gmail.com
Sep 17-26	Guernsey Congress	Guernsey, Channel Islands	www.ebu.co.uk
Oct 1-16	13th World Bridge Series	Philadelphia, PA	www.worldbridge.org
Oct 13-18	EBU Overseas Congress	Crete, Greece	www.ebu.co.uk
Oct 24-29	3 rd Commonwealth Nations Cup	New Delhi, India	sgupta07@rediffmail.com
Oct 29-Nov 1	HCL Teams and Pairs Tournament	New Delhi, India	sgupta07@rediffmail.com
Nov 18-28	16 th Red Sea International Festival	Eilat, Israel	www.bridgeredsea.com
Nov 20-24	32 nd ASEAN Club Championships	Bangkok, Thailand	cbltthailandbridge.com
Nov 25-Dec 5	ACBL Fall NABC	Orlando, FL	www.acbl.org
Dec10-12	Geologi Cup	Bandung, Indonesia	www.gabsi.or.id