



BULLETIN

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Editorial

It's that time of year again – Team Trials. In the matter of Zonal Trials for Bermuda Bowl qualification, expediency and financial considerations sometimes play a part, especially in Europe and North America. The European Team Championships are now held in even-numbered years, despite the fact that the Bermuda Bowl for which they are used as a qualification process will not be held for 15 months or so. Is that a problem? Perhaps not for the NBOs. In practice, it could be a problem for some players because the teams qualify as NBOs, not individuals, so it is quite possible that a team qualifying through the European Championship will not appear in the Bermuda Bowl with the same personnel, and this sometimes happens. Additionally, a team may be more 'in-form' coming off qualification than in 15 months' time. Why does the EBL do it this way? Ever since the introduction of the Open European Championships, it was felt that those championships should be held in non-Rosenblum (odd-numbered) years to ease the financial and time burden on people who can attend only one big event per year. So they fit the European Team Championships into the even-numbered years. The process has its pros and cons and you could argue the case either way.

What about the United States Bridge Federation? The USBF does things a little differently from the Europeans, and even their Open Trials are different from their Women's and Senior Trials. Both the Women's and Seniors choose their two teams in the year of the event for which they qualify. However, there are two separate Trials for USA1 and USA2 in the Bermuda Bowl, one this year and one next year. Why should this be? Regardless of the rationale, having two Trials appears to support the view that the professionals, who dominate the USBF Board of Directors, desire two paydays rather than one. That may not be the case, but that's how it looks.

For individual NBO selections, there are basically two methods of choice: democratic and autocratic. It is difficult to argue with either, since their chief proponents are the USA and Italy, respectively, winners of a combined 39 Bermuda Bowls and Olympiads (everyone else has won just 13 combined) since 1950. Italy is the avatar of the autocratic methodology, Carl'Alberto Perroux dictating the makeup of the Blue Team in the 50s and 60s and Maria Theresa Lavazza choosing the Lavazza Team lately. The USA has always had a democratic process to choose its representatives, whether by pairs trials (in the early days) or team trials (since the 1970s).

Both NBOs get it right in their own selection process. Not many (perhaps no other) countries have the depth of talent the USA has, and thus, in any given year, four or five teams could win their Trials and be a co-favourite for the world title; a handful of other countries could produce two competitive teams. On the other hand, why should Italy take a chance on an upset in a team trials when they know they can produce a co-favourite for a world title without such a process interfering?

The rest of us have to make do as best we can, with some picking a non-playing captain and giving him (almost) free rein, with others holding completely democratic

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III Sudamericano Transnacional de Bridge Mar del Plata, Argentina. 1 al 8 de Mayo de 2010.

3rd SOUTH AMERICAN OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

John Carruthers, Toronto

Have you ever experienced 'sticker shock' when you've received the bill for your restaurant dinner? Well, that can happen in Argentina, but in reverse from the usual! The prices are so cheap and the food so good and plentiful, you will scarcely believe your eyes. Argentina is justifiably famous for its beef, but the quality of all ingredients and the finished product is on a par with the best anywhere else in the world.

Imagine you have a 'small' steak (by Argentine standards) of 400 grams, appetizers, salads, desserts, and coffee at a fine steakhouse, accompanied by a great Malbec – that should come to about 120 pesos per person. Yes, pesos, not euro or dollars. (One euro is a bit less than five pesos, one dollar is a bit less than four pesos.) So, a meal that might cost you 120 dollars in the USA or 120 euro in the Netherlands will cost the same number in pesos in Argentina.

With friendly and polite people, great weather, high standards of cleanliness, top competition and fantastic playing conditions, it won't be long before this tournament becomes a must on people's bridge calendars.

There were two main events in the South American Transnational (similar in concept to the European Open Championships): Pairs (divided into Open, Ladies and Mixed) and Teams (Open and Ladies). More on that later.

Played concurrently with these Transnational Open events was the South American Zonal Junior Teams Championship to qualify two teams to the World Junior Team Championships later this year in Philadelphia. The junior results were:

Gold: Argentina – Francisco Montes de Oca, Felipe Ferro, Gabino Alujas, Alejandro Scanavino, Gonzalo Debarnot, Fernando Scanavino

Silver: Brazil – Juliana Pacheco, Paulo Vitor Damo, Bruno Furlan, Marcelo la Rovere, Thiago Pinnafort, Juliano Ferrario

Bronze: Venezuela – Edgar Quintero, Moises Granda, Dario Cabrera, Carlos Ojeda, Alex Milano, Yun Liang, Danny Cruz

THE PAIRS

In this deal from the Pairs Qualifying, Pablo Lambardi showed that the percentage play can look even better when the bidding and early play is considered.

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Palmeiro</i> | <i>Chagas</i> | <i>Poncioni</i> | <i>Lambardi</i> |
| – | Pass | Pass | 1 ♣ |
| 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ ¹ | Pass | 2 NT |
| Pass | 3 NT | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

1. Please bid INT with a minimum

West made a revealing two of spades lead, and it is worth considering how you'd play to make three no trump after the nine brings the ten and you win the king. You can now force a second spade trick, so the key to the hand is to make three club tricks, assuming you cannot see through the backs of the cards to play diamonds to maximum advantage.

Which play do you like in clubs?

- i. playing to the nine, then to the ten
- ii. leading to the nine, then playing the ace and king
- iii. leading the ace and then playing low to the ten.
- iv. playing off the ace and king.

I did say that West made a revealing two of spades lead. If we consider that West has shown five or six hearts with his overcall and four spades with his lead, and East

has denied eight (and probably seven) diamonds with his silence, we can see that West will have at most two clubs and may well indeed have zero or one. This changes the odds considerably due to the 'vacant spaces' available in the East-West hands to house the crucial club suit.

Accordingly, Lambardi played off the ace of clubs after winning trick one, then tried a hopeful spade queen (in case East had started with the jack-ten doubleton). West won and shifted to a heart, won by the ace in hand. Declarer continued spades, building his second trick in the suit, and West won the jack and continued hearts. Lambardi won the queen and led a club to the nine and queen.

West continued the attack on hearts and declarer won in hand, cashed his spade, led a diamond to the ace and a club to the ten. He had a nervous moment before West discarded, but all was well and the boys scored plus 400. Lambardi's play was better than 75%, catering to either club honour onside, or both offside doubleton.

Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

With both vulnerable, you and your partner bid one spade-INT(forcing)-two spades-four spades. The king of clubs is led.

Three no trump may have been easier, but here you are in four spades. You're in danger of losing a trick in each suit. Suppose you win the club ace at trick two and lead a heart – either the jack or king wins or South wins the ace. If he ducks, you lead another heart; if he wins he leads another heart.

Suppose South rises with the heart ace (he can't see any reason to duck) and leads another after North shows an odd number. You win the king and turn your attention to trumps, leading one to the king and running the ten (your best play not to lose a trick in the suit).

When North shows out, you play a heart or a club and ruff it, then cross on a diamond and ruff another side-suit card (the other suit if South has discarded on the first side suit). You are down to the ace-jack of spades and the ace-jack of diamonds. You play the ace and jack of diamond and claim the last two tricks.

You play so beautifully! As did many of the declarers in the Pairs.

Board 9. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>Caracci</i> | <i>Alfonsin</i> | <i>JM Robles</i> | <i>Marinescu</i> |
| — | Pass | Pass | 2 ♥ |
| Pass | Pass | 2 ♠ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Victor Marinescu had a problem hand to led from and chose the diamond ten. José Manuel Robles played the king from dummy, establishing a tenace over North's jack. North won the diamond ace and played hearts, South winning the first round and declarer winning the second round. Now declarer could draw trumps and pick up the diamonds, but he'd have a heart loser at the end for plus 140. But since it was Pairs and overtricks are important, watch what happened...

Robles played the queen and ace of spades, then led the diamond eight and another to the nine, picking up that suit (no more trumps with South!). Then he ruffed his heart loser with the king of spades. He could concede a club and claim the rest after drawing North's last trump.

In contrast, the fight for the overtrick was thwarted by excellent defence on the following deal.

Board 26. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Lema</i> | <i>Debarnot</i> | <i>d'Orsi</i> | <i>Scanavino</i> |
| — | — | Pass | Pass |
| 1 NT | 2 ♠ ¹ | Pass | Pass |

1. Spades and a minor

Ernesto d'Orsi led the two of hearts to the seven, three and queen and another heart was played. Lema won his ace and exited passively with a trump. Declarer rose with the ace and played the king of spades next; Lema noted the fall of the ten from d'Orsi and, assuming declarer had five spades, dumped the queen under the king. When d'Orsi won the third spade with his jack, a diamond through the king ensured that the defence would get two diamonds and a club in addition to their two major-suit tricks.

Holding declarer to eight tricks was a very good score since minus 140 was common.

The results of the Pairs:

Open Pairs

- 1 Miguel Villas Boas-João Paulo Campos (BRZ)
- 2 Gabriel Chagas-Pablo Lambardi (BRZ-ARG)
- 3 Shireen Mohandes-Andy Bowles (GBR)

Ladies Pairs

- 1 Ana Alonso-Mónica Balasarre (ARG)
- 2 Malena Iacapraro-Maria del Rosario Garateguy (ARG)
- 3 Loreto Cuevas-Beatriz Marangunic (CHI)

Mixed Pairs

- 1 Graciela Rizzo-Osvaldo Rizzo (ARG)
- 2 Marta Tiscornia Biaus-Ignacio Vidal Molina (ARG)
- 3 Carlos Pellegrini-Chantal Safra (ARG)

THE TEAMS

These Championships have a unique format. Firstly, in the Pairs, the three sessions of qualifying see everyone playing together in one large group. Then for the finals (two sessions), three groups, Open, Women's and Mixed Pairs are created. Women's (and Mixed) pairs and teams must declare beforehand whether they will play the open, mixed or women's.

In the teams, the first round of qualifying and the last three rounds of qualifying (of 15 matches in all) are played within one's own group.

The following deal was definitely grist for the bulletin mill...

Swiss 3. Board 24. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <i>JP Campos</i> | <i>JM Robles</i> | <i>Villas Boas</i> | <i>Caracci</i> |
| Pass | 3 ♦ | 3 ♥ | Pass |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Marcelo Caracci led the queen of spades (Rusinow) and Miguel Villas Boas won the ace and played a second spade to open communications. South won and shifted to the diamond ten to the king, ace and a third diamond, which declarer ruffed with the ace of trumps.

Two rounds of trumps ending in the dummy and a spade ruff revealed the full distribution. Villas Boas played a heart to dummy and the eight of clubs to the king. He then led the jack of clubs from hand, pinning the ten, and said to the Bulletin Scribe, "That's a good bulletin hand, yes?" Scribe agreed.

There were plenty of 140s and 50s on this deal; one needed to pin the ten of clubs to score 420 and a handful of others did just that, including Shireen Mohandes, Rolando Grijalva and Virginia Müller, who did so against Gabriel Chagas.

The most-talked about deal of the tournament was the following one, where it was conceivable to go nine down in three no trump (yes, nine), and on a different lead, to make 13 tricks!

Board 17. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

Some of the auctions and defences on this board were a little unusual, and were revealed to me on condition of anonymity. Here are a few:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | Pass | 3 ♣ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

North led a heart and all thirteen tricks were made by East-West, plus 520. This was a fairly common result.

At the other table in one match...

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| — | 1 ♥ | 3 ♣ | Double |
| 3 NT | 4 ♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

Plus 420 and a total of 940 the hard way. In another match...

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | 3 ♥ | Pass | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

A club lead led to 13 tricks. At the other table:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|--------|-------|
| — | Pass | 1 ♣ | 2 ♠ |
| 3 ♦ | 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass |
| 5 ♦ | 5 ♠ | Double | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

One off and minus 100.

Two hapless Norths doubled West's three no trump and led... a heart, plus 950! Not a number you see every day not vulnerable.

Surprisingly or not, no North-South pair managed to take all 13 tricks in defence against three no trump by West. One supposes that if you are willing to let the opponents play three no trump when you can make four hearts or four spades, why should you be able to take all your tricks? In all, 13 declarers made all 13 tricks in three no trump. Three went down: six tricks, seven tricks and nine tricks (hurray!) respectively.

However, we said no North-South pair managed 13 tricks with West as declarer. The one pair that managed the feat faced this auction:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | Pass | 3 NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

This illustrates the folly of the so-called Gambling Three No trump with no card outside. South led the heart queen against this contract and North cashed the spade ace before South had to make any discards so South knew to keep all his spades.

Several Norths allowed five diamonds to make an overtrick on the ace of hearts and another heart lead, trying to give partner a ruff. Rather a greedy defence, that, since if partner can ruff a heart, the spade ace at trick two still makes it one off, and partner will tell you what to do at trick three on the ace of spades.

In one match, both East-West pairs took the four no trump save(?) over North-South's four of a major. One declarer took one trick(!), down nine, while the other went four down(!) on exciting defence. Their auctions were:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| — | 1 ♥ | 2 ♣ | Double |
| 3 NT | 4 ♥ | 4 NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

One North led a low spade to the king, South returned a spade to the ace, and then a spade to the jack allowed South to run the suit. North made one heart discard, ruining a chance to tie a world record of 10 down in four no trump!

At the other table in this match, the first two tricks were the same, then North cashed the heart ace before leading the third spade. That was 'only' four down.

This was the deal of the teams semifinals.

Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <i>Carvalho</i> | <i>Sampaio</i> | <i>Aranha</i> | <i>Amaral</i> |
| 1 ♣ ¹ | 3 ♦ | 3 ♥ | 3 ♠ |
| 4 ♦ | Pass | 4 ♥ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | Pass | 4 NT | Pass |
| 5 ♣ | Pass | 6 ♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |
| | | 1. Strong, artificial, forcing | |

There are not many lies of the cards that allow one to make six hearts, but one of them put in an appearance. Aranha won the jack of diamonds lead with the ace, drew trumps ending in hand, took a club finesse, then ruffed dummy's diamond and led... the jack of spades! Plus 1430!

Although he won 17 IMPs, Aranha could have improved on his line of play by eliminating clubs before running the spade jack. This would gain when North had a singleton ace as well, in which case he'd be forced to concede a ruff and sluff.

Another possible line is to lead a spade to the king (South cannot gain by rising with the ace) after drawing trumps, ruffing dummy's diamond and taking a couple of club finesses. Then discard a spade on the fourth club and wait for the ruff-sluff. South leads one spade, discards two on clubs and another on the ruff-sluff.

Still other possibilities arise when North has queen-ten doubleton, but this is less likely on the bidding.

In the early days of South American bridge, Argentina dominated South American Championships and thus international representation. In the 1970's, Brazil gained dominance and won the World Team Olympiad in 1976, the World Open Pairs in 1978 and 1990 and the Bermuda Bowl in 1989. Lately though, Chile has been making noises about joining the elite two. Four players, Marcelo Caracci, J.M. Robles, Benjamin Robles and Joaquín Pacareu, have dominated South American bridge

over the past three years. Those four have won the last three South American Team Championships, and Benjamin Robles and Pacareu won the South American Pairs two years ago.

This year, Marcelo Caracci had to return to Santiago de Chile yesterday for a family wedding (he has his priorities in order!), so the team conscripted a couple of substitutes from Argentina, Adolfo Madala (older brother of Agustin, now of the Lavazza team) and Rafael de la Barrera. They barely skipped a beat, handily defeating a strong team from Brazil led by Leão Carvalho in the four-session final to perform the hat trick.

For most South Americans, 10:30 a.m. is way too early to be trying to concentrate on good bridge. While we norteamericanos tend to eat dinner earlier and arise earlier in the morning, in this part of the world, we learn to take things easier...and later. However, South America is joining the rest of the world in beginning their bridge championships in mid-morning.

Would that have an effect on the first board of the second session of the finals, begun at 10:30?

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ 7
♥ Q 9 6 5 3
♦ A 10 9 8 2
♣ 4 2

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

♠ Q J 10 6 5
♥ A 10
♦ 5 3
♣ K 8 6 3

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| B Robles | Carvalho | Pacareu | Aranha |
| — | Pass | 1♦ | 1♠ |
| Pass | 1 NT | Pass | Pass |
| Double | 2♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Double | Pass | Pass | Pass |

As we were entering the playing area for the beginning of play, I told Leão Carvalho that I wanted him to give me a Daily Bulletin hand in the first five boards. He said to me, "That's too much pressure!" Then the first board came along.

What do you make of this bidding? As nearly all expert pairs do, Robles-Pacareu play that West's first double meant that he had a penalty double of one spade - this is really the only logical way to play this bid. Many pairs play that when North pulls the double, as he did here, East's double would show three trumps (not necessarily four) and suggest (but not command) a pass by West.

Whatever it would have meant in their system, Pacareu passed and Robles doubled. This was a very questionable action since if partner could not double, what defence do you have against hearts? The ace of spades. You need partner to have five defensive tricks to beat the contract - surely, he'd have doubled himself with that much.

In any case, Pacareu avoided the deadly (for him) trump lead, often the best start (although not this time) against a low-level doubled contract, and started the spade king. (The defence can prevail after a trump lead, but they must be very precise, shifting to diamonds early and not sacrificing the spade ace early.)

At the appearance of the dummy and when the spade king held the trick, Pacareu knew his partner had three trumps and five spades. He shifted to the seven of clubs, king (good for declarer!), queen, two. Carvalho next led the spade queen from dummy and ruffed out the ace when Robles played that card.

Next, Carvalho played a heart to the ace and discarded his second club on a high spade as East ruffed. Pacareu next cashed the heart king and played another club, upon which declarer discarded a diamond loser.

West had won the nine of clubs at the previous trick and shifted to the diamond king. Declarer won the ace and led the diamond nine to East's jack. The ace of clubs was ruffed by declarer and the queen of hearts cashed, drawing West's last trump.

When declarer played the diamond nine to East's queen, East had to surrender a diamond trick back to declarer for down one, plus 100 to East-West. It was a lot of work for that extra 50 points. Was East's pass over two hearts forcing on West? That's a good point to discuss with your partner.

So, what happened at the other table on this board? The auction and contract were the same(!), but East led a trump, and East-West did not find their way out of the labyrinth of precision defence needed to defeat the contract, leading to plus 470 for North-South and 11 IMPs to the Caracci team. They never looked back.

Results:

Open Teams

- 1 CARACCI (CHI-ARG) – Marcelo Caracci, José Manuel Robles, Benjamin Robles, Joaquín Pacareu, Adolfo Madala, Rafael de la Barrera
- 2 CARVALHO (BRZ) – Leão Carvalho, Marcos Thoma, Manuel Peirão, Mauricio Figueiredo, Federico Kladt, Sergio Aranha
- 3= MERCOSUR (ARG) – Walter Fornasari, Marcelo Villegas, Ricardo Angeleri, Juan Manuel Rueda, Leonardo Rizzo, A. Muscolo
- 3= d'ORSI (BRZ) – Ernesto d'Orsi, Marcelo Amaral, João Paulo Campos, Miguel Villas Boas, Fabio Sampaio

Ladies Teams

- 1 ALMIRALL (ESP) - Nuria Almirall, Carmen Cafranga, Mari Carmen Babot, Marta Almirall
- 2 MANDELLOT (BRZ) – Agota Mandelot, Florencia Attaguile, Leda Pain, Sylvia Mello, Paulinha David, Heloisa Nogueira
- 3= BETTINI (VEN) – Maria Grazia Bettini, Morella Pacheco, Maru Devletian, Marisa Tagliavia, Elisabeth Rabicew, Andrée Dichi
- 3= EL 5 (ARG) – Delia Costa, Diana Budkin, Marta Tiscornia, Silvia Boldt, Gloria Iribarren

Details of this event can be found at the tournament website: <http://www.confsudbridge.org/torneos/mardelplata2010.htm>

In two years' time, the IV Sudamericano Transnacional will be held in Montevideo, Uruguay. Make your plans to attend now.

THE SHENHUA CUP

Fu Xiang, Beijing

I am very excited about bringing this hand to you. During the May Day public holiday, the ShenHua Cup, which has been held in each of the past five years, was again held in Beijing. Sixty-three teams took part in the event this year. On May 2, Trinerger and HengSha Technology met in the final, which was a 24-board match of two 12-board segments. The knock-out phase was broadcast on Ourgame and I was the recorder in the Closed Room. This was the penultimate deal, and determined the winner.

Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

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

Open Room

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|--------|--------------|------------|
| Zhou Qinghong | Lu Yan | Zhang Yizhuo | Peng Lixin |
| — | — | — | 1 ♦ |
| 3 ♥ | Double | 4 ♥ | 4 ♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Closed Room

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| Sun Shaolin | Liu Haitao | Kang Meng | Du Bing |
| — | — | — | 1 ♦ |
| 3 ♥ | Double | Pass | 3 ♠ |
| Pass | 4 ♥ | Pass | 4 NT |
| Pass | 6 ♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

In the Open Room, the Trinerger team stopped in a simple four-spade contract and made five. In the Closed Room, based on his perfect shape, an optimistic North pushed the hand to an aggressive level. Du Bing, a smart young man, had to face a difficult mission after the heart king lead.

North-South had good controls but were lacking in tricks and the opening lead diminished the number of entries to dummy. Du thought for a long time before he ruffed in dummy, East following with the heart jack. Du played the diamond nine to his ace in hand; East played the three and West dropped the queen. Declarer continued by ruffing another heart in dummy, came to hand with a club to the king and then ruffed this third heart, seeing East follow with the heart ace.

Since there was an inevitable loser in diamonds, declarer needed the spade jack to be doubleton. Under this premise, he must choose the right way to return to hand to draw the last trump. Considering that West should have some shape for his preempt, Du decided to cash the spade ace and club ace, then ruff the third club. When the 3-3 break in clubs was discovered, declarer could play the spade queen, and with great pleasure see the spade jack drop. After clearing the last trump, a small diamond to the eight and East's ten, declarer took the last two tricks and brought the contract home.

Thus HengSha Technology defeated Trinerger by 21 IMPs (56-35) and won the title. This hand provided a 22-IMP swing. Coincidentally, the annual awards of the Chinese Contract Bridge Association are also named the "ShenHua Awards" and it is very likely that Du Bing will win the "ShenHua Best Play Award" after he won the ShenHua Cup. Hundreds of bridge fans witnessed his feat through the Internet, and I was lucky enough to be the nearest one, having recorded the whole play.

To see the broadcast, you can open your web browser to:

<http://worldbridge.ourgame.com>

then follow the instructions to download the software and choose "6th ShenHua Cup". In the Final, Section 2, open the scorecard and click on Board 11 to see the above hand.



IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra

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521. Dealer South. E-W Vul.

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

♠ A K Q J 10 6
 ♥ A
 ♦ A K Q
 ♣ A Q 2

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | — | — | 2 ♣ |
| Pass | 2 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♠ |
| Pass | 4 ♠ | Pass | 6 ♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

When this hand was originally played, declarer took West's queen of hearts lead with his ace, cashed the ace of trumps and then crossed to dummy with a trump. His next move was to finesse the queen of clubs and he was soon entering minus fifty on his scoresheet.

"You should have made twelve tricks!" exclaimed North, "All you had to do was ruff the eight of hearts instead of taking the club finesse, which can wait. Next you play the three diamonds, which eliminates that suit from both hands, and only now do you play clubs, leading the two from hand towards dummy's ten. As the cards lay, West would rise with the jack to prevent the ten winning. After that he would have to return a club into your ace-queen tenace or give you a ruff-and-discard."

"This plan also makes the contract when West has the jack of clubs and East the king. If West plays the jack he is endplayed and if he plays low the ten would force East's king. Finally, if East started with the jack of clubs, he would have to return a club, to avoid giving a ruff-and-discard. You would finesse the queen and still make the contract when East had king of clubs too. You'd make the hand unless West had the club king and East the jack."

522. Dealer South. E-W Vul.

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

♠ 9 4
 ♥ A K J 10 8
 ♦ A J 10 3
 ♣ K 3

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

South decided that game would have a play as long as North had values in the minor. After cashing the king of spades, West continued with the ace and another spade. Declarer ruffed East's queen of spades with the eight of trumps then, without any apparent thought, played the ace, king and jack of trumps. West took the latter with his queen of trumps and played a fourth round of spades, ensuring a two-trick defeat.

Dummy was unimpressed, as dummies often are. "You can afford to lose a trump trick" he said. "You should have aimed to do so safely. Simply lead the jack of trumps at trick four! As long as trumps are no worse than 4-2, you are home. If West takes his queen of trumps and plays a fourth round of spades, you will ruff in dummy. After returning to hand with the king of clubs, you draw the remaining trump; you will make four trumps, four diamonds and two clubs."

"Of course, West would do no better to duck the jack of trumps. Then you take the ace-king of trumps and play on the minors. All West makes is two spades and the queen of trumps."

523. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | — | — | 2 NT |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 5♠ | Pass | 6♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

A simple transfer, slam-invitational sequence from North saw South find an easy raise to slam. West led the king of clubs and declarer saw that he could bank everything on the trump finesse. If East began with the king of trumps, he would make seven trumps, three hearts and the minor-suit aces.

However, declarer saw that it was just as valid to play East for the king of diamonds, with the additional chance of dropping a singleton king of trumps with West. So, he cashed the ace of trumps. When the king of trumps was still outstanding, declarer played a low heart to dummy's king and finessed the queen of diamonds. When it held, declarer was able to throw dummy's three remaining clubs on the three red-suit winners he had in his hand.

524. Dealer South. E-W Vul.

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

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

After North's splinter-raise of hearts, two cue bids and Roman Key Card Blackwood followed and South bid the good slam in hearts.


West led the queen of diamonds, taken in dummy with the ace. Declarer considered the two possible plans. One line was to draw trumps and take the two black-suit finesses, making the slam whenever East held at least one of the black kings.

However, instead, he decided to rely on an elimination play. He drew the trumps with the ace, then cashed the king of diamonds and ruffed a diamond. Next he crossed to dummy with a trump and led a spade to the nine. West was able to win his jack of spades but then had either to play a black suit into one of declarer's black-suit tenaces or, alternatively, to lead a diamond and see declarer discard a club from table while ruffing in hand; then, dummy's remaining club would disappear on the ace of spades.

Of course, if East played the ten or jack of spades on the first round of the suit then declarer would cover it with the queen of spades. Whenever West was able to take this with the king, he would find himself similarly endplayed, as the ace and nine of spades would form a tenace around the ten of spades.

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POLISH OPEN TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

Marek Wójcicki, Przemsyl, Poland



From the 1st till the 3rd of May, in Poznan, the Final Four of the Polish Open Teams Championship was played.

In the 72-board semifinals, the title holders - Auguri Warsaw (Buras-Narkiewicz, Kalita-Kotorowicz, Chmurski-Puczynski, Gawrys-Pszczola) beat Unia Winkhaus Leszno (Jagniewski-Kwiecien, Pazur-Wojcicki, Poletylo-Suwik) 154.2-152 (carryover 7.2 for Auguri), and Mragovia SI Mragowo (Gierulski-Skrzypczak, Cichocki-Pikus, Janiszewski-Sztyrak) beat Myoni Warsaw (Krupowicz-Lutostanski, Jeleniewski-Zawislak, Kowalski-Tuszynski, Ohrysko-Ratynski) 160.2-148 (carryover 7.2 for Mragovia).

In the 96-board final, Auguri beat Mragovia SI 218-160.6 (carryover 9.6 for Mragovia), while in the playoff for the bronze (48 boards), Unia Winkhaus beat Myoni 116-70.8 (carryover 4.8 for Myoni).

Piotr Gawrys of Auguri was named MVP of the finals.

Four players of the Auguri team – Krzysztof Buras, Grzegorz Narkiewicz, Jacek Kalita and Krzysztof Kotorowicz, will represent Poland in the European Championships in Ostend in June.

Spectacular declarer play was demonstrated by Bogoslaw Pazur in the semifinal. After the bidding (all vulnerable, dealer West):

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|----------|------------------|-------|
| Buras | Wójcicki | Narkiewicz | Pazur |
| 1 ♥ | Double | 2 ♦ ¹ | 3 NT |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

1. Heart raise, preemptive or game forcing

Buras (West) led the eight of diamonds (2nd / 4th), and Pazur looked at:

♠ K Q 8 6
♥ 2
♦ J 6 2
♣ A Q 9 8 4

♠ A 9 3
♥ A Q 8 7
♦ Q 9 7
♣ 6 3 2

He played low from dummy and East played the three (upside-down count). Declarer took the trick with the nine and played a club: king from West, ace, small. King of spades (jack from West) and a spade to the ace – West discarded a heart, and a club again – West followed with the ten: queen, small.

Now declarer conceded a diamond – four from East, and West took the trick with the ace and cashed the king (East discarded a spade). In the ending:

♠ Q 8
♥ 2
♦ —
♣ 9 8 4

♠ 9
♥ A Q 8 7
♦ —
♣ 6

West cashed two more diamonds. Declarer discarded clubs from dummy and low hearts from his hand (East discarded two heart spots). Now a heart was played – two, king, ace. When the heart queen was cashed (club from dummy) East was squeezed in the black suits for the ninth trick. This is the complete hand:

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

3rd LONDON INTER-NATIONAL TEAMS

Simon Cochemé, London

The event is for people with non-British passports who live or work in London. Sixty-seven competitors (most of them club players) from 19 countries took part at the Young Chelsea in May. The winners of the Elizabeth Lindsay Trophy were USA (John Vos, Heather Bakhshi, Sybil Bragadir, Michael Ranis) with Sri Lanka second and France third. The Trans-National event was won by a team from India, Singapore and Ireland. Players are encouraged to come in national colours and the prize for the best dressed team went to Denmark.

Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

I asked the Americans for an interesting deal and they modestly gave me this one, where Sri Lanka had got the better of them.

In one room the Sri Lankan South was allowed to make five diamonds when West led the ace of hearts and the defence then failed to play two rounds of trumps.

In the other room, with no intervention, Ranis (South) and Bragadir bid as follows:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|------------------|------|--------------|
| — | <i>Bragadir</i> | — | <i>Ranis</i> |
| — | — | — | 1 ♦ |
| Pass | 2 ♣ ¹ | Pass | 2 ♦ |
| Pass | 3 ♣ | Pass | 3 ♦ |
| Pass | 5 ♦ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | — | — | — |

1. Game forcing unless followed by three clubs.

West led the two of spades. Declarer ducked and East won with the king and switched to the two of clubs. Ranis ruffed, played a spade to the ace and called for the king of clubs. His plan was to ruff the club, throw the eight of hearts away on the spade queen, and then take the ruffing finesse in hearts. Suren Velayutham in the East seat did very well to trump the club king with the ace of diamonds and play a heart to his partner's ace for the setting trick. That was a marvellous recovery!



**Michael Gibson,
Wellington, N.Z.**

If you start learning bridge when you turn 65 you will surely want to make up for lost time by playing at a Congress. If you play at a Congress you will certainly choose somewhere with excellent weather, beaches

and decent places to eat, such as the eight-day Gold Coast Congress which takes place in Broadbeach, Australia at the end of February each year. If, at the last weekend of the Congress, you do not play in the Mixed Teams or the Restricted Swiss Pairs, you will want to join the beaten semi-finalists from the Gold Coast Teams and play in the Open Swiss Pairs.

This is how two New Zealanders, Janet Woodfield, and I, found ourselves defending against six no trumps played by Marion Rice of Sydney. Mrs. Rice began learning bridge in 1974 when she was 65.

I suppose that, until the 1960s, most of my opponents at the bridge table were probably born, like Mrs. Rice, before the First World War. However she is, as far as I am aware, the first declarer aged over 100 who has bid and made a vulnerable six no trumps against me.

Board 18. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Janet Woodfield</i> | <i>Lee Lewis</i> | <i>Michael Gibson</i> | <i>Marion Rice</i> |
| — | — | Pass | 1 ♣ |
| Pass | 1 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♦ |
| Pass | 2 ♠ | Pass | 2 NT |
| Pass | 4 NT | Pass | 5 ♥ |
| Pass | 6 NT | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | — | — | — |

At our table, the lead of the five of spades indicated some lack of interest in the suit. East played the queen.

Clearly, the contract requires an extra trick from either clubs or spades – provided of course, that declarer makes four tricks in hearts as well as the assured four diamonds.

For the extra trick in clubs you can immediately put yourself out of your misery with the fifty-fifty chance of finessing the ten of clubs at trick two or playing for the king of clubs on your right at trick three.

Mrs. Rice tested the hearts first. When West's ten and nine fell under the ace and king and dummy's eight was not covered by East she chose to apply "restricted choice" and run it. The first hurdle had been crossed

with the extra benefit of beginning to put the defence under pressure with discards.

If the last cards are as follows (with the lead in dummy)...:

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

...the lead of a 'low' spade from dummy gives East a chance of going wrong on the actual lay-out. However, leading the king and then the nine of spades gives declarer the same chances in clubs that existed at the start - except that the vital whereabouts of the defenders' honours happen to be reversed.

Mrs. Rice led the king of spades followed by the nine so I found myself on lead and Mrs. Rice then just had to guess right in clubs!

"Makeable Contract" or "Deep Finesse" shows that both six no trumps and seven diamonds are indeed makeable. It was just our luck that six no trumps was made at only thirteen other tables in the Open and failed on 38 occasions whilst even six diamonds failed on four occasions out of 28. (In the Restricted Swiss Pairs six no trumps was made six times and failed 18 times whilst six diamonds made once and failed once.)

With an average score to North-South of 560 at the 98 tables in the Open compared to an average score of only 150 at the 41 tables in the Restricted, we were lucky that the 1440 chalked up by our 100 year-old opponent cost us only 13 IMPs.

Perhaps if pairs like the eventual winners, Julie Sheridan and Karen Martelletti who made three overtricks in three no trumps, or Michael Courtney (recently described by Janet de Botton in the Spectator as one of the world's great declarers) and Astrid Goncharoff who made an overtrick in six diamonds, had bid up a little our loss of IMPs might have been that much less!

Otherwise, surely the difference in datums in the two sections (Open 560, Restricted 150) provides an argument in favour of continuing to calculate datums on the results achieved in actual play. After all, there should be some accounting in the Restricted section for only two pairs reaching a reasonable contract of six diamonds - as well as a very handsome reward for those who, like the redoubtable Mrs. Rice, made twelve tricks in six no trumps.

WHO WASTHAT MASKED MAN?

David Caprera, Denver CO



I was declarer on the following deal, playing in the Amarillo, Texas Regional with Chris Compton against two perfect strangers. As North-South, we held:

IMPs. North Dealer. Both Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|------|---------------------|------|----------------|
| — | <i>Compton</i> | | <i>Caprera</i> |
| 2 ♥ | 1 ♦ | Pass | 1 ♠ |
| 3 ♥ | Double ¹ | Pass | 2 ♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 3 ♠ |
| Pass | 4 ♠ | Pass | Pass |

1. 3-card spade support

The opening lead was the heart king.

RHO overtook the heart king with the ace and played back the diamond three. LHO won the diamond ace and played back the heart queen, all in tempo. How do you continue?

I ruffed with the queen of spades to prevent an overruff with the nine of spades as RHO followed with a heart (uh-oh!). I cashed the ace-king of clubs to shed the other two hearts and played a spade to my ace to minimise the danger of a possible diamond ruff.

A look at the full deal reveals the only distribution to beat me:

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

Even Compton, seldom a man with nothing to say, didn't say a word.

The Cavendish Invitational

Phillip Alder, Hobe Sound, FL

The John Roberts Teams

The Cavendish Invitational is the one big-money event in the United States each year. It starts with the John Roberts Teams, for which the first prize was \$38,130.

This deal was a bit unusual, the final board of Zimmermann's match against Gaylor Kasle, Lew Finkel, Drew Casen, Jim Krekorian, Russ Ekeblad and Jan Jansma.

Board 18. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Jansma</i> | <i>Helness</i> | <i>Ekeblad</i> | <i>Helgemo</i> |
| — | — | Pass | 1 ♥ |
| Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass | 2 ♦ ¹ |
| Pass | 2 NT ¹ | Pass | 3 ♥ |
| Pass | 3 NT | Pass | 6 ♦ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

1. Non-forcing

With three of the nine nine-board rounds to go, several teams were in contention. But then Pierre Zimmermann, Franck Multon, Michel and Thomas Bessis, Geir Helgemo and Tor Helness won two blitzes without conceding an IMP. They had clinched first with a round to go. They also won a blitz in the final round, but did concede some IMPs.

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Multon</i> | <i>Finkel</i> | <i>Z'mann</i> | <i>Kasle</i> |
| — | — | Pass | 1 ♥ |
| Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass | 3 ♦ |
| Pass | 3 NT | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

Kasle took the low road, passing out three no trump. Note, though, that the Norwegians had four nonforcing bids, then bid a slam! When the tray came under the screen with six diamonds on it, Helness sat back in shock. Then he passed with a shrug of his shoulders, used to Helgemo's ways.

Ekeblad asked about the auction. Helness replied, "Yes, two diamonds was non-forcing, and two no trump was non-forcing. Three hearts was forcing, showing a good 6-4. He could have continued with a forcing four diamonds. Perhaps he has 13 red cards."

A trump lead would have defeated the slam, but that was tough to find.

When Jansma chose a low spade, Helgemo paused for some time. Then he called for dummy's queen and, when East could not cover with the king, discarded a heart. South continued with a heart to his ace, a heart ruff with dummy's diamond six, the spade ace for a club discard, a club to his ace, a heart ruff with the diamond king, a spade trumped in his hand (West playing the king), and a heart ruffed with the diamond three.

East, who knew that West had a spade left, probably should have discarded. But it would not have helped. Helgemo would have ruffed a club in his hand and taken two spades, one heart, five diamonds, one club and three ruffs in the dummy.

When East overruffed and returned a spade, declarer trumped with his diamond eight and claimed. Minus 600 and plus 1370 gave Zimmerman 13 IMPs and the match by 37 IMPs, a 30-0 VP blitz.

By the way, did you notice that if Helgemo had not called for the spade queen, he would have gone down? When he ruffs the third heart in the dummy, East discards and declarer has only 11 tricks.

On BBO, both Souths were in six diamonds. Simon De Wijs, knowing South had a big red two-suiter with a spade void, found the trump lead. Declarer went down two. Sjoert Brink received a spade lead and called for dummy's ace. After that, declarer ruffed the first heart low, the second high and the third low. Martin De Knijff defended perfectly, not overruffing the third heart and taking the contract down one.

Before we leave the teams, and get to the main event, how about a little declarer play problem?

Board 17 Dealer South. Neither Vul.

♠ 9 5 3
♥ K J 5 3
♦ Q J 8
♣ Q 4 2

♠ A K Q 4
♥ Q 9 6 2
♦ 3 2
♣ A J 7

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

- 15-17 points
- Usually a quantitative raise to two no trump (or perhaps long clubs, weak or strong)
- Maximum

West leads the diamond ace and continues with a low diamond to dummy's jack. When you call for the heart jack, East wins with his ace and shifts to the club ten. How would you continue?

These were the East-West cards:

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

It looks too dangerous to take the club finesse. If it loses, you will concede one heart, one club and three diamonds. And you could well have nine top tricks via four spades, three hearts, one diamond and one club.

At least, that is what declarer thought. He won with his club ace and could no longer make the contract. Who found that great club shift? Geoff Hampson. He knew declarer had to have the ace-jack of clubs to be maximum, so things were desperate.

At the other table, East returned a diamond. But after West took his two tricks, declarer was able to try the spades and, when they did not break 3-3, fall back on the club finesse.

The Cavendish Invitational Pairs

There were 46 entries in the five-session Invitational Pairs. The evening before, there was an auction for each pair, with the opening bid being \$12,500. If no one offered higher, the pair bought itself. However, the bidding was brisk, raising \$853,500, which was paid back to the buyers of the top ten finishers. The highest price of \$62,000 went for the defending champions, Bobby Levin and Steve Weinstein. They were followed by

Helgemo-Helness at \$49,000 and Eric Greco-Geoff Hampson at \$42,000.

Two brilliant players showed on this deal from Session I that even they are not immune to an inaccurate reading of the cards.

Board 4. Dealer West. Both Vul.

♠ K 10 9 6 4 2
♥ 9 6 3
♦ J 5
♣ 5 3

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

♠ 3
♥ A K 10 4
♦ 10 7 3
♣ K Q 10 6 2

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Zia | Levin | Garner | Weinstein |
| 1 ♦ | Pass | 3 ♦ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |

East could not bid two diamonds, which would have shown at least game-invitational values; and not wanting to respond one no trump, he settled for a pre-emptive three diamonds.

Against three no trump, Bobby Levin led a low spade. Declarer won with dummy's jack, played a heart to his queen, then ran the club eight, Steve Weinstein winning deceptively with his queen. South shifted to a low diamond, West winning with his king and cashing the ace before running the club nine. South produced the ten, which gave this end-position:

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

The defence has taken two tricks. How can South defeat the contract? And if South leads his last diamond, what can happen?

Weinstein could have defeated three no trump for sure by cashing a high heart to void dummy of the suit, then leading his last diamond. But when he led his diamond immediately, Zia could have cashed the spade ace, squeezing South into submission. However, Zia led a low heart from his hand. South took his three tricks in

the suit for down one. Plus 100 gave North-South 129 IMPs. Plus 600 would have given East-West 167 IMPs.

This deal was from the third session of the pairs:

Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

How would you evaluate six diamonds?

At first glance, it seems to require guessing the trump suit correctly. But that is not necessarily true.

If you play in six diamonds by North, let's say East leads a club. You can win and cash the two top trumps, getting the bad news. Then, though, you play two more rounds of spades, ruffing the last, and three rounds of clubs, ruffing the third. You next lead your last spade. It cannot help East to ruff, so he discards a heart. But after trumping, you ruff dummy's last club and, even if he does not overruff, you exit with a trump to endplay East to lead away from his heart king.

It is also interesting if East began with 3=3=3=4 distribution. You could guess that and ruff South's two low clubs. But even if you do not do that, you reach this position:

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

When you lead the spade nine, what can East do?

Nothing! If he ruffs, you discard dummy's last club. If he throws the club queen, you ruff, then pitch a heart on the established club nine. And if he parts with a heart, you trump, ruff the last club, and exit with a trump.

You need to guess the trump suit only if you play in six diamonds by South and West leads a heart.

Two declarers made six diamonds by end-playing East: Bjorn Fallenius and Simon De Wijs.

This was an unusual deal in the fourth session of the pairs:

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

What is the fate of four spades after a heart, diamond or club lead?

On a heart lead, four spades has no chance, assuming the defenders take three spade tricks. (You may laugh, but one East, when declarer North twice led spades toward the dummy, rose first with his king and then with his ace.)

On a club lead, suppose declarer wins in the South hand and calls for a trump. To defeat the contract, West must play his queen and shift to a heart. Just the sort of play we would all find!

Suppose West plays low, East wins the trick and shifts to a heart. Declarer wins and plays four rounds of clubs, discarding his heart jack. The defenders can get only three spade tricks. If West ruffs the fourth club, it is with his queen. If East ruffs with the spade four, both the ace and queen crash together on the next round.

It looks like the same story on a diamond lead, but it is not. East wins the second trick with the spade king and shifts to a heart. Declarer wins and plays four rounds of clubs, discarding his heart jack. But West ruffs with his spade queen and East discards his last diamond. Then West gives East a diamond ruff. The defenders take four trump tricks.

There were nearly 3,000 watching the two tables of play on BBO from the final session, with Bobby Levin and Steve Weinstein on one screen and Geir Helgemo and Tor Helness on the other. For six of the nine rounds, they were sitting in the same direction, allowing an exact comparison. The other three would be slightly harder to judge.

Helness and Helgemo gained some IMPs here (see top of next page):

Helness led the spade six. Gunnar Andersson won with dummy's ace, ruffed a spade in his hand and led a trump. Helness won with his ace (he saw the endplay coming), then shook his head ruefully when Helgemo played the queen. However, winning the trick was the only way to

give the defense a chance if declarer was going to guess the trumps correctly.

Board 8. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

♠ J 7 6
 ♥ K 7 3
 ♦ Q J 8 7 6
 ♣ A 4

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

♠ A 9 8 4
 ♥ A J 5
 ♦ K 10
 ♣ K J 6 3

♠ K Q 10 5 2
 ♥ Q 9 2
 ♦ 9 5 3 2
 ♣ Q

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------|---------------------|------------|---------|
| Andersson | Helness | Gustawsson | Helgemo |
| Pass | 1 ♦ | Double | 1 ♠ |
| 2 ♣ | Double ¹ | Redouble | 3 ♠ |
| 4 ♥ | Pass | 5 ♣ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

1. Three spades

| West | North | East | South |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------|
| Brink | Levin | Drijver | Weinstein |
| Pass | 1 ♦ | Double | 1 ♠ |
| Dble ¹ | Redble ² | 2 ♣ | 2 ♠ |
| 4 ♣ | Pass | 5 ♣ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

- 1. Hearts and clubs
- 2. Three spades

If North ducks his ace and West calls for dummy's king, it is easy to ruff a spade, play a diamond to dummy's king, ruff the last spade, cash the diamond ace, and exit with a trump to endplay North into opening up the hearts.

After taking his club ace, North shifted to the diamond queen. West won with dummy's king, ruffed a spade, played a trump to the king, ruffed the last spade, and cashed the diamond ace to give this position:

♠ —
 ♥ K 7 3
 ♦ J 8
 ♣ —

♠ —
 ♥ 10 8 6 4
 ♦ —
 ♣ 10

♠ —
 ♥ A J 5
 ♦ —
 ♣ J 6

♠ 10
 ♥ Q 9 2
 ♦ 9
 ♣ —

It was time to attack hearts. If North has both the king and queen, which is not impossible given his opening bid, low to dummy's jack works well. If North has king-

nine-three(two), though, declarer must lead specifically his eight. (If North holds king-nine-seven, West has no chance.) However, West chose to lead his ten, which North covered with the king. Now South got two heart tricks for down one.

At the other table, Weinstein (South) led the spade king. Bas Drijver (East) won with his ace, ruffed a spade and called for the club ten, Levin winning with his ace and shifting to the diamond jack. Now declarer did the same elimination to reach the previous diagram. Declarer played a low heart to his jack. South won with his queen and returned the two, but Drijver got it right, calling for dummy's eight. This was good gain for the Norwegians and the Dutch.

By the way, did you notice the only guaranteed defence? They must start with two rounds of clubs. Then declarer does not have the entries to eliminate spades and produce the endplay.

The final standings in the 2010 Cavendish Invitational Pairs were:

| | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Bobby Levin/Steve Weinstein | \$201,200 |
| 2. | Tor Helness/Geir Helgemo | \$129,340 |
| 3. | Josef Piekarek/Alexander Smirnov | \$86,230 |
| 4. | Michel Bessis/Thomas Bessis | \$64,670 |
| 5. | Björn Fallenius/Peter Fredin | \$57,485 |
| 6. | Jie Zhao/Fu Zhong | \$50,300 |
| 7. | Martin de Knijff/Frederic Vrang | \$43,115 |
| 8. | Chip Martel/Kit Woolsey | \$35,930 |
| 9. | Nicolas l'Ecuyer/Jim Krekorian | \$28,740 |
| 10. | Sjøert Brink/Bas Drijver | \$21,560 |

Editorial continued from page 1...

open trials, still others finding a middle ground. Sweden has got it right for them, giving their NPC, much as a national football team manager, the freedom to choose his own team, based on selection tournaments and compatibility. Other countries using a completely-democratic process have it wrong, with too small a base of world-class players to make an open teams championship winner the best choice.

So, who will qualify for the Bermuda Bowl in Europe and the USA? We're going out on a limb, making predictions. It is wonderful to see so many teams with really young players and we predict that they will come to the fore this year. For Europe: Poland, Italy, Sweden, Israel, England, Netherlands; for the USA: Diamond. You will notice that all these teams are relatively young, with Balicki, Lauria, Fallenius and Muller the closest we can come to "Grand Old Men", not that any of them is ready for the old folks' home just yet. Another group from which one or more qualifiers could come in Europe: Bulgaria, France, Germany, Norway, Russia, Turkey. In the USA, everyone has to overcome Nickell to win.