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Editorial

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

Until 2006, the European Team Championships was conducted as a complete round robin amongst the participants (from two teams in the Open series in 1932 to 33 teams in 2006). Eventually, the matches became 32 boards in length, two per day. However, as more nations joined the European Bridge League, it was necessary to shorten the matches to 20 boards to prevent the event's running for three weeks. From 2008, with 46 member countries, it was found further desirable to divide the field into two equal-strength sections for an initial round robin, then continue with the top nine from each group forming a 'premier' league for nine further matches. Now the event is run in 3 x 16-board match days to allow for best play and as little competitor weariness as possible.

Perhaps it's time for the EBL to consider splitting itself into two WBF Zones. This could be done on a geographical basis, with either an East/West or a North/South split. Continental solidarity should not be an issue as Asia, for example, is already divided in two Zones (BFAME and APBF) and North America into ACBL and CACBF (the Caribbean and Central America are geographically part of North America). While it is a fairly simple matter to divide the 46 European member NBOs into one or the other division, even 23 in each if so desired, it is not a simple matter to determine what the criteria for the division should be. Three potential criteria that immediately pop to mind are (i) the number of members in each NBO, (ii) the relative strength of each division and (iii) the number of NBOs in each division. Both the most populous and the most successful NBOs would be in the North (excepting Italy) or West (excepting Poland and perhaps Italy) division. If none of these criteria were considered a serious detriment, the division would be fairly straightforward. If only the first two of these criteria were considered important factors, perhaps an East or South division could contain more NBOs to equalize membership. (Note that the NBOs of France and The Netherlands together claim about 45% of EBL members.)

Each division of the EBL could retain three of the Bermuda Bowl (and Venice Cup and d'Orsi Trophy) qualifiers of the current six, or perhaps they could convince the WBF to increase the number of European qualifiers from six to seven and award four to the North or West Zone, based upon larger NBO membership. If such a division of the EBL were to occur, a North or West division, unless artificially reduced in size, would still be the largest in terms of membership in the WBF. The East or South division would be third in size after the ACBL. One could then assign one more team to North America (effectively to the USA). Twenty-four teams seems like a much better number for a World Championship than 22 anyway, although it must be admitted, 22 teams fit a seven-day round robin perfectly.

A 24-team Bermuda Bowl is easily handled with a round robin within each of two groups of 12 teams, qualifying eight from each group for two-day knockouts. The round robin matches could be expanded from today's 16 boards to 32 boards. That would make for a rather more-intense five-and-a-half-day round robin than the current seven-day affair, but would allow for a half-day off between the qualifying and knockout stages and for eight days of less-arduous 48-boards-a-day knockouts.

In addition to its advantages for Europe, this scheme would have three added advantages for the WBF: (i) keeping more teams in the running for Bermuda Bowl knockout play for a longer period than they are now and, (ii) making 16 teams eligible for knockout play instead of the current eight, and (iii) providing for an earlier start to the Transnational Teams, avoiding the cramped feel of the current event.

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THE 19TH NEC CUP

Yokohama, Feb. 11-16, 2014

Barry Rigal, NYC

Rich Colker, Wheaton, MD

This year, invited teams with players from Russia, Netherlands, England, Denmark, China, Australia, New Zealand, Bulgaria, Taiwan, India, the USA and Korea battled 25 Japanese teams for supremacy. The five teams from China made it the largest contingent from one foreign nation ever to compete in an NEC Cup. The defending champions from Russia/Netherlands, this time with both Brink and Drijver in harness (Drijver was unable to play last year), rated to be the top pick, followed closely by various English, Chinese and Antipodean collections.

The event consisted of 12 x 14-board Swiss matches over three days, followed by a knockout for the top eight teams.

Squeeze Me, Please Me

When Newell-Reid of Down Under took on Patrick Huang-Sun Ming from Yeh Bros Mixed ...

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

♠ 5 4 2
♥ Q 8 7 5 4
♦ Q J 6
♣ 3 2

West	North	East	South
Reid	Huang	Newell	Sun
—	2♣	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Sun led a club to the ten, jack and queen and when Newell cashed his diamond ace, Huang did not unblock his king. So North won the second diamond to shift to a low heart. Newell ducked, and Sun won to play a second heart. Declarer won and cleared diamonds.

At this point Sun could see that if she reverted to clubs or hearts her partner would be endplayed in

clubs to lead spades. She therefore shifted to spades, but Newell hopped up with the ace, led a heart to hand, and ran his diamonds. When the last diamond was led, this was the ending:

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

South pitched a heart, dummy a spade, and North was strip-squeezed to let go a spade and be endplayed to open up clubs. Note that had South retained her second club and if North had pitched a club at trick ten, declarer would have had to decide whether he had begun life with a 3=2=2=6 pattern or his actual 4=2=2=5 shape. Once South's second club becomes visible there is no ambiguity in the count any more.

Mr. Deschappelles, Meet Mr. Merrimac

In the Round 6 encounter between Down Under and Hinden, both pairs had an opportunity to show off their skills.

Board 26. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

♠ A K 9 4
♥ 10 6 2
♦ A J 8 6 3
♣ J

West	North	East	South
Hinden	Newell	Osborne	Reid
—	—	1♠	2♦
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Had East opened a weak two spades, he might have gone quietly plus in that spot. But two notrump on Peter Newell's lead of the nine of diamonds was considerably more testing. Hinden made the first nice play of the deal when she put up the queen of diamonds from dummy. If South ducks that, she can unblock hearts then play diamonds, and come home

with eight tricks. Reid therefore won the ace of diamonds and responded to declarer's coup with one of his own. He played back the jack of diamonds, forcing declarer to win the diamond in her hand, and cutting her off from the heart suit. From that point on declarer had no more than seven winners.

From China Nangang versus Lorentz comes this excellent Challenge-the-Champs deal:

Board 10. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Bach	Zhang	Lambardi	Wu
—	—	Pass	1♣ ¹
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	
1. Strong			

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gan	Burgess	Huang	Lorentz
—	—	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥ ¹	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The Open room auction is a model of simplicity while the Closed Room auction saw the Symmetric Relay identify North with a 5=3=3=2 pattern by the three-diamond bid, then a hand with eight 3-2-1 controls, and then the king/king/ace in spades, hearts and diamonds. Lorentz hoped to buy, e.g., ♠KJ10xx ♥Kxx ♦Axx ♣xx plus a minor-suit queen, when six spades or six notrump would be cold, the advantage of playing six spades perhaps being the ability to play a trump coup. Nice idea – but absolutely the wrong day for it. Six spades went down 200 against the bad trump break.

It is very difficult to bid this hand scientifically, isn't it? Simply switching the queen of hearts with the jack of

spades in South, (or the jack of hearts for the jack of spades in North) make a very poor slam a good one. But we do have one pair who produced a scintillating auction to stay out of slam for the right reason; step forward Messrs. Brink and Drijver.

They bid:

West	North	East	South
Pass	—	Pass	1♣ ¹
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦ ²
Pass	2♥ ³	Pass	2♠ ⁴
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣ ⁵	Pass	4♥ ⁶
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. 2+ clubs			
2. 18-20 HCP			
3. Enough values for slam to be in the picture			
4. 3-card support for spades			
5. Slam interest in spades			
6. Bad trumps (four diamonds would show good trumps)			

The same pair had had a similar auction the day before to stay out of a slam missing the trump ace-queen – but that one had made. I suppose it was tit for tat.

Board 14. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

<p>♠ A Q 2 ♥ A K 10 9 ♦ A J 5 ♣ Q 6 5</p> <p>♠ J 8 7 4 3 ♥ 7 3 ♦ K Q 8 ♣ A 7 3</p>	<p>♠ 6 ♥ Q 6 5 4 ♦ 9 7 3 2 ♣ K 8 4 2</p> <p>♠ K 10 9 5 ♥ J 8 2 ♦ 10 6 4 ♣ J 10 9</p>
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In the Shanghai Financial versus China Shanghai match, both Wests opened the bidding with one spade in third chair and got to lead a top diamond against three notrump. Both Souths won the diamond, but there the paths diverged. Zhou Lihua went after clubs and the defenders cleared diamonds, letting East cash out for one off when he got in with his queen of hearts.

Liu Ning found a very neat alternative after winning the ace of diamonds. He cashed one top spade and led the ten of hearts. East won and cleared diamonds, but declarer won the third diamond in hand and ran the ten of spades, then crossed to the jack of hearts and took the long spade and the hearts for nine tricks.

That was excellent play by Liu, but West could have foiled his effort by the simple expedient of not allowing declarer the extra hand entry provided by the ten of

diamonds. When East wins the queen of hearts and returns a diamond, West must play the eight if South withholds the ten. West plays his king of diamonds only if South produces the ten. That forces South to make his second diamond trick with the jack. The top clubs could then be used to sort out the defence's diamond tricks. East cannot gain by ducking the heart as declarer can then switch his attack to clubs.

Board 25. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Ayako M.</i>	<i>Shen</i>	<i>Kenji M.</i>	<i>Zhou</i>
—	1♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Chen</i>	<i>Tanaka</i>	<i>Cao</i>	<i>Naito</i>
—	1♠	2♣	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Both Easts led their doubleton diamond and declarer pitched three club losers. East ruffed, then exited with the jack of spades to declarer's ace. Here the two lines of play diverged slightly. In the Closed Room, Tanaka played the eight of spades at trick five, which Chen astutely ducked to prevent dummy's nine from becoming an entry to the diamonds. Next Tanaka led the king of hearts. Cao won and tried to cash the ace of clubs but Tanaka ruffed, ruffed a second heart with dummy's nine of spades, cashed the jack of diamonds, pitching a heart, and led another diamond for down one.

In the Open Room, Chen cashed the king of spades at trick five. When the queen failed to drop, he played along similar lines to Tanaka by leading the king of hearts. Kenji Miyakuni won and played the ace of clubs, ruffed by Shen, who then ruffed a heart, took the jack of diamonds (pitching a heart), and then led a fifth diamond. Ayako Miyakuni could ruff but that was still nine tricks for down one and a delicate push.

Sue Picus, playing with Tadashi Yoshida, also played four spades as North on a diamond lead and found a way

to come to ten tricks. (Four spades is, in fact, cold on a diamond lead, though not on the lead of a club or the ace of hearts.) Picus won the diamond lead in dummy and continued with top diamonds, pitching her clubs as East ruffed the third round. East then tried the ace of clubs. Picus ruffed and got out with a low heart. East won the heart and continued with clubs as declarer ruffed again, cashed the ace of spades (noting the fall of the jack), ruffed a heart, cashed the jack of diamonds (pitching a heart), then continued diamonds. West could ruff in whenever he wished but Picus could always ruff another heart in dummy for her tenth trick.

Board 12. Dealer West. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Ayako M.</i>	<i>Gill</i>	<i>Kenji M.</i>	<i>Hans</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	Pass
2NT ¹	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♥ ²	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Puppet to three clubs ...
2. ... to show four spades and two or fewer hearts.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Reid</i>	<i>Tanaka</i>	<i>Newell</i>	<i>Naito</i>
Pass	Pass	1♦ ¹	Pass
1♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Hearts

Both tables declared four spades here. Reid won the top club lead to unblock diamonds and play hearts, and Naito took the first heart to shift to a trump – not a terrible idea but not necessarily best today. The defenders could play a second trump, but declarer had two top trumps, five plain winners, and three trumps separately one way or another.

Kenji Miyakuni received a top heart lead and club shift to the eight, jack and king (nice play, Peter). He

unblocked diamonds and played a second heart. Hans won to play a second club, and declarer rejected the finesse to win the ace and cash diamonds pitching clubs, then ruff a diamond, and ruff a heart to reach this ending with the lead in dummy:

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

Declarer, who had lost two tricks, could have ruffed a club to lead a heart up and would have gone down only when North had started life with three hearts and the jack of spades but not the king. Instead, Miyakuni finessed in spades. Hans took the queen with the king, and resisted the knee-jerk reaction to return his club. Instead, he played back his low spade to the six, jack, and ace, and now could discard his club when declarer ruffed his loser in dummy, leaving South with the master trump at trick 13. Down one, and 10 elegant IMPs to Down Under.

The Russians and Dutch (Gromov/Dubinin. Krasnosselsky/Gladysch, Brink/Drijver) successfully defended their title, crushing England (Hinden/Osborne, Hydes/Bell) in the final.

West	North	East	South
<i>Hinden</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Osborne</i>	<i>Brink</i>
3♥	Pass	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Double	5NT
Pass	6♦	Pass	6♥
Pass	7♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Let's admire a wonderful bidding sequence from the final of the NEC Cup in Yokohama, Japan. England faced the holders, Russia, and Frances Hinden ventured a vulnerable three hearts on the West cards. Sjoert Brink protected with three spades and Bas Drijver responded four clubs. Since he had not bid over three hearts, this agreed spades as trumps.

Brink liked his hand and bid RKCB, hearing of one key-card. Mere humans would now have been happy to bid six spades. No, Graham Osborne's lead-directing double had shown useful clubs over the ace, so Brink could place North with good values in the red suits. He continued with five notrump, asking for kings and partner showed the king of diamonds. Brink persisted with six hearts, suggesting a grand slam. He knew there were only three hearts in the North and East hands. With North holding length in both black suits, the odds were great that he held a singleton heart! Drijver, who did indeed hold a singleton heart, accepted the grand-slam try. It was a truly excellent bidding sequence.

At the other table the auction was Three Hearts-Pass-Four Clubs-Four Spades and Russia picked up a 17-IMP swing on their way to a substantial victory.

NEC Empowered by Innovation

**GREAT BIDDING
AT THE NEC**

David Bird, Eastleigh, Hants., UK



Moscow,
Feb. 21-23,
2014

Mark Horton, Sutton Benger, Wilts., UK

Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

The Slava Cup honours the memory of the talented Russian bridge player Slava Grinyuk, who died an untimely death in his thirties, and again attracted a world-class field, thanks to the efforts of Organizing Committee Chairman Pavel Portnoy and his team. We had powerful representatives from Bulgaria, Monaco, Israel and The Netherlands alongside four transnational outfits containing stars from all over the world. The elite players contested a team tournament with the eight squads playing a round robin, followed by a final for the top two teams. A pairs tournament, the Top 36, was also run in parallel.

Auken vs. Israel – Round 1

The first swing came on this deal:

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Padon</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Birman</i>	<i>Markovich</i>
—	—	—	1♣
1♠	Double	3♦ ¹	3♥
4♠	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 4-card limit raise in spades

Once East had shown spade support via three diamonds, it was clear for West to bid four spades. With a double fit for partner, North must have considered bidding on but, with what looked like a trump trick, he was happy to double.

North led the three of diamonds and declarer took South's queen with the ace and ran the queen of spades. When that held he repeated the finesse, drew the outstanding trump and played a heart to the king. When that held as well, declarer had several ways to arrive at eleven tricks, plus 990.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Welland</i>	<i>O. Herbst</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>I. Herbst</i>
—	—	—	1♣
1♠	Double	2♥ ¹	4♥
4♠	5♣	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Spade support

Here North judged to bid on, and right he was as five clubs was only one down, minus 100, and that was 13 IMPs to Israel.

Auken vs. Zaleski – Round 3

(See top of next column.) South led the king of spades. Declarer ruffed and cashed the ace of hearts, South pitching the five of spades.

Board 31. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Zaleski</i>	<i>Welland</i>
—	—	—	1♣
Pass	1♥ ¹	Double	4♥ ²
Pass	4♠	5♥	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Spades
2. Splinter

Declarer crossed to dummy with a club (North following with an upside-down nine) and played the nine of diamonds, ducking it to South's jack when North played the four. South continued with a spade and declarer ruffed and played the king of diamonds. South took the ace and now does best to cash the king of clubs. However, he exited with a spade. Declarer ruffed and can now escape for one down by playing the ten of diamonds.

If South does not cover the diamond ten, a club goes from dummy and declarer then pitches dummy's last club on the seven of diamonds, a neat loser on loser play. Subsequently, declarer ruffs a club in dummy. However, declarer played the seven of diamonds and, when the queen did not appear, he had to go two down, minus 300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tokay</i>	<i>Lanzarotti</i>	<i>Markovich</i>	<i>Manno</i>
—	—	—	1♣
Pass	1♥ ¹	4♥	4♠
5♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Spades

South led the ace of spades. Declarer ruffed and cashed a top heart. Now came a vital difference – a low diamond towards the nine. South took the jack and played a spade. Declarer ruffed and played a diamond, which South won to try a low club, but declarer ran that to his queen and played the ten of diamonds. When South wisely withheld his ace, declarer ruffed and was one down, minus 100 and 5 IMPs to Auken.

Board 32. Dealer West. EW Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Zaleski</i>	<i>Welland</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	2NT ¹
Pass	3♣ ²	Pass	3NT

1. Balanced game force or club preempt
2. Pass or correct

West led the queen of hearts. Declarer won in dummy to lead a diamond; East rose with the king of diamonds and played another heart. On a diamond to the queen, West won and cashed out for plus 50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tokay</i>	<i>Lanzarotti</i>	<i>Markovich</i>	<i>Manno</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Here, West led the jack of hearts and, when that held, continued with the queen, South winning with the ace. A club to the ace was followed by the eight of diamonds to West's jack. West switched to the king of spades to the ace. Declarer played a club to the king and when the jack dropped he was home, plus 400.

You can hardly blame West for failing to find the only winning defence when in with the jack of diamonds: returning the two of diamonds. Even then, East would have had to win and switch to a spade. If West had played a third heart after the diamond jack, declarer wins with the king and runs clubs, coming down to:

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

When declarer takes the last club, parting with a diamond from hand, the defence has no good answer – declarer must come to two more tricks, provided he reads the position accurately. A smooth seven of spades discard is West's best bet - West having passed initially, declarer might be inclined to place East with the king of spades.

Board 37. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Zaleski</i>	<i>Welland</i>
—	1♣	Pass	1♥ ¹
2♦	2♠	Pass	2NT
3♦	4♠	5♦	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Spades

North led the king of spades and, when South followed with the eight, she switched to the five of hearts for the nine and king. Declarer played a diamond to the ten and cashed the ace. There were still two hearts and a spade to lose, two down, minus 300.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Tokay</i>	<i>Lanzarotti</i>	<i>Markovich</i>	<i>Manno</i>
—	1♣	Pass	1♥ ¹
2♦	2♠	Pass	4♠
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Spades

After West's double, was it so unreasonable for East to lead the ace of diamonds? Perhaps not, but clearly West was not doubling on the strength of his trumps (or, for that matter, on potential diamond tricks), so perhaps East should have reasoned that West might be ruffing something and found a club lead (that is for two down).

When West followed with the four of diamonds, East switched to the two of clubs. When declarer put up dummy's ace, the contract went out of the window as West ruffed and the defenders had to score a club and a heart. That was one down, plus 200, and 11 IMPs to Auken, cruising to yet another win.

Auken vs. Monaco – Round 4

Board 11. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Tokay</i>
—	—	—	Pass
1NT	2♥	2♠	2NT
3♠	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East led the queen of spades. Declarer won with dummy's ace and played the five of clubs to the queen and king. East switched to the nine of diamonds and declarer tried the jack, covered by the queen and ace. He cashed the ace of clubs, ruffed a club and played the ace of hearts and another. West won with the king, cashed the king of diamonds and played another diamond, promoting a trump trick for East, one down, plus 50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Welland</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
—	—	—	Pass
1♣	1♥	Double	2♣ ¹
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Heart support

East led the queen of spades and declarer won with dummy's ace to play the ten of clubs to the queen and king. When East switched to the nine of hearts (right card, wrong suit), West won with the king and returned the three. Declarer won with dummy's ace, played a club to the ace and ruffed a club, claiming ten tricks, plus 420 and 10 IMPs.

Netherlands vs. Zaleski – Round 5

The following board (see top of next column) was a chance for South in the Open Room to be brilliant – lead a heart and the defenders will take the first seven tricks. No, out came a mundane three of diamonds. Declarer recorded ten tricks for plus 1400. That was a swing of a mere 3000 points.

Board 36. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Zaleski</i>	<i>Brink</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	2♦
Double ¹	3♦	Double	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Double	Redouble	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. 3-card heart support

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lankveld</i>	<i>Lanzarotti</i>	<i>Van de Bos</i>	<i>Manno</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦ ¹	Double
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. 4th-suit forcing

South led the jack of spades and declarer won with dummy's ace and ran the jack of hearts to South's queen. The return of the ten of clubs went to the king and declarer played a heart to the ten and ace. When North returned the ten of diamonds, declarer had dodged a bullet, plus 620. He must have been surprised to discover that his side had lost 13 IMPs on the deal.

Monaco vs. Israel – Round 6

Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>O. Herbst</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>I. Herbst</i>
2NT	Pass	3♣ ¹	Pass
3♦ ²	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Puppet Stayman
2. No 5-card major; 1 or 2 4-card majors

North led the three of diamonds for the king and ace and declarer played a club for the nine, king and eight. The ten of spades was covered by the king and declarer was able to cash four tricks in the suit. The last of these embarrassed North, who was down to ♠—♥1084♦Q106♣AJ. He pitched the four of hearts and declarer exited with the four of diamonds. North won with the ten, cashed the queen of diamonds and exited with a diamond. Declarer won and exited with the queen of clubs. North could cash two clubs but then had to lead a heart into declarer's tenace, a routine plus 600 for this particular West.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Padon</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Birman</i>	<i>Nunes</i>
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North led the eight of spades (right card, wrong major) and declarer won with the queen and played the queen of clubs. North had to duck that, and a second club went to dummy's king. A spade to the jack was followed by the ace of spades and the thirteenth spade. Declarer exited with a club and North won and tried the ten of hearts, so it was a dull push.

Slava Cup Final – Auken vs. The Netherlands – Session I

Board 9. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Lankveld</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>van de Bos</i>	<i>Markovich</i>
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♠	Double	INT
2♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

The Netherlands started the final with a carryover of 6.5 IMPs.

North led the queen of diamonds. Declarer won with dummy's ace and ran the ten of clubs. When it held, he played the four of clubs and South took the ace and returned the two of diamonds to declarer's king. After cashing the king of clubs, declarer took the ace of spades, played a spade to the king and ruffed a diamond with the seven of hearts. North overruffed and played the queen of spades. If declarer had ruffed that low he would have survived, but he used the nine, and South overruffed and played a diamond, ruffed by the queen and overuffed. A spade was ruffed and overuffed and a diamond promoted North's six of hearts into the setting trick, plus 100.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Welland</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Drenkelford</i>
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♠	Double	1NT
2♥	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North led the two of spades and declarer won with the jack, played a diamond to the ace and a heart for the eight, ten and jack. The king of spades took the next trick and a heart went to South's ace. He exited with the jack of diamonds and declarer won with the king, pitched a club on the ace of spades, ruffed a spade and ran the nine of clubs. When it held declarer was home with plus 140 and 6 IMPs for Auken.

Board 14. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Welland</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Drenkelford</i>
—	—	1♣	3♦
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	3♥	Pass	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Continued on page 12 ...



IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra

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

701. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East's initial pass, the vulnerability, South's pre-emptive opening bid and West's reticence conspired to keep East-West out of the auction, where 12 tricks, albeit rather fortunately, are available in hearts.

West led the king of hearts and shifted to the two of diamonds. As the cards lay, playing low from dummy would have been fatal: East would win the trick with the king of diamonds and shift to a club, giving the defenders four tricks before declarer gained the lead.

Instead of playing low at trick two, declarer called for dummy's ace of diamonds and led dummy's jack of hearts at trick three, throwing the queen of diamonds from hand. This loser-on-loser gave declarer a real chance of establishing a long card in diamonds without letting East gain the lead. West won that trick with the ace of hearts and shifted to his seven of trumps. Declarer took this with dummy's ten and followed with the six from hand. After ruffing a diamond high, declarer led the two of trumps to dummy's three to ruff another diamond high. Next came the four of trumps to dummy's five to ruff a third diamond, thereby establishing dummy's last diamond as a winner. All that remained for declarer to do was to cross to dummy with the ace of trumps and discard a club on the good diamond.

If the diamonds had broken 5-1, declarer would have had to hope that the ace of clubs was onside.

702. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♦
2♦	Double	2♠	3♠
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

After West made a Michaels Cue Bid, showing length in both major suits, North doubled to show some values. East's preference for spades gave South a problem and his choice of three spades indicated a powerful diamond-based hand. When North showed diamond support with his leap to five diamonds, South had an easy raise to six.

West led the king of spades to declarer's bare ace. All seemed routine for declarer until West discarded a spade on the ace of trumps. Declarer saw that his main chance of making the contract was to find West with the queen of clubs. However, he noted that there was an extra chance if East began with exactly three spades and one heart, not unlikely in view of his bidding: then East could be stripped of his major suit cards and put on lead with a trump when he would only have clubs left in his hand – then it wouldn't matter who had the queen of clubs.

Putting this plan into action, declarer drew a second round of trumps with dummy's king and ruffed a spade. Next, he crossed back to dummy with the king of hearts to ruff dummy's remaining spade. This was followed by the crucial move of unblocking the king of clubs, to ensure three tricks in the suit when East started with 3-1 in the majors.

Declarer continued with the ace of hearts and East was fixed! If he ruffed with his winning trump he would then have to play a club into dummy's ace-jack tenace, thereby giving declarer two tricks in the suit and a parking place for his heart loser. When East threw a club instead of ruffing he was put on lead with a trump for the same outcome.

703. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

	♠ K Q J 6		
West	North	East	South
—	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

South's two notrump rebid was forcing, asking for more information about the North hand. The leap to four hearts confirmed that North had four-card support for hearts and South used Roman Key Card Blackwood on the way to bidding the heart slam. North showed two key cards without the queen of hearts.

West led the queen of diamonds and declarer counted ten likely winners, a loser in trumps and a possible loser in clubs. Declarer saw that he would always make twelve tricks if the trumps were no worse than 4-1, whenever East had the king of clubs.

However, this declarer was not one to rely on a finesse when there was a better line available - that of ruffing two diamonds in hand. He took the lead with the ace of diamonds, cashed the king of diamonds and then ruffed a diamond with the king of trumps. Next he led the seven of trumps to dummy's nine. When East allowed this to hold, declarer ruffed a second diamond with the queen of trumps and then led the ten of trumps to dummy's jack. East took this with the ace and shifted to a club. Declarer rose with the ace of clubs and then crossed to dummy by playing the six of spades to the ace. Then he drew East's two remaining

trumps with dummy's eight and six before claiming his contract. He made four spade tricks, three trumps, two diamonds, two diamond ruffs in hand and the ace of clubs for a total of twelve tricks.

704. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

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

This deal was played in a teams match and both Wests led the queen of diamonds against four spades after identical auctions.

The first declarer took the opening lead in hand and played a trump to the king followed by a second trump towards his hand. When East discarded a club the contract could no longer be made.

The second declarer saw that if there was a trump loser he would have to find a way to avoid a loser in each of the side suits and then proceeded to show how that could be done. He took the opening diamond lead in hand with the king and cashed the ace of trumps. After both opponents had followed with small trumps, he then made the rather strange-looking play at tricks three and four of the ace followed by the ten of hearts. West rose with the queen of hearts and continued with the ten of diamonds. Declarer took this with dummy's ace and led the jack of hearts, discarding the nine of diamonds from hand after East threw a club. West took this with the king and tried to cash the jack of diamonds. Declarer ruffed this in hand and crossed to dummy with the king of trumps. East's second club discard was a slight disappointment but declarer was still in charge for he could discard his club loser on the established nine of hearts. All declarer lost was two hearts and a trump.

The diamond lead gave both declarers a chance to make the game, while a club lead would have left neither with a way of making four spades.



View from the playing venue
The Svjato Danilovsky Monastery

North led the jack of hearts and declarer won with the king and played a spade. North went up with the ace and played the ten of hearts and declarer ruffed, played a club to the ace and a heart. If South ruffs this and plays a diamond, the contract will be two down, but when he discarded, declarer ruffed and played the ten of spades, putting up dummy's queen when it held. he cashed the ace of diamonds, played a club to the king and, having seen South's jack and ten, he claimed, plus 590.

Notice that if North starts with three rounds of spades, declarer will win the third, cash the ace of diamonds, play a heart to the king and play the queen of diamonds. South can win, but in due course North will be trump-squeezed in hearts and clubs.

Notice also that two club leads, starting either on opening lead or after one or even two high trumps, break up any squeeze, removing the vital entries before their time.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Lankveld	Ventin	van de Bos	Markovich
—	—	1♣	Pass
1♠	2♥	3♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North led the jack of hearts and declarer won in hand and played a spade. North won with the king and played another heart. Declarer pitched a club on dummy's ace and played the ace of diamonds. North ruffed, cashed the ace of spades and played a heart; declarer ruffed and played the queen of diamonds. South's king was the last trick for the defence, plus 140, but 10 IMPs to Auken that should have gone the other way. When Ventin/Tokay went for 1400 via a dubious vulnerable sacrifice to lose 13 IMPs it was all over. The Netherlands had taken the last set 48-2 to win 140.5-

98. Well done to Berend van de Bos, Bas Drijver, Herman Drenkelford, Sjoert Brink and Jiris van Lankveld. Sabine Auken, Roy Welland, Dragan Markovich, Mustafa Cem Tokay and Juan Carlos Ventin were runners-up. The Top 36 Pairs tournament was won by Karlis Rubins and Dmitry Prokhorov.

THE BOSS

Ib Lundby, Aså, Denmark



After a lifetime filled with bridge, I still write monthly columns in "Dansk Bridge" and "Bridge in Norway", but I don't play any more. Nevertheless, I am one of the most faithful clients of BBO VuGraph, and on Sunday, February 23, I noticed this amusing deal from the final of the Slava Cup in Moscow:

Board 24. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

In the Closed Room, Sjoert Brink and Herman Drenkelford for The Netherlands bid to four hearts and went down four, but in the Open Room, with Berend van de Bos/Joris van Lankveld North/South and Sabine Auken/Roy Welland East/West, this was the bidding:

West	North	East	South
Welland	van de Bos	Auken	van Lankveld
1♦	Double	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

As expected, South started with a spade, the nine. Have a small break and enjoy the situation: if North, as expected, wins the ace of spades, the contract suddenly is makeable by unblocking the ace of clubs on the king of spades!

No way: "I am the Bos(s)", North was likely thinking, because at trick, one he 'finessed' with the spade queen! (I believe that this is why it's called a finesse!) East had to win with the king of spades. Declarer then played a club to the ace and the ten of hearts. No way again – North won with the ace and continued with the ace of spades, the ace of diamonds and another spade – three down, but still, 2 IMPs for Auken.



THE 53rd GOLD COAST CONGRESS

February 21-March 1, 2014

Barry Rigal, NYC

Brent Manley, Memphis, TN

David Stern, Sydney

In the first round of the qualifying sessions for the Open Pairs, Fiona Brown and Hugh McGann had the better of the first deal, but then GeO Tislevoll, playing with Michael Ware, righted the ship for his side on the second.

Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Ware	Brown	Tislevoll	McGann
—	—	1♥	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Declarer showed either six hearts or an unbalanced hand with five hearts. McGann had a horrible lead problem, and chose the spade five; this went to the two and Brown's eight (yes, maybe she should have played low) and queen. Tislevoll led out the queen of clubs, ducked all round, then the jack of clubs, covered by king and ace. Declarer ran the clubs and reached this ending:

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

Declarer cashed the king of diamonds, then led the jack of spades, covered all round, and another spade, setting up the nine in the dummy. Brown won this and exited with a low heart. After some thought Tislevoll got it right, rising with the ace of hearts and presenting McGann with an insoluble dilemma. If he played low he would be endplayed with a heart to give dummy the ace of diamonds and the good spade. If he unblocked the king, as he did at the table, declarer would simply lead out hearts and North would score just one heart trick.

If South bares the king of spades to keep an extra heart, declarer changes tack completely. He wins the ace of diamonds and exits in diamonds. South wins, and whether he leads the king of hearts (declarer ducking) or leads a low heart at once, the defenders take just one more trick. In practice, Tislevoll lost just one spade and one heart for a very good score.

One of the more amusing tales from the congress came to us from Neville Francis. He called it "The Canadian 3NT".

Neville: "This deal was played in round four of the Open Teams qualifying; I was playing with Magnus Moren.

Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	Moren	—	Francis
—	—	—	Pass
2♣	2♠	3♦	4♦
5♥	Pass	7♥	Pass
Pass	Double	Redouble	Pass
Pass	Pass	—	—

Partner led the ace of clubs for one down and plus 400 to us. We were feeling very good about this result, since even if our teammates got to only four hearts, plus 680 and plus 400 would mean 14 IMPs to our side. If they got to six hearts, we would gain 17 IMPs.

Little did we know that our teammates had a very scientific gadget available and that West had not missed his opportunity to unleash it on the poor opponents (not to mention partner). The bid was three notrump to show a solid major suit. If you have a weak stomach, you might stop reading now.

Here's what happened at their table ...

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

1. Long solid major
2. Pass or correct (East thought)
3. Four clubs over three notrump would have asked about opener's major, so four spades was natural (West thought)

As dummy was tracked, East was last seen heading towards the toilet. The result was minus 1700. Instead of a big plus, we lost 16 IMPs. Well, I warned you.

By the way, Table 17 is the place to come to meet two wonderful Canadians, and if you ask nicely, they might give you the notes on this convention as they are not using them any longer."

The Open Teams Final featured round-robin winner CHINA NANGANG (LI Shin/GAN Xinli, ZHANG Bankxiang/SHEN Jiaxing) against the multinational (Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, England, Norway) squad which was the original #2 seed McGANN (Hugh McGANN/Matthew THOMSON, Fiona BROWN/Tony NUNN, GeO TISLEVOLL/Michael WARE).

Board 15. Dealer South. NS Vul.

♠ A Q J 9 3 2
♥ 10 8
♦ 7 5
♣ K 10 7

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

♠ K 7
♥ —
♦ A Q J 8 6 3
♣ J 9 8 4 3

West	North	East	South
Ware	Li	Tislevoll	Gan
—	—	—	1♦
1♥	Double	4♥	4NT
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Brown	Shen	Nunn
—	—	—	1♦
1♥	1♠	2NT ¹	3♣
3♥	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 4+-card limit raise or better in hearts

Five diamonds proved to be very easy to play on a top heart lead. Declarer ruffed and played the ace, then jack of diamonds, leaving the defence the club ace then or later. By contrast, four spades proved very awkward. Shen led a trump and Brown sensibly won in hand and ruffed a heart, then tried to guess clubs. Who knows what she would have done had West followed low, but when he hopped up with the ace and played back a low club, Brown had a further problem. She got it right by rising with the king and drawing trumps to lose two clubs and a heart for a sweaty IMP to McGann.

This board was to have ramifications a few boards later in the set.

Two boards later, GeO Tislevoll had the chance to shine again:

Board 17. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ K Q 2
♥ J 7 2
♦ A Q J 7 4
♣ 9 4

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

West	North	East	South
Ware	Li	Tislevoll	Gan
—	1NT ¹	Pass	2♥ ²
Double	2♠ ³	3♣	3♠
5♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 13-16 HCP
2. Transfer
3. 3-card spade support

West	North	East	South
Zhang	Brown	Shen	Nunn
—	1NT ¹	Pass	2♥ ²
3♣	Pass	3♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♠ ³	Pass
6♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 12-14 HCP
2. Transfer
3. Two key cards and the queen of clubs

Both tables found their way to clubs, but Zhang's exuberance got him to a no-play slam whereas Tislevoll was in a contract he could have made. Tislevoll received the ten of spades lead to the queen (should North falsecard with the king?) and ace. Declarer, who knew South had one card at most out of the diamond ace, spade king and heart king, started well by ruffing a spade and drawing two rounds of trumps ending in hand. However, he then erred by leading a diamond to dummy's king. The defenders played back a diamond and declarer ruffed and eventually lost two hearts for down one.

That was a bit unlucky, but if declarer ruffs a spade high and no king appears, then the king of hearts must be onside, since North has no more spades. As the cards lie, the spade king appears, and this position has been reached:

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

Now you cross to hand with a trump, take the jack of spades to pitch a diamond, then lead a diamond. If South surprises you by scoring the ace of diamonds, then the king of hearts will be right. When, in fact, North wins the king of diamonds with the ace, he will have to play a heart, and when South's ten forces your ace, you can finesse against North's jack. In effect, you get to take two finesses in the suit instead of one. You are favourite to guess the suit – South's decision to compete is surely more likely to be based on a king than a couple of jacks.

Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Ware	Li	Tislevoll	Gan
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Ware led the two of diamonds. Gan won, drew two rounds of trumps, ending in hand, and led a club up. Ware took his ace and led a low heart. Gan ruffed, came to a diamond and took the club finesse. He ruffed a club and drew the last trump, emerging with 12 tricks.

We do not have the auction at the other table that led to Fiona Brown declaring six spades from the North seat after opening one club, but on a diamond lead, Brown won in dummy and led a club up. West took the club ace (cf. Board 15) and played a heart. Declarer ruffed and drew trumps then led a club to the king and took the ruffing finesse in clubs, for down two. Not unreasonable, but very expensive.

Usually, when declarer has a king/jack guess and leads a card toward that combination, and the player in front of the king-jack plays the ace, he will have the queen as well. Nevertheless Zhang had demonstrated, four boards earlier, that he was capable of rising with the ace absent the queen. Thus Brown was predisposed to play him for the ace-doubleton this time as well.

McGann was leading by 11 IMPs with eight boards to play when the Chinese missed a game on a bidding misunderstanding after a notrump opening by the opposition and a two-diamonds-showing-one-major balancing bid. That cost them 11 IMPs. The following board was even more painful ...

Board 42. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
McGann	Li	Thomson	Gan
—	—	2♠ ¹	Pass
3♣ ²	Double	Pass	4♥
5♣	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 4 spades and a longer minor, 10-14 HCP
2. Pass or correct



Unusually storm weather on the Gold Coast

McGann chose the slow route to five clubs, gambling after North's takeout double that he would be facing clubs and that his partner would be short in hearts – a reasonable, if fortunate, approach. Gan was not happy to bid on facing known spade length to his right. On the queen of hearts lead, McGann managed to strip off the majors without South getting in to play a diamond through him. Then, after drawing trumps, he led a diamond to his queen to endplay North to give him a second diamond trick. Nicely done, but the auction at the other table swung a huge number of IMPs and decided whether China was back in the match or dead and buried.

West	North	East	South
Shen	Tislevoll	Zhang	Ware
—	—	1♦	2♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
5♣	5♥	6♣	Double
Pass	6♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Not surprisingly, Zhang did not find the spade lead; I leave it to the Monday Morning quarterbacks to explain why they would have done so. After a diamond lead to the queen and ace, Tislevoll cashed the club ace to pitch dummy's diamond and now, on the actual lie of the cards, he had to ruff a diamond immediately to make his slam legitimately. Instead, he led a heart from hand and had East won to play a club, declarer would have been unable to set up either diamonds or spades.

East actually shifted to spades, and declarer was back in control. Those 16 IMPs (which could so easily have been nine or so the other way) sewed up the match. McGann led by 38 now and the rest of the deals had no potential to swing. The final score was 104-66.

This was the third consecutive appearance in the finals for four of the six winners, but their first win. Those four were Fiona Brown, Hugh McGann, GeO Tislevoll and Michael Ware. Tony Nunn joined them in 2013 and Matthew Thomson this year. Obviously adding Thompson made all the difference!

JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Mark Horton,
Sutton Benger, Wilts., UK



Did you ever stop to wonder just how many deals of bridge are played each day? Of those hundreds of thousands, most will be consigned to the dustbin of history, but occasionally, like the Koh-i-Noor diamond that adorns the crown of Queen Elizabeth II, a gem will rise to the surface.

This wonderful deal was played in a qualifying round of the French 'Open Par Quatre Excellence' the national teams championships for first series players. You might like to try it as a problem.

Dealer West. EW Vul

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

West	North	East	South
Tacchi		Géré	
INT	2♣ ¹	2♦ ²	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♣ ³	Pass
4♦ ³	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠ ³	Pass	5♣ ³	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Single suited
2. Transfer to hearts, invitational-plus
3. Control bids

Once West had produced his calculated overbid (his hand is worth 16.10 on the Kaplan-Rubens Hand Evaluator) the bidding rapidly escalated to what appears to be a hopeless slam. North leads the six of hearts - can you find a way home?

This was the full deal:

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

♠ J 9 7
♥ 5 3 2
♦ 10 7
♣ Q 8 7 4 2

Ron Tacchi, well-known bon vivant and bridge photographer extraordinaire is also a more than passable performer at the bridge table, but here it seemed that he and his partner Jean-Paul G  r  , the former president of Ron's local club, had gone to the well once too often.

Ron won the trump lead in hand and took a second round, North following with the nine. Realising that to have any chance the clubs would have to deliver four tricks, Ron played a club to dummy's king and the first glimmer of hope appeared when North followed with the jack. With fingers crossed, a club to the nine saw North discard a diamond. Needing to get back to dummy for another club finesse, Ron was about to play a trump, when he spotted a snag - what would he be able to discard on the fourth round of clubs? Then a better idea occurred to him - a low diamond. North could not afford to go in with the ace, so dummy's queen won. With a diamond trick in the bag Ron drew the outstanding trump. He was up to eleven tricks, but how to conjure up a twelfth?

Ron cashed his remaining trumps, discarding two spades from his hand. Then he played a club to the ten and when he advanced the ace of clubs these cards remained:

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

When North discarded the jack of diamonds, Ron threw a diamond from dummy and exited with the king of diamonds forcing North to lead away from the king of spades.

In order, declarer had used the Principle of Restricted Choice, Morton's Fork and a strip-squeeze and endplay.



PSYCHOLOGY 402

Barbara Travis, Adelaide, Australia

(Pre-requisite: Psychology 401, IBPA Bulletin February 2014)

The opponents have a random Precision auction which went something like this:

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♣ ¹
Pass	1NT ²	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	6♠	Pass	7♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 16+ HCP
2. 8+ balanced

As West, Robert Bignall was on lead holding queen-seven-three of spades and found the 'classic' (?) lead of the spade three! And found this:

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

What a stroke of genius! Declarer naturally played low and won the spade ten with the king. Then she led a low spade toward dummy and, when West followed, declarer confidently flew with the ace of spades, thinking that no one in his right mind would lead from the queen-third of trumps against a grand slam.

Robert, who is a mathematician, has told me that there is some mathematical foundation for the logic behind his lead – but I'm still to be convinced.

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OZ BRIDGE
Ishmael Del'Monte,
Sydney

BOARD 60

The Australian National Open Teams Final
MILNE v. LORENTZ
Ishmael Del'Monte, Sydney

Dealer West. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Thomson	Hollands	Lambardi	Del'Monte
Pass	1♣	1♦	1♥
5♦	Pass	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	6♦	7♣
Pass	Pass	7♦	Pass
Pass	7♥	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

I had not expected the auction to get out of control as quickly as it did. I finally passed, muttering obscenities under my breath, as I knew I was going down on a club ruff. Surely the double was 'Lightner', asking for a club lead to be ruffed by the doubler. Lo and behold, Matthew Thomson disagreed, and after some thought led the queen of spades! I played low from dummy and won with my ace.

I had initially intended to play Pablo Lambardi on my right for the queen third of hearts and so led a heart to the ace; the ten appeared on my left. It would have been much faster and much less agonising for me as well as all of the kibitzers if it hadn't! (Apparently the kibitzers waited for close to 15 minutes before my next play).

Unfortunately, I now started thinking and 'worked out', much to my later disappointment, that Lambardi had to have five spades: if Thomson had held the queen-jack to five spades, he would surely have introduced them at the one level over one heart, as this could have resulted in a sacrifice at a lower level.

GUIDO FERRARO
1959-2014



The bridge world has been shaken by another big loss. Guido Ferraro suddenly passed away, at a rather young age, following a heart attack. Guido was a prominent figure within Italian and world bridge, with an exceptional résumé: winner of the Olympiad Teams in 2000, the Rosenblum in 2002, the World Open Transnational Teams in 2003, and many European and Italian Championships.

Guido was a member of both the WBF and EBL Appeals Committees and of the WBF Systems Committee. Appreciated and well-liked in all parts of the world, Guido leaves real sadness and a lasting impression on all those who knew him and were his friends. The WBF bows to his memory and shares his family's and the Italian Federation's grief.

Gianarrigo Rona, President, World Bridge Federation

On that basis, Lambardi was likely to be either 5=3=5=0 or 5=2=6=0. I thought the latter was more likely, as the former would have meant that Thomson had not sacrificed at either of two opportunities holding a 4=1=6=2 at favourable vulnerability opposite a one-diamond overcall. This seemed unlikely! I played the a heart to the king, only to watch Thomson discard a diamond, and went one down.

If I had had Thomson's hand, I'd have bid six diamonds over six clubs, but then again, I would have led a club and stopped me from looking like a doofus!

To put this decision in context, we started the last 16 boards of the final with a 46 IMP lead and a total of 30 IMPs swung on my decision on the heart suit on this board. I am pleased to report that we held on to win the final by 22 IMPs despite this board.



Correspondence

The Editor reserves the right to abridge and/or edit correspondence.
Email: ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca

To IBPA Members:

The January issue of the IBPA Bulletin provides a link to an article written by Ian McKinnon called *On Victory Point Scales in Duplicate Bridge*. This article, which is critical of the new WBF scale, is described by the IBPA editor as “a learned treatise.” The article’s author is widely recognized as both a highly-respected writer and an innovator in all bridge scoring matters. However, as this lengthy riposte will demonstrate, while much of the article supports the approach adopted by the WBF Scoring Panel, it also contains several errors, generally lacks conviction where critical, and worse, offers some unacceptable alternatives. Detailed responses to McKinnon’s main points of criticism are given in our reply, the link to which has been sent to all IBPA members, and which can be found at: [www.ibpa.com/archive/WBF Response to VP Scale Critique.pdf](http://www.ibpa.com/archive/WBF%20Response%20to%20VP%20Scale%20Critique.pdf). Where possible, technical issues are avoided.

Ernesto d’Orsi, São Paulo

Dear John,

Couldn’t agree with you more regarding the change to the fourth (etc.) non-vulnerable, doubled undertricks. It’s not only the non-vul v vul slam saves – it’s also taken out of the game the psychic one notrump overcall prepared to stand it when doubled.

The game is not all about technical accuracy and beauty: Rodwell showed great courage by sacrificing, and that is part of the game also.

Best wishes, Richard Fleet, Berkhamsted, England

Dear John,

Your editorial referred to a massive sacrifice by Eric Rodwell against a well-bid grand slam by Edgar Kaplan and that the prevailing vulnerability made this worthwhile. You mentioned that the opponents were not impressed even though Rodwell was perfectly within the bounds of law and etiquette.

A few years ago, I proposed the introduction of what I called the ‘five-trick rule and insolence penalty’, which would have made the penalties for frivolous bidding of this kind too stiff for it to be worthwhile or anywhere near it. Such a scale would not only kill psychic bidding outright (and with it most of the cheating that goes on) but would make the game much cleaner altogether. My rationale was that it seems totally insane that, for example, a building company

should be able to secure a contract to build a multi-storey office block when they know perfectly well that they cannot even manage the sub-basement washrooms.

One bridge magazine published this and I was greeted with a swarm of abuse, some of it very rude. Sadly, Mr. Kaplan did not have the courage to stick up for me and neither did anybody else. The bridge authorities seem very reluctant to introduce any sort of discipline of this kind because they know that the top players will not like it and they (the authorities) are scared stiff. These ‘top’ players (grossly overrated at the best of times) need to know that all they are doing with this attitude is demonstrating that they are not good enough to win with sensible bridge. Are they right?

In my view, the game should be a test of who can play the most sensible AND FAIR game over a large number of boards and NOT who happens to choose the right moment to do something outrageous and – worse still – get plenty of positive publicity.

If this rule had been in force fifty years ago, the disasters in Buenos Aires and in the American trials, both of which tarnished the reputation of the game and ruined at least four players while achieving absolutely nothing positive, would never have happened. When will somebody have the guts to put their foot down and clean up the game before another such disaster happens?

I have the courage to stand up and be counted. Nobody else? I rest my case.

Danny Roth, London

Dear IBPA member,

Bridge App Challenge - Here’s a rather novel idea for your members’ columns:

Challenge the Bridge column readers, most of whom probably believe that computers aren’t a match for experienced ‘human’ players of the game, to take on our Bridge App, iBridgePlus, in a 24 hand, FREE to enter, ‘Gauntlet’ challenge. Anyone who beats the app will win \$40 in iBridge Dollars, but more so will have the satisfaction of having beaten one of the best Bridge ‘engines’ in a Head-to-Head challenge (iBridgePlus utilises the Q-Plus Bridge Engine, which came 3rd in the World Computer Bridge Championships is Bali last year).

The challenge ends on 30th April 2014.

After this date, we'll provide you with stats on what percentage of our users beat the app. We're sure that it will stimulate an interesting conversation within the conservative Bridge audience.

For more information on exactly how the challenge will run, please be in touch and we'll happily provide it.

The App is only available for Apples iOS devices (iPad & iPhone) If any Bridge journalist would like to try the app, but doesn't have access to a suitable device, we will be happy to lend them an iPad for a week or so (first come, first served).

Kind regards, Gidon Stemmer, Brevia Bridge Ltd.
+44(0)161 272 9040 www.ibridgeplus.com

NEWS & VIEWS



2014 GERMAN OPEN TEAM

Sabine Auken, after more than two decades of being part of the anchor pair (with Daniela von Arnim) on the great German Women's Teams, has qualified to be part of the German Open Team for the European Team Championship in Opatija, Croatia this summer. Her partner is ... Roy Welland, formerly of the USA and now a resident of Germany. As partners, Auken/Welland had an extraordinary 2013, winning the Vanderbilt and the European Open Pairs and placing third in the Yeh Bros Cup. Early in 2014, as well as winning the German Trials, they have finished second in the Slava Cup. Their teammates for the German Trials were Alexander Smirnov/Josef Piekarek and Roland Rohowsky/Jörg Fritsche.

RED BULL WORLD BRIDGE SERIES

The energy drink company Red Bull has signed on as title sponsor for the World Bridge Series in Sanya, China this fall. With its company emphasis on sports for the young, such as BMX, snowboarding and skate cross, it's a good company to get involved in bridge.

RENAULT-NISSAN POTENTIAL SPONSORSHIP

Mark Horton informs us of potential sponsorship of bridge by the *Renault Nissan Alliance*, which will celebrate its 15th anniversary in March this year and is the longest-lasting, cross-cultural partnership in the auto industry. The partnership has been a real success - they currently sell more than one in ten of all cars worldwide (and 1.3 million vehicles in China, giving it a market share of more than 6%).

The President Emeritus of the World Bridge Federation, José Damiani, has been exploring how Bridge and the Alliance might work together, and was in Beijing during the *SportAccord World Mind Games* in Beijing in December to meet with Marie Vallee, who is

a member of the special events team for Renault Nissan. China is the Alliance's biggest market in the world in terms of sales and that is one of the reasons why a link with Bridge, one of the fastest growing sports in China, might be forged. The Alliance was one of the sponsors of the *2013 Sport Accord World Mind Games*, their first such involvement in China.

2015 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup and d'Orsi Trophy will take place in India, venue to be determined, but perhaps not Goa, as previously mooted.

BRIDGESORTER

Jannersten Förlag AB has announced the introduction of the Bridgesorter, described as a sturdy dealing machine that can sort cards without barcodes. www.jannersten.com

BRITISH TAXMAN DECLARES CONTRACT BRIDGE NOT A SPORT

Patrick Kidd - The Times, February 25

It's a game that requires stamina, concentration, teamwork and ruthlessness - as well as years of practice - to acquire any real proficiency. As far as the taxman is concerned, however, letting a mere card game be considered as a sport would be a bridge too far. How can something be a sport when you can hold a glass of whisky while playing it? A tax tribunal yesterday dealt a losing hand to the English Bridge Union, which had wanted to be recognised as a sport so that members would not have to pay VAT on their competition entry fees, which amounted to £631,000 in 2012-13.

(Really? - did HM Inland Revenue consult the IOC? They consider bridge a sport and surely have more expertise in the determination than a tax tribunal acting out of pure bureaucratic self-interest. - Ed.)