



BULLETIN

www.ibpa.com

Honorary Chairman

ZHU Qingfeng (China)
1546340545@qq.com

Chairman

Per JANNERSTEN (Sweden)
ibpa@jannersten.com

President Emeritus

Tommy SANDSMARK (Norway)
tommy@sandsmark.org

President

Barry RIGAL (USA)
+1 212 366 4799
barryrigal@mindspring.com

Executive Vice-President

David STERN (Australia)
david.stern.bridge@gmail.com

Organizational

Vice-President & Bulletin Production Manager

Dilip GIDWANI (India)
+91 98214 53817
dilipgidwani@hotmail.com

Secretary

Elisabeth van ETTINGER (Netherlands)
+31 655 680 120
e.ettinger@chello.nl

Treasurer

Richard SOLOMON (NZ)
+64 9 232 8494
rsolomon@xtra.co.nz

Awards Secretary

Brent MANLEY (USA)
brentmanley@yahoo.com

Membership Secretary

Katie THORPE (Canada)
+1 519 981 9248
thorpe.katie@gmail.com

Honorary Auditor

Richard FLEET (England)
richardjfleet@gmail.com

Honorary General Counsel

David HARRIS (England)
davidrharris@ntlworld.com

THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE PRESS ASSOCIATION

Editor: John Carruthers

This Bulletin is published monthly and circulated to members of the International Bridge Press Association, comprising the world's leading journalists, authors and editors of news, books and articles about contract bridge, with an estimated readership of some 200 million people who enjoy the most widely-played of all card games.

Bulletin No. 663

April 10, 2020

Editorial

The opinions expressed here are solely those of the Editor, and do not necessarily represent those of the IBPA Executive or its members.

In what may well have been the last major, live-play, bridge tournament of 2020, there was controversy over a TD ruling, with no appeal permitted. Roy Welland, a teammate of one of the combatants, posted this on BridgeWinners on March 10.

Why Zimmermann should not have won the Monaco Winter Games

Dealer West. Both Vul. (Hands rotated)

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

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♦ ¹	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		
1. Hearts			

Paraphrasing Welland: During the qualification for the knockout phase of the European Winter Games in Monte Carlo, this deal came up. The three-club bid was very slow and the Tournament Director was called after the three-notrump bid. After a while, the TD informed the players that the result would stand. After a few questions from my teammates, the TD agreed that some further investigation was appropriate.

Here are the facts of the investigation as they were later stated to me by the TD who was called to the table: five players were asked what they would bid over three clubs – all five players passed; eight players were asked whether they felt the hesitation indicated something specific – four felt strongly that it implied extra values, two were unsure, and two thought you might raise to pre-empt a balance.

At the end of the qualifying Swiss, our team was in 17th place, a tiny fraction of a VP behind the Zimmermann team for the last qualifying spot. We eagerly awaited the final ruling in our case. Alas, it was not to be, three notrump was allowed to stand, and we were out of the main event.

There followed various opinions on BridgeWinners about what East should bid (e.g., Woolsey – three notrump, Rosenberg – pass), with prominent players coming down in favour of three notrump, three spades and pass.

The TD pointed out a number of facts to me not explained in Welland's post: (i.) East/West vigorously denied that there was a hesitation. (ii.) East/West were informed of the decision that day, one-and-one-half hours after the incident, while the North/South pair could not be found to tell them the ruling; they were informed the next day. (iii.) It was determined that there was no Unauthorized Information since, even if there had been a hesitation, it was not clear what the pause conveyed.

I'm not sure if an Appeals Committee could have sorted it out better than the directing staff, but conducting a survey of players and then ignoring their opinions does not seem the right way to proceed.

Address all IBPA Bulletin correspondence to: JOHN CARRUTHERS
1322 Patricia Blvd., Kingsville, Ontario, N9Y 2R4, CANADA
Tel: +1 519-733-9247 email: ibpaeditor@sympatico.ca



Mark Horton, Shrewsbury, Shrops., UK
Vincent Labbé, Paris
John Carruthers, Kingsville, ON

The main event at the European Winter Games is the Zimmermann Cup, a seven-day team contest comprising three days of Swiss qualifying, followed by four days of knockout play for the top 16 qualifiers. This year, the other 48 non-qualifiers got to play in a consolation Board-a-Match event with newcomers, of which there were ten, permitted.

From the Swiss qualifying...

Good News Day – Mark Horton

When Krzysztof Martens tells you he has a deal for you, you can be sure it is going to be good! This one was from his team's match against Lavazza in Round 4:

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Nawrocki	Bilde	Wiankowski	Madala
—	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Double	2♣	3♦
3♠	4♦	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

North led the five of clubs. Declarer won with dummy's ace, dropping the king from hand, and played two rounds of trumps, North winning with the king. He cashed the ace of hearts and continued the suit, but declarer could win with dummy's king, ruff a heart, draw the outstanding trump and claim the rest, for plus 450.

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Martens	Bocchi	Filipowicz
—	Pass	2♣ ¹	Pass
2♥ ²	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 18-19 balanced, no 5-card major
2. Transfer to spades

South did well to find the lead of the eight of clubs, the only suit to keep the defenders in the game. Declarer won with the queen and played two rounds of trumps, North winning with the king. With the East hand hidden, North now needs to find a way to put his partner in for a killing club return. How to do it?

Martens switched to the seven of diamonds and declarer was helpless. He took the ace and exited with a diamond, but South won and gave his partner the all-important club ruff. How did Krzysztof know to play a diamond?

The answer lay in South's play in the trump suit! He had followed with the six and then the jack. The partnership were using suit-preference signals in the trump suit so, if South had played the jack of spades on the first round, it would have indicated something useful in the heart suit. The failure to do that made it clear that finding partner with a diamond entry was the best hope, although a low heart would have achieved the same result.

Top Bidders Club – Mark Horton

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

The players representing teams Black and Ventin had a chance to show off their bidding skills in Round 13. They passed this one with flying colours:

West	North	East	South
<i>Pacareu</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
—	—	—	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣ ¹	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT ²	Pass	5♦ ³
Pass	7♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Fourth-suit forcing
2. RKCB
3. 0 or 3 key cards

West	North	East	South
<i>Black</i>	<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Palma</i>
—	—	—	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♦ ¹	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♣
Pass	7♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Forcing

Both declarers received a trump lead and they played to establish the spades, plus 1440.

Just two board later, in the same match...

Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Pacareu</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
—	1♦	4♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	Double
Pass	5NT ¹	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	6♥	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Pick a slam

You can see that five hearts is a phantom save against four spades (three off on a diamond lead, probably two off otherwise), but I have never been a supporter of bidding in the 'one-man army' style of Rixi Markus: "pre-empt, then bid again on the next round". However, one must give East full credit, this time, for

unilaterally saving in six hearts, which cost only 500 against 1370 in diamonds. Should West have perhaps doubled four spades? That might have provoked North rather than East.

West	North	East	South
<i>Black</i>	<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Palma</i>
—	1♦	4♥	Double
Pass	6♣	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Double seems a better choice than four spades and it was worth 13 IMPs when East/West subsided.

Unfamiliar and new partnerships occasionally have system problems, as was evident here, two boards forward in the same match...

Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Pacareu</i>	<i>Hult</i>	<i>Ventin</i>	<i>Hallberg</i>
—	—	—	INT
Pass	2♦ ¹	Pass	2♥
Pass	2NT ²	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Transfer to hearts
2. North: transfer to clubs; South: natural, invitational

Alas, North/South's wires were well and truly crossed. Declarer took ten tricks, plus 180.

West	North	East	South
<i>Black</i>	<i>Wrang</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Palma</i>
—	—	—	INT
Pass	2♦ ¹	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT ²	Pass	5♦ ³
Pass	6♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Transfer to hearts
2. RKCB
3. 0 or 3 key cards

West led the ten of clubs. Declarer won with the ace, played a club to the king and ruffed a club. West overruffed and returned a trump, but declarer won

in dummy, ruffed a club with the ace of hearts and could go to dummy with a diamond to draw the outstanding trump, plus 1430 and 15 IMPs. Well done.

On a trump lead declarer can show off his technique: win in dummy and play three rounds of clubs, ruffing with the ace of hearts. Then go back to dummy with a diamond and ruff a club with the five of hearts. West can overruff, but you can get back to dummy by ruffing a spade to draw the outstanding trumps. Greek star Petros Roussos was one of only two declarers to make six hearts on a trump lead, alongside Russia's Alexander Dubinin.

No less than 29 declarers went down in six hearts!

The qualifiers for the knockout were:

1	Gupta	209.92
2	Ventin	193.94
3	German Seniors	190.30
4	Russia	180.66
5	Marx	178.26
6	Harris	177.61
7	Breno	172.68
8	Formidables	172.66
9	Coldea	171.44
10	Netherlands	170.20
11	Agriport	169.87
12	Lavazza	169.56
13	Moran	169.22
14	Pepsi	167.37
15	Bortoletti	165.51
16	Swiss Team	164.69

As has become *de rigueur*, Gupta, as the first-place team, got to choose its Round-of-16 opponent, then second, and so on.

The results of the Round-of-16 matches were:

Gupta	135	–	Bortoletti	84
Pepsi	114	–	Formidables	92
Netherlands	127	–	Marx	80
Russia	131	–	Agriport	76
Moran	121	–	German Seniors	87
Swiss Team	130	–	Harris	102
Lavazza	139	–	Breno	99
Ventin	139	–	Coldea	133

The above table portrays the bracket: in the quarterfinals, the line one team plays line two team, and so on. Then, the lines one and two winner plays the lines three and four winner in the semifinals.

Here are some key deals from the quarterfinal matches:

Make Mine a Merrimac – Mark Horton

Has it ever occurred to you that there should be some bridge-related cocktails? Why not try ordering a 'Zia' at the bar – one of the ingredients is sure to be champagne. The names of certain plays might easily be

ascribed to cocktails – my choice would be a 'Merrimac' – a powerful concoction that will make you sit up and take notice. It might become popular, especially in Switzerland. From Moran v. Swiss Team...

Board 8. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Carrol</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Moran</i>
2♦ ¹	Pass	4♣ ²	Pass
4♦ ³	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Multi
2. Transfer to your major
3. Hearts

South led the three of spades. Declarer ruffed in dummy and played a diamond to the jack and ace. South continued with a second spade and declarer took the ace pitching a club, unblocked the king of diamonds, and pitched another club on the king of spades. He led the ace of clubs, then ruffed a club, ruffed a diamond and played a heart to the ace and a heart, claiming ten tricks, plus 420.

When South came in with the ace of diamonds, he needed to switch to the king of hearts(!), a Merrimac Coup, removing a vital entry to dummy. Declarer can't afford to duck, but if he follows the same general plan as he did in actuality, the defenders would have been able to score their trumps separately.

As it happens, the defence would have been easier if South had led the queen of clubs at trick one. Then there would have been no need for South to do anything dramatic.

West	North	East	South
<i>Fitzgibbon</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Mesbur</i>	<i>Brink</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Here, no one saw any reason to disturb one spade. South did lead the queen of clubs but, as it turns out, the 'movie star' lead of the heart king (or even a trump) would have been better. Declarer won with the ace of clubs, cashed the top spades and continued with a third round (best is to play a club at this point). North won and now does best to play a red card but, naturally,

he played a club. Declarer won with dummy's ten and played a diamond for the jack and ace. When he was in dummy with the ace of hearts, declarer could play a club to establish a seventh trick, plus 80, but an 8-IMP loss.

Elementary my Dear Watson – Mark Horton

Sherlock Holmes was fond of saying, "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth." Knowing about that might have helped a defender on this deal from the second session of the quarterfinal matches between Russia v. Netherlands and Moran v. Swiss Team:

Board 38. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sprinkhuizen</i>	<i>Khokhlov</i>	<i>Mendes</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
—	—	4♦	Pass
4NT ¹	Pass	5♣ ²	Double
Pass	Pass	6♦	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. RKCB
2. 1 or 4 key cards

South led the king of clubs for the ace, four and six. Declarer ran the queen of diamonds, South winning with the king and returning the queen of clubs. Declarer ruffed with the eight of diamonds, cashed the ace of diamonds and followed that with four more diamonds, pitching two spades and a heart from dummy. That meant he was two down, minus 100.

West	North	East	South
<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Schollaardt</i>	<i>Gulevich</i>	<i>Groenenboom</i>
—	—	1♦ ¹	2♣
2♥ ²	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 2+ diamonds, 11-15 HCP
2. Spades

South led the king of clubs. Declarer took dummy's ace (North following with the eight) and played a diamond for the jack and king. When South tried the queen of clubs, declarer ruffed with the eight of diamonds, went to dummy with the diamond seven,

pitched a heart on the ace of spades, ruffed a spade, went to dummy with another trump and ruffed another spade. When the king appeared, declarer cashed the ace of diamonds, pitching dummy's ten of hearts. North, down to the jack-nine of spades and the queen-jack-six of hearts, was squeezed in the majors; plus 920 and 14 IMPs.

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Carroll</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Moran</i>
—	—	2♥ ¹	3♣
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
1. 6-10, 5+♥ and 5+♣/♦			

Declarer won the club lead with the ace, cashed the ace of hearts and then played the ten of hearts for the jack and king. When South discarded, declarer played two rounds of diamonds, ruffed the club return and claimed ten tricks, plus 420.

West	North	East	South
<i>Fitzgibbon</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Mesbur</i>	<i>Brink</i>
—	—	Pass	1♣
INT	2♣ ¹	5♦	Pass
6♦	Pass	Pass	Pass
1. Majors			

South led the queen of clubs. Declarer won with dummy's ace, ruffed a spade, and then played two rounds of diamonds. Here, the situation was even clearer but, perhaps worried about picking up his partner's heart holding, South played a second club and North was eventually squeezed in the majors, declarer following a similar line to that adopted by Gulevich.

Do you see what South missed at both tables?

It should have been clear from partner's card on the first round of clubs that you had no trick in that suit. Declarer was known to have seven diamonds and one club, leaving five major-suit cards. If declarer had one spade, he could take the spade finesse and establish a long spade, taking care of two losing hearts. (Not to mention the threat against partner's major suit holdings. You'd be no better off if declarer had two spades, but what if he had three spades and two hearts? Apart from the fact that it would be a strange distribution for a four-level pre-empt, it would only be wrong to switch to a heart if declarer had the king-jack of hearts. Switching to the nine of hearts breaks up the impending squeeze.

Applying Science - Mark Horton

Many of the top pairs use sophisticated methods during the bidding. When the right hands come along, they can play a significant role in determining the result of a match, as they did on this deal between Moran and Swiss Team:

Board 43. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

♠ 10 6
 ♥ J 9 7 6
 ♦ Q J 8 2
 ♣ 6 3 2

♠ Q 4 3 2
 ♥ K Q 10 8 4
 ♦ 7 5 3
 ♣ K

♠ J 7 5
 ♥ A 5 3 2
 ♦ A K 6
 ♣ A Q J

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>McGann</i>
—	—	—	2NT ¹
Pass	3♣ ²	Pass	3♦ ³
Pass	3♥ ⁴	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 19-21
2. Puppet Stayman
3. At least one major
4. Spades

West led the six of hearts. Declarer ducked three times, pitching a card from each suit, won the fourth heart and cashed the ace of clubs, claiming when the king appeared, plus 430.

North/South were more ambitious at the other table...

West	North	East	South
<i>Fitzgibbon</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Mesbur</i>	<i>Brink</i>
—	—	—	1♣ ¹
Pass	1♠ ²	Pass	2♦ ³
Pass	2♥ ⁴	Double	2♠ ⁵
Pass	3♦ ⁶	Pass	3♥ ⁷
Pass	4♥ ⁸	Pass	5NT ⁹
Pass	6♣	Pass	Pass

1. (i.) 12-14 balanced 2+ clubs, or (ii.) 18-20 balanced 2+ clubs, or (iii.) 12+ unbalanced 4+ clubs
2. Natural, possible canapé
3. 18-20
4. Good hand
5. 3 spades, 18-19
6. Clubs
7. Waiting
8. Shortage
9. Pick a slam

West led the six of hearts. Declarer ruffed in dummy and played a club. When the king appeared he won, took a second round of trumps, ruffed a heart, and played three rounds of spades, claiming when the jack scored, plus 920 and 10 IMPs.

Unlucky for Some – Mark Horton

You will be well aware of the superstitions surrounding the number 13. After all, I have written enough articles about triskaidekaphobia – the fear of the number 13. Here is a cracker from the last session of the quarterfinals, notationally Board 13, but the fifty-third board of the match. It features Moran and Swiss Team...

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ A K
 ♥ Q J 7 4
 ♦ Q 4 3 2
 ♣ 9 7 3

♠ Q 4
 ♥ 6 5 2
 ♦ K J 10 5
 ♣ A K Q 5

♠ J 8 7 6 2
 ♥ A 9
 ♦ A 7
 ♣ 10 6 4 2

♠ 10 9 5 3
 ♥ K 10 8 3
 ♦ 9 8 6
 ♣ J 8

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>McGann</i>
—	1♣	1♠	Pass
2♣ ¹	Pass	2♦ ²	Pass
2NT ³	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Transfer to diamonds
2. Non-forcing
3. Natural, invitational

North led the four of hearts. ducked in dummy, South winning with the king and returning the heart three to dummy's ace, as declarer played the five and six. A club to the queen was followed by the ten of diamonds and, when that held, declarer played a diamond to the ace and the six of clubs to the king. He unblocked the ten of clubs on the next round and then cashed the five of clubs. At this point North was down to the ace-king of spades, the queen-jack of hearts and the queen-four of diamonds and was well and truly squeezed. He parted with the queen of hearts, but declarer could exit with a spade and eventually took the last two tricks with the king-jack of diamonds to make three notrump, plus 600.

It's hard to see perhaps, but North must play an honour on the second round of hearts. Then, in the six-card ending, he can discard his remaining heart honour. By concealing the two of hearts, declarer made it more difficult for North to work out his partner's heart length.

West	North	East	South
<i>Fitzgibbon</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Mesbur</i>	<i>Brink</i>
—	1♣ ¹	Pass	1♦ ²
Pass	1♥ ³	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♥ ⁴	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

See top of next page for alert explanations...

1. (i.) 12-14 balanced 2+ clubs, or (ii.) 18-20 balanced 2+ clubs, or (iii.) 12+ unbalanced 4+ clubs
2. 0-7 HCP
3. 4+ hearts, non-forcing
4. Transfer to spades

Declarer took nine tricks for plus 140 but lost 10 IMPs.

The quarterfinal results were: Gupta 122-Pepsi 87; Russia 136-Netherlands 91; Swiss Team 156-Moran 148; Lavazza 156-Ventin 105.

Maurizio Di Sacco has written an extensive report on the semifinals of this event. Some of his deals will be published in May. – Ed.

Russia Wakes Up – Vincent Labbé

After a very poor start in its semifinal against Gupta, Russia woke up. They gained 13 IMPs on Board 12 thanks to a slam in hearts (three notrump in the other room) and Board 13 was another huge swing in their favour...

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Khokhlov</i>	<i>Gupta</i>	<i>Dubin</i>	<i>Rosenberg</i>
—	1♦	1♥	4♦
4♠	5♦	6♦	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Six spades does not look like a good result, as seven spades is the right contract. But in the other room, Zia/Meckstroth let the opponents play in...five diamonds doubled (oops!), only one down, 15 IMPs for Russia, coming from nowhere.

In the other semifinal match, Lavazza v. Swiss Team, there was no swing, but there were many regrets for some guys.

West	North	East	South
<i>Klukowski</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Madala</i>
—	1♦	1♥	5♦
Double	Pass	6♦	Pass
7♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Seven spades popped up in response to the control-bid. Bold, rapid and well done.

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Drijver</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Brink</i>
—	1♦	1♥	4♦
4♠	5♦	6♦	Double
Pass	Pass	Redouble	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	7♦
Pass	Pass	7♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The four-spade bid seemed to pave an easy way to the grand slam but, despite a control-bid at the six level and the redouble showing a void in diamonds, the Italians stopped in six spades. But wait, Brink had not said his last word. He balanced with seven diamonds. A boomerang sacrifice! Pass by Sementa over seven diamonds, more promising than double, was then the key bid for Bocchi: now, seven spades can't be a poor contract, he thought.

In the semifinals, the results were: Gupta 184-Russia 110 and Swiss Team 177-Lavazza 136.

Thanking Teammates – Vincent Labbé

Sometimes you're bemoaning the fact that you went off in a lay-down contract, only to discover later it was not such a disaster, thanks to your beloved teammates. From the final, Gupta v. Swiss Team:

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Mahmood</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Klukowski</i>
—	—	—	2♥ ¹
2♠	Pass	2NT	3♣
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			
			1. 5+ hearts and 5+ either minor

Gawrys led the ace of diamonds. Mahmood discarded a club, which seemed alright but, curiously, he was already slated for one down! Four spades was no longer makeable.

North cashed his ace of clubs and switched to a heart. After winning with the ace, declarer ruffed a diamond



The winners (l. to r.): Michal Klukowski, Sjoert Brink, Franck Multon, Pierre Zimmermann, Piotr Gawrys, Sebastian Drijver

and played a heart, ruffed by North, who shifted to a spade. West won in hand and led another heart, ruffed by the eight and overruffed by the queen. Declarer ruffed a diamond and led a heart, ruffed by North's jack, the setting trick. That was minus 200.

The winning solution is to ruff at trick one and play two rounds of hearts, the second ruffed by North, who cashes the ace of clubs and switches to a trump.

You take the trump in hand, play a heart, ruffed and overruffed, ruff a diamond, play a heart ruffed by North with the jack. North exits with the king of diamonds, which you ruff. You finish your masterful play by ruffing the king of hearts in order to cash the queen of diamonds. Ten tricks.

Not completely double-dummy; you can even wrap up eleven tricks as follows: ace of diamonds ruffed, run the ten of spades (North has to have the jack, yes?), all the trumps but one, ace of hearts, a club to the ace, king of diamonds (you discard from hand, as South has kept three hearts and two clubs). Here is the situation, North to lead:

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

When North plays a diamond to the queen in dummy, South is trump squeezed: if he discards a club, the five of clubs disappears from West. Declarer ruffs a club and can enjoy two clubs tricks, thanks to the queen of hearts; if, instead, South discards a heart, declarer will enjoy three heart tricks. Eleven tricks like in a dream...

Well, one down in four spades was not a complete disaster as the board had been won by his teammates in the other room:

West	North	East	South
Brink	Helgemo	Drijver	Lorenzini
—	—	—	Pass
1♠	2♦	2NT	Double
4♦	5♦	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

On the lead of the two of spades, ruffed, declarer played the ace of clubs, ruffed another spade, cashed three clubs, ruffed a heart and soon claimed 12 tricks for plus 650 and a 10-IMP swing for Gupta.

And the final score: Swiss Team 100 – Gupta 76.

TestYour European Winter Games Slam Play – John Carruthers

The following two slams were misplayed or, more generously, misguessed by World-Champion players at these third European Winter Games. Their names have been withheld to avoid further embarrassing them – I promise you, no filthy lucre has changed hands to prevent publication of their identities; they are already embarrassed enough.

Problem 1

Dealer West. EW Vul.

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

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

1. Key-card ask in clubs
2. 2 key cards plus the club queen

West leads the eight of hearts (second/fourth). East wins with the ace and returns the deuce of hearts; West follows with the three. West would have led fourth-highest from a high honour, but second-highest from a poor suit; East has returned upside-down remainder count (i.e., lowest from two or four remaining); West's carding has denied a doubleton low heart, from which he would have led the lower of the two. Make a plan.

Problem 2

Board 18. Dealer West. NS Vul.

♠ 10 7 5 2
 ♥ K J
 ♦ A K 8 7 4
 ♣ Q 5

♠ A Q J 8 4
 ♥ A 7 6 2
 ♦ 10 5 2
 ♣ A

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

1. Minimum 4-card spade raise with no shortage
2. RKCB
3. 1 or 4 key cards

West kicks off with the five of hearts, lowest-from-an-odd-number, third-best-from-an-even-number reverse carding. What's your plan of attack?

Solutions

1.

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

♠ 2
 ♥ K Q J
 ♦ A K 10 8
 ♣ K J 8 4 3

A multiple World Champion hacked up the play on this deal, seduced by great defence from his multiple-World-Champion East defender. Declarer followed to the first two tricks with the king and queen of hearts, led a club to the ace and another to the king (East making a terrific play by discarding his four of hearts rather than an 'idle fifth' diamond), followed by a spade to the ace and a spade ruff, everyone following with low ones. South cashed the jack of hearts, throwing the three of diamonds from the dummy, four of diamonds from East. Declarer led a club to the queen to draw West's last trump, and East discarded another diamond (the five).

East was then known, in all probability, to hold 4=3=5=1 or 5=3=4=1. The odds were slightly against the spade king ruffing down (4:3 against if East were 4=3=5=1). Furthermore, if East had begun with five spades, why had he not discarded one on the jack of hearts to keep his diamond holding intact? All the signs pointed to East holding a 4=3=5=1 distribution with the queen

of diamonds, otherwise why had he not discarded a diamond on the second trump rather than a heart?

Declarer concluded that East had begun with 4=3=5=1 and so led the jack of diamonds and ran it to West's queen; down one!

Declarer had relied too much on his table presence and too little on the percentages. It was the second round of trumps that was not such a good idea. This line is sounder: win the second heart, lead a club to the ace and the jack of diamonds (maybe it will be covered) to the ace. When the queen of diamonds has not put in an appearance, cash the jack of hearts for a diamond discard and lead the eight of diamonds. When the queen of diamonds appears, draw trumps and claim. If the queen of diamonds does not show up, ruff low in the dummy and lead a trump to hand, ruff the ten of diamonds high, then play the ace of spades and ruff a spade, draw the last trump and again claim.

Although it's more likely that the third heart will be ruffed rather than the second diamond, it's a bit more likely that the third diamond will be over-ruffed by East. Today, the fall of the diamond queen means that either play would have been successful.

I do have some sympathy with drawing a second trump; after all, if clubs are 2-2, you can claim. When they are not, however, you may need to ruff two diamonds in the dummy, one low and one high. In that case you'd need West to follow to three rounds of spades, his not being able to discard one on the fourth diamond. That was the original declarer's dilemma: that West, with just six cards in spades and diamonds, would be able to over-ruff the third spade after discarding one on the fourth round of diamonds. That would indeed have been the case on the actual deal, IF the diamond queen had not dropped early. So, declarer read the distribution accurately; he was taken in by East's husbanding of the diamonds.

2.

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

♠ A Q J 8 4
 ♥ A 7 6 2
 ♦ 10 5 2
 ♣ A

One multiple-World-Champion declarer threw this one on the floor. He won the heart lead with the king and ran the ten of spades to the king. West returned the four of hearts to the jack, queen and ace. It certainly looked like West had begun with an even number of

hearts, so declarer felt compelled to draw the remaining trumps lest either defender was able to ruff in with the nine of spades. After that débâcle, he played skilfully to go just one off, leading to the ace of diamonds and ducking the second, eventually setting up the fifth with a ruff. Thus he was able to ruff one heart in the dummy and discard another on the fifth diamond.

That was a pretty pathetic effort. Had declarer simply led a low spade to the queen, he could have won the heart return in hand with the ace and led a third

heart. When West showed out he could ruff safely in the dummy, come back to hand with a trump, ruff the fourth heart, come to hand with a club to the ace and run the spades. West would have been squeezed between the minors on the last of these.

Note that West could have killed this plan by shifting to a club when in with the king of spades, a rather difficult play, not knowing declarer's distribution. An initial club lead would have accomplished the same goal.



The 59th Gold Coast Congress

21 February - 29 February, 2020
Barry Rigal, NYC

The Gold Coast Congress seems to grow in stature every year as its fame becomes more widespread.

The Open Teams had a fantastic finish this year, something that has become commonplace in Australia recently. After 45 boards of the 48-board final, WARE (Max Henbest, Nick Jacob, Terje Lie, GeO Tislevoll, Michael Ware, David Wiltshire) led CORNELL (Alex Antonios, Ashley Bach, Matthew Brown, Nabil Edgtton, Michael Whibley) by 30 IMPs, 150-120. These were the last three boards...

Board 46. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Edgtton</i>	<i>Wiltshire</i>	<i>Bach</i>	<i>Henbest</i>
—	—	1♠	Pass
2♣	2♥	2♠	3♥
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Bach had room to bid four clubs and Edgtton correctly appraised his wasted heart queen and sterile shape as not even worth a slam try. Well done. Even four spades isn't 100% cold on a heart lead but, with the ace of diamonds onside and clubs breaking, Bach wrapped up his 11 tricks.

West	North	East	South
<i>Ware</i>	<i>Whibley</i>	<i>Jacob</i>	<i>Brown</i>
—	—	1♠	Pass
2♣	2♥	2♠	3♥
4♥	Pass	6♣	Pass
6♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Even after the ace-of-diamonds lead and a heart shift, Jacob had no legitimate play for his slam except a miracle in clubs, which was not forthcoming today. Thirteen IMPs to CORNELL made the margin 17 IMPs, 150-133.

Nabil Edgtton successfully tried to steal the next board in four spades but, nevertheless, may have been

surprised and delighted that there was no more bidding.

Board 47. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

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

♠ 8
 ♥ 10 6 5 4 2
 ♦ 9 5 4
 ♣ Q J 7 6

West	North	East	South
Edgtton	Wiltshire	Bach	Henbest
—	—	—	Pass
1♠	Double	3♣ ¹	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 4-card mixed raise 6-9 HCP

Four spades proved to be no problem in the play.

West	North	East	South
Ware	Whibley	Jacob	Brown
—	—	—	Pass
1♠	Double	3♣ ¹	3♠(!)
Double	Pass	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. 4-card mixed raise 6-9 HCP

And neither did the four-heart contract reached at the other table after a fairly eccentric route, if the BBO auction is to be believed. Was three spades a psyche? Whatever the case, four hearts was just as cold as four spades and I'm not quite sure why neither Ware, with six spades, nor Jacob, with the short hearts, didn't act.

That was 15 IMPs more to CORNELL, trailing now by just 2 IMPs, 150-148, as another flat deal hit the table ...

Board 48. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

♠ 5
 ♥ 5
 ♦ A K Q 6 4 3
 ♣ Q 8 6 4 3

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

♠ A 7 3
 ♥ K Q J 4
 ♦ 8 5
 ♣ A K 9 2

West	North	East	South
Edgtton	Wiltshire	Bach	Henbest
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠ ¹
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT ²
Pass	5♣ ³	Pass	5♦ ⁴
Pass	5♠ ⁵	Pass	6♣ ⁶
Pass	7♣ ⁷	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 4th-suit forcing to game
2. RKCB
3. 1 or 4 key cards
4. Queen ask
5. In theory, the queen of clubs and the king of spades
6. Placing the contract (South thought)
7. Placing the contract (after a grand-slam try, North thought)

Everything up to four clubs is clear. South used Key-card to ask for aces then asked for the trump queen, perhaps planning to play six notrump, but going past a safe level if North did not have it. North thought this had to be a grand slam try since the partnership was headed for six clubs even if he did not have the queen of trumps. Suffice it to say, West could double and hope it was Lightner not just 'I have an ace'. Bach certainly read it that way, and led to Edgtton's ace at trick one.

West	North	East	South
Ware	Whibley	Jacob	Brown
—	1♦	1♠	Double
3♦ ¹	5♣	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 4-card limit raise in spades

Brown tempted fate by bidding five hearts rather than five spades, but Whibley could be sure that if the grand slam was making his partner would have bid it with four key cards.

CORNELL had the title by 12 IMPs, 162-150, thanks to that 14-IMP swing. His team were unanimous that he was due the lion's share of credit for not attending; and congratulations to Alex Antonios, collecting his first masterpoints for winning such a big title. I'd be surprised if that had ever been done before.

Here are a few deals from the Bobby Richman Open Pairs, won handily by Jovanka Smederevac and Sascha Wernle.

Continued on page 14...



IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra



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

993. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

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

1. Forcing to game, artificial
2. No 3-card heart support, not 4 spades

This deal came up in a teams match. Both pairs did well to reach the slam after somewhat convoluted auctions, one of which is shown here (the other South used an agricultural approach: Gerber over the one-notrump rebid followed by a leap to the slam).

The opening lead was the same at both tables, the ten of spades. The first declarer took this in dummy with the king and played a trump to the queen and king. Although the diamond finesse succeeded, declarer had to concede a trump to East and so finished down one.

At the other table, declarer also took the opening lead with the king of spades but, instead of playing a trump at trick two, he played a diamond to the queen. Now declarer could afford to lose a trump trick and still make his contract. So, at trick three, he cashed the ace of trumps, felling West's bare king. Declarer lost just a trump trick to East.

If the queen of diamonds had lost to the king, declarer would have had to rely on trumps being 2-2 with the king onside.

994. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

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

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

North had quite an awkward problem at his first turn. In the end, he decided to use Roman Key Card Blackwood.

West led a third-highest two of hearts. When dummy appeared, declarer saw that the contract depended on playing the trump suit for at most one loser. If the opponents had not bid, he would have played a trump to the king and a low trump back, intending to finesse the jack if East followed with two low cards.

However, as declarer placed East with a seven-card suit, this was not the time to play the suit in a standard way. East had only six places for the queen of trumps compared to West's ten. So, declarer won the first trick with dummy's ace of hearts, then crossed to his hand by ruffing a heart. Declarer then placed the jack of spades on the table. West played low and so did dummy. When the jack of trumps won the trick, declarer made 12 tricks – losing only one trump.

What were the odds? Declarer's play succeeds in managing the trump suit for at most one loser whenever trumps are 3-2, barring an unlikely ruff. It also wins when trumps are 4-1 and West began with the queen of trumps while losing rather unluckily to the singleton queen in East. Calculations suggest that declarer's approach will succeed at least 85% of the time.

995. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

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

1. Forcing-to-game-spade raise
2. Extra values, no shortage
3. RKCB
4. 2 key cards with the queen of spades

Reasoning that his fifth spade was as good as the queen opposite a five-card-major opening, North's five-spade bid propelled the partnership into slam. West led the queen of diamonds. Declarer took this in hand with the ace and, without any apparent thought, cashed the king of trumps. When West showed out, declarer bemoaned his luck at having a sure trump loser. He then played a trump to dummy's ace and followed by taking the heart finesse. West won with the king of hearts and declarer could only make 11 tricks.

"That was unlucky," opined South. "The trumps were 3-0 and the king of hearts was offside. What is the chance of that happening?"

North responded, "I would say you murdered the contract, but that requires malice aforethought. You clearly weren't thinking!"

North continued, "If spades were 2-1, it wouldn't matter how you managed the trump suit. Twelve tricks would be guaranteed. Consequently, you should have turned your attention to coping with a 3-0 break. A low trump to the ace at trick two would have ensured the contract. As the cards lie, you would have made 12 tricks easily."

"If it had been West who had had the three missing trumps, you would have continued with a trump to the king,

followed by a diamond to the king and a diamond ruff. Then, after cashing your three club winners, you would have exited with a trump. West would have been on lead and either would have had to lead a heart or else give you a ruff-sluff. Either way, you would have had 12 tricks."

996. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

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

1. Forcing
2. Limit raise with three trumps

West led the jack of diamonds. Dummy played low and East rose with the ace, felling declarer's king. East shifted to the ten of clubs. Declarer counted 11 tricks if the queen of diamonds stood up and saw that the best chance for a twelfth trick was to try to ruff a club in dummy. He won with the club ace and was about to cash the king of clubs when he realised that it would not hurt to cash one of dummy's trump winners before attempting to ruff a club.

So, at trick three, declarer led a low trump to dummy's king. After throwing a club on the queen of diamonds, declarer played the jack of clubs to his king. Next, declarer led his remaining club and was pleasantly surprised when West discarded a heart. After winning the trick with the three of trumps, declarer cashed the ace of trumps. When West discarded it was a simple matter for declarer to ruff a diamond low in hand, draw trumps and claim 12 tricks.

If declarer had not cashed the ace of trumps, West would have ruffed the third round of clubs with the six of spades, thereby promoting a trump trick for East. Furthermore, as the play went, it would not have benefitted the defence for West to ruff the third club if he'd had another trump: declarer would have overruffed and drawn the two outstanding trumps with his queen and jack. Finally, if West had followed to the third club, the percentage play would have been to ruff it low – a 4-1 break in trumps occurs nearly three times as often as a 5-2 club division with East having just two.



The Gold Coast Congress Teams winners, in true Australian fashion, enjoy a celebratory libation after their triumph; l. to r. standing: Michael Whibley, Nabil Edgton, Matthew Brown; kneeling: Alex Antonios, Ashley Bach

Board 6. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

Peter Hollands and Vanessa Brown bid unopposed, against Janet Kahler and Peter Quach, to four hearts, after Hollands opened in second seat: one heart-two clubs-four hearts. Hollands received the seven-of-spades lead. East won with the ace to return the jack of spades. Hollands took it and played the ten of clubs, jack, king, ace. Now that East had shown nine points in the black suits, declarer laid down the ace of hearts and was charmed by the result: plus 450. That was an undivided top for them in the 'C' final. Go on, guess how many pairs in the 'A' final duplicated this action? Step forward, Terje Lie and GeO Tislevoll, the only pair to make the discovery play to land 11 tricks. That snort of derision you hear is coming from me ...

Board 10. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

We had remarked earlier that our field was struggling with basic arithmetic. Let's see two vastly different pieces of declarer play. Not surprisingly, only one of them will be named; the price of anonymity is two Hail Marys and an Ave Maria.

Both Norths opened one spade in fourth seat and played in two spades on an uncontested auction. The first declarer received the heart-queen lead and ducked. He won the second heart to try a club to the ten and queen. Back came a third heart; he ruffed and led a spade to the jack and queen. Terje Lie played the fourth heart; declarer pitched a low diamond, finessed unsuccessfully on the club return and won the third club. At this point, after he drew trumps ending in dummy, East had shown eight points in hearts and clubs so a diamond to the king was the marked play for down one. Or so one would have thought ... down 200 when declarer took his eye off the ball and led a diamond to the knave.

At the other table, Justin Mill played two spades against Jovi Smederevac's lead of the queen of hearts. Mill took the ace immediately and advanced the jack of clubs. When Sascha Wernle played low without a flicker, Mill determined that both club honours rated to be wrong. Smederevac won and shifted to a diamond at trick three, to the ace. When Wernle reverted to hearts, Mill ruffed the third and decided that East had to hold eight points in clubs and hearts, and her low diamond shift suggested the queen, so there was no room, as a passed hand, for her to have the queen of spades. Accordingly, Mill played the ace of spades and low to the king, dropping the queen. He then drew the last trump and ruffed the fourth heart back to hand. On this trick, East had to pitch from her three clubs and two diamonds. She discarded a club and was endplayed in that suit to lead diamonds for declarer's ninth winner, and all the matchpoints. Well bowled by Mill.

Board 25. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

A minor technical point here when you have slightly (but only slightly) overreached to get to slam.

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

When North leads a club against your slam, you can improve upon needing the diamond guess, but you must be careful. You need to win with the club queen to ruff a spade. Then go back to dummy's club king and when trumps split 2-2 you can play the ace-king and ruff another spade. If the spade queen falls in three or four rounds you have your discards. If it doesn't, you can make your best guess in diamonds – and today, there is no wrong guess.

Board 26. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

At two tables that I know of, and doubtless more across the room, East/West reached the, in theory, no-play four hearts with four top losers. They received the friendly spade lead that allowed them to discard two club losers. Where I was watching, East led the heart jack and, when it held, had no further problems. All South had to do was win with the heart ace at the first opportunity and force declarer in clubs. When declarer ruffs, he has the choice of playing a second trump, when the hand falls to pieces, or trying a cross-ruff. And then, the absence of decent heart intermediates in dummy means that the heart five will lose out to the heart six at some point. And all because



The Bobby Richman Open Pairs winners:
Sascha Wernle and Jovanla Smederevac

you didn't lead a low trump from dummy at trick three!

On a low heart lead from the dummy, if South wins and forces you, simply play three top diamonds and ruff two diamond winners in dummy with high trumps. South cannot overruff or he loses control, so you end up with five plain winners and score five of your six remaining trumps separately. You could sell me on the idea that you are supposed to play diamonds before even one round of trumps. If North has shown long spades, it can hardly lose just to lead diamonds at once. If North ruffs in you can overruff and now, your remaining trump spots are good enough to ensure you have ten tricks.

Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

As our teammates discovered the hard way, defeating three notrump is far from easy. Say you play three notrump from the South seat on a heart lead. East encourages the lead and you pass the queen of clubs. West wins and surely cannot find the spade shift. He leads a heart to the queen and king. Now declarer runs the clubs and pitches spades from dummy. West pitches an encouraging spade but then has to find a second pitch before East can do anything but give suit preference on the clubs. West must unguard the spades, then when East pitches the most encouraging spade he can afford, West must discard his king of spades at the next turn. Now declarer

will surely misguess diamonds. I believe there were only 13 tables where three notrump by South was attempted on a heart lead and defeated. By contrast, at 61 tables three notrump made with overtricks after the heart lead.

Board 25. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Smolanko	Jacob	Buchen	Ware
—	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♥	Double	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Smolanko led the diamond jack, far from unreasonable, but missing the ruff that would have defeated the contract at once. Ware now did well to my mind to put up the diamond king and guess spades, but perhaps the implicit diamond count made the bidder favourite to hold spade length. After the ace and jack of spades, holding the trick, Ware cashed the ace of diamonds and now had a complete count of the deal, assuming West would have led a singleton club.

West had to be 4=5=2=2 and the winning play was to lead the king of clubs. East does best to duck to prevent you establishing clubs. You play a second club to the ten, queen and ace. East gets out with a heart to the king, ducked by West to avoid the immediate endplay. However, when West ruffs the third diamond, you discard a heart from dummy, win the trump shift and ruff out clubs. If West doesn't ruff the third diamond you play a second heart, endplaying West to lead a major-suit for you and concede the tenth trick.

Back to the table action: at tricks four and five, Ware played winning diamonds and West correctly ruffed in; Ware pitched a heart from dummy, and West could now either play the fourth spade or the ten of clubs. (If he plays a trump, declarer wins, crosses to the king of clubs and leads a club, ducking West's ten. East must overtake and lead a diamond to defeat the contract!)

Back to the table action again: Ware won the shift to the ten of clubs in hand and prepared to draw the last trump to reach this ending:

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

When the third spade is played, East must be careful to pitch a club (throw losers, keep winners!). If he doesn't, declarer plays a club from the board. East does best to win and give a ruff and discard. Declarer ruffs in hand and leads the king of hearts, which West must duck. However, South then ruffs a heart to dummy and leads a club and, in the two-card ending, East must concede a trick to a club in dummy.

Yet again, back to the table action, where East did pitch a club in the diagrammed ending. Ware led a heart to the king, West won and played the second club, and East won. But now, instead of giving a ruff and discard, East led a low club. Declarer let it run to the board and claimed. Ware might have done better not to play a heart at trick eight; if instead, he leads a club from dummy, East might well win and play a heart. That looks natural, but it endplays West in hearts either at this trick or on the next. Again, the ruff and discard is the necessary defence.

Some deals are not susceptible to an easy answer, and sometimes the best line in theory fails in practice. Take a look at six diamonds here.

Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

For the record, five pairs achieved extremely undeserving plus scores by making six spades or receiving a top club lead against six notrump – almost the only way to let it through. Twelve pairs played in partscores, not all of them in diamonds, and at least half the field missed slam altogether. Roughly 30 pairs made slam, while twice that number went down.

Say, as was the case at the table I was watching, that you play six diamonds on a heart lead. What is the best line? With one club and one heart trick, you can make your contract if you can take five diamonds and five spades. So, simply ruffing a heart in one hand or a club in the other gets you to 12 – but only if spades break.

A far better play on a heart lead is to duck, win the next, ruff a heart low, then play the king of spades, a spade to the ace and ruff a spade high. Now you draw trumps and claim if diamonds are 3-2 or the ten of diamonds falls singleton. This line requires no vicious

break in the majors, and a 75% chance in diamonds, which comes in at about 60%, but it fails when diamonds are 4-1, as they are here. If you followed this line, as did my teammate Pablo Lambardi, you are entitled to consider yourself unlucky.

But, was he really that unlucky? It was pointed out to me that it is better to start this way for the first four tricks. But now you play diamond ace and a diamond to hand. If trumps split, ruff out the spades as above. If they don't break 3-2, go to the king of diamonds and come back to the king of spades to draw the last trump and rely on spades breaking.



The Paul Street Invitational

John Carruthers, Kingsville, ON

Mark Horton, Shrewsbury, Shrops., U.K.

When the Spring Nationals in Columbus were cancelled, Paul Street had the idea to create a substitute team event for the Vanderbilt. After meeting some resistance to calling it the Vanderbilt Alt due to its nature as an invitational, the name Columbus Alt was conceived. Street enlisted the aid of bid72, netbridge online and BBO to assist, engaged Jan van Cleeff to produce a Daily Bulletin and invited seven top-class team to battle against his own troops.

There were two quirks in the competition: the first was that each team was allowed to have eight players – only UPMARK took advantage of that innovation; the second was that the teams could seat new players after 12 boards of each 24-board match – players who played the first 12 boards, however, could not change rooms if they played the second half of the match.

The teams were:

BLASS: Josef Blass, Sjoert Brink, Sebastian Drijver, Jacek Kalita, Michal Nowosadzki, Jacek Pszczola

LAVAZZA: Dennis Bilde, Norberto Bocchi, Philippe Cronier, Giorgio Duboin, Agustin Madala, Antonio Sementa

MELTZER: Billy Cohen, Nikolay Demirev, Rose Meltzer, Ron Smith

MOSS: Ishmael Del'Monte, Roger Lee, Eldad Ginossar, David Grainger, Brad Moss, Sylvia Moss

SPECTOR: Vincent Demuy, John Hurd, John Kranyak, Warren Spector, Gavin Wolpert, Joel Wooldridge

STREET: Thomas Bessis, Nicolas l'Écuyer, Cédric Lorenzini, Hugh McGann, Tom Hanlon, Paul Street

TULIN: David Bakhshi, Alon Birman, Dror Padon, Ricco van Prooijen, Stan Tulin, Louk Verhees

UPMARK: Peter Bertheau, Per Ola Cullin, Simon Hult, Marion Michielsen, Fredrik Nyström, Mikael Rimstedt, Ola Rimstedt, Johan Upmark

Just one of those heralded squads, UPMARK, was not a sponsored team, a sign of the times.

No one would have been surprised if those teams comprised the last eight of a major NABC knockout, although there were fewer Americans than might have been expected. A dozen countries were represented and there were more than two dozen World Champions in the ranks. The teams played a complete round robin with no playoff stage.

Here are some of the more spectacular deals, starting with one on which Hugh McGann displayed his superlative declarer-play skills.

Round 2. STREET v. UPMARK

Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Nyström</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Upmark</i>	<i>McGann</i>
—	INT ¹	Pass	2♥ ²
3♦	Pass	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♠
Pass	7♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. 14-16			
2. Transfer to spades			

Tom Hanlon knew that his hand, with the queen of spades and red-suit honours, was pure gold for Hugh McGann and raised to the grand slam. Fredrik Nyström led the three of diamonds, lowest from odd. At first blush, it looked to McGann that he'd need five red-suit winners to take care of his two losing clubs, so he ducked in dummy, taking the chance that Johan Upmark's singleton was not the king, and won with the jack in hand. When he led a spade to the queen, it was a bit of a shock when West discarded a diamond. McGann won with dummy's queen led the nine of spades next, holding the trick, followed by the ace and king of clubs, getting that piece of welcome news. Declarer cashed the ace and king of hearts, discarding a club from hand, and ruffed a heart. He led a club to the jack and led the thirteenth club from the dummy, leaving East trump coupé: if he had ruffed, McGann would have over-ruffed and drawn trumps; if East had declined to ruff, declarer would have discarded his second diamond and made the last three tricks with his ace-king-ten of spades.

That brilliancy was worth 13 IMPs against the six-club contract reached in the other room.

James Bond Will Return – Mark Horton

Fans of the James Bond franchise will recall that at the end of the credits for each movie up come the words of my title. The virus has temporarily deprived us of the latest offering, *No Time to Die*, postponed until November. It will be Daniel Craig's last outing as 007 and there is inevitably speculation as to who will replace him. If the role of 'M' can be taken by a

woman, then why not that of the man himself? Watching play in the match between Moss and Upmark in the Columbus Alt event, I noticed that Marion Michielsen's BBO handle is lady007. Judging by the way she approaches life at the bridge table, she would make a worthy successor to our hero. Take a look at this deal:

Round 3. Cullin v. Moss

Board 20. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>M. Rimstedt</i>	<i>Ginossar</i>	<i>O. Rimstedt</i>	<i>Del'Monte</i>
Pass	Pass	INT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

South led his heart. Declarer won with dummy's ace as North followed with the three. The jack of spades was taken by South's ace and he switched to the ten of clubs for two down, North winning with the ace and giving his partner a heart ruff.

West	North	East	South
<i>Grainger</i>	<i>Cullin</i>	<i>Moss</i>	<i>Michielsen</i>
Pass	Pass	INT	2NT ¹
Double	4♣	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. Minors			

Would four diamonds by East after West's second double have shown four-four in the majors? In any case, against four hearts doubled, South led the nine of clubs (Rusinow). North took the ace and switched to the four of diamonds. Declarer went up with the ace and tried the king of spades, continuing with a heart to the ace and the jack of spades. South won, cashed the king of diamonds and gave her partner a ruff, the king of clubs delivering plus 500.

East/West must have been shaken, not stirred.

The following deal from Round 5 produced some excitement, as do most seven-fives:

Round 5. LAVAZZA v. TULIN

Board 2. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Birman</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Padon</i>
—	—	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
6♣	Pass	Pass	Double!
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Did Dror Padon think that six clubs undoubled would be a bad result for his side? That it would have been unmanly to pass? One could argue persuasively that the old practice of saying “content” or the Australian “contract” in the passout seat would have been preferable. In any case, Madala passed, so Padon was soon chalking up plus 300 and 13 IMPs when his teammates played a prosaic four spades. The double gained him 2 IMPs at the risk of losing 11 or more, had Madala pulled to six spades.

MELTZER v. BLASS

West	North	East	South
<i>Smith</i>	<i>Nowosadzki</i>	<i>Cohen</i>	<i>Kalita</i>
—	—	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Double	Pass	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Double
6♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Jacek Kalita wondered how on earth East/West were going to make six spades when they had a club fit and both he and Nowosadzki had the hearts locked up. He soon found out. Ron Smith ruffed the ace-of-hearts lead, cashed the king of diamonds and played the ace and a spade to the jack. When spades behaved nicely and the diamonds stood up for four more tricks, Smith lost just a club for plus 1210. In this match as well, four spades was bid at the other table; 12 IMPs to MELTZER. Kalita’s double had cost just 1 IMP, but a larger measure of irritation.

In another match, the double cost much, much more...

UPMARK v. SPECTOR

West	North	East	South
<i>Hult</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Bertheau</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>
—	—	1♦	Pass
1♠	2♥	Pass	4♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Double
Redouble	Pass	Pass	Pass

John Hurd led a spectacular three of hearts and, when Joel Wooldridge played the king, Hurd hoped against hope that he had only three hearts. His hopes were dashed when Simon Hult ruffed and led a spade to the jack and another to the ace. Declarer lost just three club tricks for plus 880 and 11 IMPs when four spades was declared at the other table. True, Hult could have made two overtricks, but at the risk of the contract had spades been four-zero or three-one, with North ruffing the diamond king, leading a club through the dummy and ruffing the third club for one down. That outcome was extremely unlikely, but the potential gain was just 2 IMPs and he’d have been risking the contract (and his plus-11 IMPs) by cashing the diamond king before trumps were drawn.

In the fourth match, both tables had auctions not duplicated anywhere else...

STREET v. MOSS

West	North	East	South
<i>Del’Monte</i>	<i>Hanlon</i>	<i>Ginossar</i>	<i>McGann</i>
—	—	1♦	Pass
1♠	2♥	Pass	4♥
4♠	5♥	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

The defence did not find the double-dummy defence to beat five hearts three tricks, so had to settle for two spade tricks and two diamond tricks, plus 500 to East/West.

West	North	East	South
<i>l’Ecuyer</i>	<i>B. Moss</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>Grainger</i>
—	—	INT ¹	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
1. 10-13			

l’Ecuyer made ten tricks to lose 2 IMPs.

Round 7. UPMARK v. LAVAZZA

The match schedule worked out perfectly for the organisers and the spectators alike (although perhaps not for Paul Street, whose team languished in sixth place): the teams lying first and second in the standings met in the final round. Unfortunately for UPMARK, being 11.29 VP in arrears to LAVAZZA meant that they’d have to win the match by 29 IMPs to overtake Team Espresso. Still, the outcome was in their own hands, always preferable to depending on external factors.

Some players like to declare their 'ownership' of the table early on in a match. This proclivity does not come without risk, however. Norberto Bocchi wasted no time in stamping his authority over the Rimstedts at his first opportunity – after all, he thought, I'm old enough to be their father; they need to show some respect for their elders...

Board 1. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>M. Rimstedt</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>O. Rimstedt</i>	<i>Duboin</i>
—	2♥	2NT	Pass
4NT	Pass	6♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

If the heart and diamond holdings in the East hand had been reversed, the deal would not have been worthy of a second look. However...

West	North	East	South
<i>Madala</i>	<i>Berteau</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Upmark</i>
—	Pass	1NT ¹	Pass
2♣ ²	Pass	2♦ ³	Pass
2♠ ⁴	Pass	3♦ ⁵	Pass
3♥ ⁶	Pass	3♠ ⁷	Pass
4♣ ⁸	Pass	4♦ ⁹	Pass
4♠ ¹⁰	Pass	5♣ ¹¹	Pass
5♦ ¹²	Pass	5♠ ¹³	Pass
7♣ ¹⁴	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. 15-17
2. Stayman
3. No 4- or 5-card major
4. Game-forcing relay
5. I have a 5-card minor with a maximum
6. Relay
7. 5-card club suit
8. Establishes clubs as trumps
9. Control in diamonds
10. RKCB
11. 0 or 3 key cards
12. Do you have any extras?
13. Yes, in spades
14. Thank you, Partner!

That resulted in 11 IMPs for LAVAZZA, making UPMARK's task all but unachievable..

The Espresso Stars



These four Lavazza players, left to right, Norberto Bocchi, Antonio Sementa, Giorgio Duboin and Agustin Madala, with Dennis Bilde, pictured below, were the runaway winners of the first-ever Columbus Alt online tournament, envisioned by Paul Street as a replacement for the Vanderbilt Cup, due to have been played at the Spring NABC in Columbus, Ohio, but cancelled because of the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19.

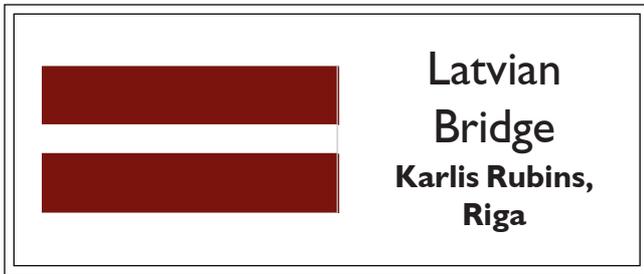


LAVAZZA never really let UPMARK into the match, eventually winning by 24 IMPs, 14.92-4.08 VP.

The final standings (decimals rounded):

Place	Team	VP
1	LAVAZZA	102
2	BLASS	87
3	UPMARK	81
4	TULIN	76
5	MOSS	69
6	STREET	68
7	SPECTOR	57
8	MELTZER	18

The Columbus Alt event was quite a success, considering the short notice on which it had been organised. Let's hope a second edition is not needed for Montréal.



A World Record?

What is the longest distance that a player has travelled to play one session in a local club event? I do not know, but I can be sure that Estonians Marko Tenn and Eino Vaher are heavy favourites because, last month, they travelled 244 kilometres from Tartu to Riga to play a 22-board regular evening club game.

Why? The story started last May, when Marko, Oleg Sirotin, Martins Lorencs and I were heading back to the Baltics from a bridge tournament in Poland. The trip was long, and soon we ran out of boards to go over, so we started to talk about the next World Championship in Wuhan, where the Latvian Mixed Team would take part. "You will finish below average," said Marko. I replied, "We will at least make the quarterfinal."

So, we made a bet: if the Latvian Mixed Team made the last eight, Marko had to come to play one Tuesday-night tournament in Riga. If we did not manage to finish among the top eight, I would have to go to Estonia and play in the Estonian National Mixed Championship with an Estonian woman, determined by Marko. We made it to the quarterfinals, after which I thought we should have made a bigger bet!

Anyway, Marko, together with Eino Vaher, came all the way from Tartu to play a 22-board tournament. As I was the organiser, I put them at the first table, planning to watch some boards. As it turned out, I was busy with other things, so could watch just one late board at the end, when the Latvian juniors Janis Ilzins and Martins Balodis reached Table 1.

With the Latvians red and the Estonians white, Marko Tenn, East, was looking at:

♠ A K Q 2
♥ Q J 4 2
♦ A Q 8
♣ Q 9

He opened one club (strong). His partner bid one diamond (negative) and Tenn continued with two notrump. Five diamonds from Eino Vaher was the next bid. Tenn bid a rather surprising five notrump (you do not play minor-suit games in matchpoints after you've travelled 244 km, do you?! Six notrump from Vaher was the final bid and Martins Balodis had to find a lead.

What would you lead, holding...?

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

Balodis choose a passive spade and, soon after, Marko claimed 12 tricks, when the Latvians could have taken the first seven! This was the full deal:

Board 18. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

Would a double from North have made a difference?

The Estonians were laughing – it was worth travelling 244 kilometres just for this one deal! They got a complete top, of course, but the Latvians were not disappointed, because at the end they deserved a good victory with 65%.

The full results are here: <http://bridgeresults.org/orig18pcup/s200225/res.php>

A Farsighted Defence

From February 21 to 23, the 18th Slava Cup tournament was held in Moscow. Sixty-four pairs participated in the event, which was won by Terje Aa – Allan Livgård from Norway. In the 12th round, my partner, Jelena Alfejeva, as East, executed a very farsighted defence. With everybody vulnerable, she picked up:

Board 29. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ K 4
♥ J 10 6 5 4
♦ 7 6
♣ Q J 8 5

Our North opponent, Olga Vorobeychikova opened one club (Polish), Alfejeva passed and Mikhail Rozenblum bid three notrump, which ended the auction. I led the king of hearts and this dummy appeared:

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

That seemed a good start! The main issue was to understand who had what and how to get five tricks. First of all, Rozenblum has a balanced 12-15 points and, almost surely, not four spades or hearts. It looks like he has honours in both majors and also the ace of clubs and the king of diamonds. If he has five diamonds, there is no chance, but if he has only three or four, then we have both hope and a problem – we can pitch one club on the third diamond, but will have to find a discard on the fourth. If we discard a heart – he can duck a spade or club! So, what to do? Lena found a solution: on the first heart she put the jack – that is the right card, because it shows the ten and helps us not to block the suit – if I have three hearts, I will continue with the queen, but if I have four, as on the actual deal, king-queen-nine eight – I will continue with the nine. That is how we can maintain our transportation and not block the suit. Also, declarer will not know our heart distribution.

Rozenblum took the second heart and played four rounds of diamonds. Alfejeva discarded a low spade and a low club. After the king and ace of clubs, Rozenblum took the spade finesse and we collected six tricks. This was the full deal:

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

Plus 200 gave us 10 IMPs on this board and helped us to finish fifth in this prestigious event. All the results are here: <http://www.bridgemoscow.ru/tournaments/results/slava20/slava20s.htm>

NEWS & VIEWS



COVID-19 & Bridge

The Asia Pacific and South American Championships have been cancelled; the European Championships have been postponed; the World and North American Championships are still pending at press time. It seems unlikely that either of them will proceed, especially as huge sporting events such as the Summer Olympics,

Euro 2020, the Open, PGA and US Open golf tournaments, and the French Open and Wimbledon tennis tournaments have all been postponed or cancelled outright, as well as a host of lesser events. In addition, sports leagues and entertainment venues all over the world are on hiatus or closed.

ACBL Board Reorganization

A motion to reorganise the ACBL Board from the current 25 Districts into 13 Regions has passed its first reading. To be approved and put into practice, the motion must pass a second reading with a two-thirds majority, then gain approval from the Board of Governors. If passed, the new BoD will consist of 13 Regional members.

KBA & BAMSA

The KBA Pro-Am had two aims – one was to fundraise for the work being done, and the other was to raise the profile of bridge. *Keep Bridge Alive* is the fundraising name, but moving forward in terms of promoting the game beyond the bridge community, the new name: *Bridge: A MindSport for All (BAMSA)* will be used. This new name will cover research, policy and practice initiatives from the project whilst also promoting mind-sports and the fun and enjoyment that bridge can and does bring to many.



Correspondence

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

Dear John:

Here is some news about our next South American Youth Championship Trials, to Salsomaggiore we hope ... but perhaps not.

Since Lima (the South American Championships) has been suspended, the only way that the South American Federation could hold our Youth Trials is online. Marcelo Caracci, Gustavo Chediak, Jorge Campdepadros (President of the Youth Committee) and I are currently writing the regulations. The NPCs will have a very important, expanded function, safeguarding security, for example.

South America organized its first official Championship in 1948 in Buenos Aires, and Ernesto d'Orsi organized our first Junior Championship in July, 1979 in São Paulo. Our zone continues to be a pioneer in the organization of bridge events.

Attached is a photo with the 1979 winners; Marcelo Lerner was the NPC of the Argentine team that won the event.



Photo, left to right: Ricardo Angeleri, Ariel Stainoh, Eduardo Braceras, Jorge Saubidet, Marcelo Lerner (NPC) Ernesto Muzzio and Osvaldo (Valdi) Merdinger.

Dear bridge friends (*Sjoert Brink writes on BridgeWinners, abridged here*),

During these terrible times, with the horrible virus, nobody can leave their house. In those times we, as bridge players, would all like to see world-class players online so at least we can watch them. Therefore I would like to organise the 2020 WORLD INDIVIDUAL BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIP from April 14-18, 2020.

In this event, the top 32 players in the world (in my opinion) will be invited. Because I understand that to play with them would be great, 16 seats will be open for auction. Everybody in the world can make an offer to play in this event; the 16 highest bidders can claim their seat. (My guess is that 1000 Euro might be enough. All the money from the auction will go to charity to help eradicate, cure and halt coronavirus.

Because the tournament would be held on BBO, everybody can see the greatest players in the world competing with each other. My suggestion is that there might be a small fee to watch to cover the costs. The schedule would be four days (47 4-board rounds) where all players play with and against all other players twice. On the last day, the top 16 would go to a grand final. (15 rounds of four boards).

At present (March 27), it is just an idea. I have not yet proposed it to BBO or the players. I just hope everybody would like to help the world.



www.ibpa.com

This Bulletin: You can access an electronic copy of this Bulletin at www.ibpa.com/663mm.pdf

Subscriptions: You can apply to join the IBPA or renew your subscription on the website by clicking on the appropriate button on the top of the homepage.

Members' Addresses: You can find fellow members' contact details at: www.jannersten.org. If you have forgotten your access code: thorpe.katie@gmail.com

The 2018 Handbook: To access the electronic version of the Handbook, go to the IBPA website: www.ibpa.com

Personal Details Changes: Whenever your contact details change, please amend them as appropriate in the database found at: www.jannersten.org or inform the Membership Secretary, Katie Thorpe: thorpe.katie@gmail.com

World Bridge Calendar

Please check to ensure that any tournament you plan to attend is still going ahead.
Many tournaments are being postponed, assigned new dates or cancelled outright due to the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19.

2020

Apr 10-12	Easter Congress	Singapore	Cancelled
Apr 11 -13	Reims Bridge Festival	Reims, France	Postponed
Apr 13-19	Abano Festival	Padua, Italy	Cancelled
Apr 15-22	APBF Congress	Perth, Australia	Postponed
Apr 22-23	Baltic Cup	Tallinn, Estonia	Postponed
Apr 23-26	Tallin Bridge Festival	Tallinn, Estonia	Cancelled
Apr 23-26	Shree Cement Championship	Kolkata, India	Postponed
Apr 24-27	Wellington Bridge Congress	Wellington, NZ	Cancelled
Apr 24-May 3	Lambourne Bridge Festival	St. Helier, Jersey Is.	Cancelled
Apr 25-May 3	Turkey Summer Championships	Antalya, Turkey	Cancelled
Apr 27-May 3	International Festival	Arachon Bay, France	Cancelled
Apr 30-May 3	58 th 1 st May Tournament	Pula, Croatia	tihana@pilar.hr
Apr 30-May 3	Slavonice Cup	Slavonice, Czech Republic	www.czechbridge.cz
Apr 30-May 4	Australian Autumn Nationals	Adelaide, Australia	Cancelled
Apr 30-May 5	Russian Cup	Chelyabinsk, Russia	www.bridgecup.ru
May 1-3	German Bridge Trophy	Berlin, Germany	Cancelled
May 1-4	Barrier Reef Congress	Yeppoon, Australia	Cancelled
May 5-14	USBF Open Trials	Schaumburg, IL	Postponed
May 6-12	12 th SBU Overseas Congress	Majorca, Baleiric Is., Spain	Cancelled
May 7-11	Schapiro Spring Fours	Warwick, UK	Cancelled
May 15-24	Festival de Juan-les-Pins	Juan-les-Pins, France	Cancelled
May 16-23	70 th South American Festival	Lima, Peru	Postponed
May 16-23	22 nd Deutsches Bridgefestival	Wyk-auf-Führ, Germany	Cancelled
May 16-23	USBC Mixed Trials	Schaumburg, IL	Postponed
May 25-31	Sofia Bridge Festival	Sofia, Bulgaria	www.sofiabridgefestival.com
May 26-Jun 1	USBC Senior Trials	Schaumburg, IL	Postponed
May 27-Jun 8	Canadian Bridge Week	Niagara Falls, ON	www.cbf.ca
May 28-31	White Nights in St. Petersburg	St. Petersburg, Russia	www.whitenights/spbbridge.ru
May 28-Jun 1	52 nd Graz Bridge Festival	Graz, Austria	Cancelled
May 28-Jun 2	USBC Women's Trials	Schaumburg, IL	Postponed
May 29-31	Andrzejka Zurka Memorial	Krakow, Poland	www.zurek.mzbs.pl
May 29-Jun 1	Balaton Cup	Lake Balaton, Hungary	revai@durostone.hu
May 30-Jun 4	International Festival	Porto-Vecchio, Corsica, France	www.bridgeclub-portovecchio.com
Jun 4-8	Victor Champion Cup	Melbourne, Australia	Cancelled
Jun 9-13	Indian Summer Nationals	Bengaluru, India	https://bfi.net.in
Jun 10-14	39 th Jordan Bridge Festival	Amman, Jordan	jor_bridge@Yahoo.com
Jun 17-27	55 th Euro National Team Champs.	Madeira, Portugal	Postponed
Jun 19-25	Tunisian International Festival	Hammamet, Tunisia	https://bridgescanner.com
Jun 23-Jul 5	38 th Albena International Bridge Festival	Albena, Bulgaria	www.albenabridge.org
Jul 1-12	Biarritz International Summer Festival	Biarritz, France	www.festival-bridge-biarritz.com
Jul 2-12	Kongres Brydzowy	Slawa, Poland	www.pzbs.pl
Jul 3-5	Kuching Bridge Congress	Kuching, Borneo, Malaysia	https://kuchingbridgecongress.com
Jul 3-12	Dansk Bridgefestival	Svendborg, Denmark	www.bridgefestival.dk
Jul 4-9	International Bridge Festival	Ajaccio, Corsica, France	https://bridgescanner.com
Jul 9-16	54 th Tel-Aviv International Festival	Tel-Aviv, Israel	http://ibf-festival.org
Jul 10-12	Merit Sveaas International	Lillehammer, Norway	http://www.msibt.org
Jul 10-19	Hangon Bridge Viikko	Hanko, Finland	https://bridgescanner.com
Jul 11-23	Australian National Championships	Adelaide, Australia	www.abf.com.au
Jul 15-19	Inter-City Championships	Hong Kong, China	https://hkintercity.org/2020
Jul 16-26	ACBL Summer NABC	Montréal, Québec, Canada	www.acbl.org
Jul 16-26	Festival Mondial de Bridge	Deauville, France	www.mondial-deauville-bridge.com
Jul 17-19	Goa Bridge Festival	Goa, India	https://bfi.net.in
Jul 24-26	Summer Congress	Dublin, Ireland	www.cbai.ie
Jul 24-26	PA Winter Tournament	Port Alfred, South Africa	www.sabf.co.za
Jul 24-Aug 2	26 th Swedish Bridge Festival	Örebro, Sweden	www.svenskbridge.se
Jul 25-30	Chairman's Cup	Örebro, Sweden	www.svenskbridge.se
Jul 31-Aug 9	18 th World Youth Championships	Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy	www.worldbridge.org
Jul 31-Aug 9	Kongres Baltycki	Sopot, Poland	www.pzbs.pl
Aug 2-8	Wachauer Bridge Week	Mautern, Austria	www.bridgeaustria.at
Aug 21-30	Grand Prix Warszawy	Warsaw, Poland	www.pzbs.pl
Aug 21-Sep 4	16 th World Bridge Games	Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy	www.worldbridge.org
Sep 4-16	59 th International Bridge Festival	Pula, Croatia	www.pulabridgefestival.com
Sep 11-16	FISU World University Championships	Bydgoszcz, Poland	www.fisu.net
Sep 28-Oct 3	18 th HCL International Championship	New Delhi, India	www.hcl-bridge.com
Oct 14-23	Australian Spring Nationals	Sydney, Australia	www.abf.com.au
Oct 23-27	47 th Vilnius Cup	Vilnius, Lithuania	www.bridgescanner.com
Oct 30-Nov 14	Hainan Bridge Festival	Sanya, Hainan, China	wangjij_bridge@yahoo.com
Nov 2-8	Madeira Bridge Festival	Funchal, Madeira, Portugal	www.madeira-bridge.com
Nov 26-Dec 6	ACBL Fall NABC	Tampa, Florida	www.acbl.org