



BULLETIN

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Editorial

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

The FIGB's handling of 'il affare Fantoni' has been nothing less than a slow-motion trainwreck. Outrage and injured innocence quickly morphed into damage control and face-saving.

Last month, we reported on the actions of the Italians' opponents and the fallout from those actions. Much more was to follow. The best place to keep abreast of developments is the great website run by Laura Camponeschi: <https://neapolitanclub.altervista.org/>. The Neapolitan Club has gathered all the relevant material there. It has also presented a terrific summary of the events, slightly edited here and published with the Neapolitan Club's permission:



Recap and Updates of the Italian Open Trials Saga

All the documents referred to can be found at the Neapolitan Club website.

On **April 29, 2021**, the President of the Italian Bridge Federation (Federazione Italiana Gioco Bridge – FIGB), Francesco Ferlazzo Natoli, announced: "If International Championships for National Teams are held in 2021, the National Team will be selected as per 2020 arrangements. For the Open Team, players informally selected by the late Maria Teresa Lavazza have been invited to confirm their availability. At the moment only Lauria & Versace and Madala & Duboin have agreed (not Bocchi & Sementa). If tournaments are held in 2021, we will decide whether and how to select another pair."

On **August 3, 2021**, the FIGB announced the Trials for the selection of the Italian Open Team that will participate in the 45th World Bridge Team Championships, 2022 Bermuda Bowl (Salsomaggiore Terme, March 27-April 9, 2022).

On **September 1, 2021**, the FIGB posted the list of participating teams. The FIGB announced that participation in the Italian Trials will be subject to the approval of the FIGB Credentials Committee. Carlo Bortoletti (a team captain) sent a letter to the Italian Federation stating: "I told Fantoni that if he got selected (unlikely, but possible) and, if this could not be resolved by the institutions, I would suggest him to step back. I share this because I believe that knowing Fantoni's plan can support a more positive atmosphere around the selections."

Continued on page 18 in NEWS & VIEWS...

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USBF Open Team Trials

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The Trials for the USBF Open Team Championship, which would be used to qualify two teams to Salsomaggiore Terme, Italy, for the 2022 Bermuda Bowl early next year, were to be held in three phases, the first two online in September and the third, face to face, in October.

Twenty-one teams entered the fray. In the first stage, they played a complete round robin of seven-board matches over three days (September 13-15) to produce 12 teams for Stage Two. After a day off, the 12 remaining teams played a double-round robin of seven-board matches (September 17-19). Every member of all teams had to play at least one of the Stage-Two sets against each other team.

After that exercise, the top eight teams would play in two-day 120-board knockout matches (October 5-10), with the winner being designated USA1.

To determine who would be USA2, the USBF would use a double-knockout format, with each losing team in all the USA1 KO matches being allowed a second chance. Thus, the USA1 quarterfinal losers would play to determine two teams to knock heads with the USA1 semifinal losers. That four-team KO winner would play the loser of the USA1 final over 120 boards (October 11-12) to determine USA2. Whichever team became USA2 would have played 718 boards over 14 days. Phew! In contrast, the EBL teams played 30 10-board matches over six days.

In an event such as this, with as little left to chance as was humanly possible (kudos to the USBF for the format), it's a little easier than usual to determine who would be the favourites. That favourite would be NICKELL (Eric Greco/Geoff Hampson, Ralph Katz/Frank Nickell, Bobby Levin/Stevie Weinstein), with three of the top pairs in the world. Half a dozen teams could lay a claim to be second favourites. Some of

those teams were weakened by the absence, in this Trial, of 'the usual suspects', players or pairs who, for one reason or another (mostly Covid-related), were absent, notably Peter Boyd, Vincent Demuy, John Diamond, Bob Hamman, Brian Platnick, Steve Robinson, Eric Rodwell and Howard Weinstein, all of whom had been World Championship medallists.

Perhaps FLEISHER (Marty Fleisher/Chip Martel, Joe Grue/Brad Moss, Daniel Korbel/Roger Lee) had a slight edge over the other contenders to be second favourites, even though Korbel/Lee was a relatively new partnership.

Interlude: From 1991 to 2006, I was the manager of the Canadian Junior Bridge Programme. Since then, I have always had a fondness and an avuncular feeling for 'my' Juniors. Many of them (Geoff Hampson, Gavin Wolpert, David Grainger, and Daniel Korbel), played in this USBF Trial. During the World Junior Team Championships, I also became friendly with many USA and world Juniors such as Brad Moss, Joel Wooldridge, Debbie Rosenberg, Ishmael Del'Monte, John Kranyak and Joe Grue, all of whom also played here. Please forgive me if I unabashedly cheer for them.

No endeavour other than bridge in the USA produces such a wide variety of nationalities in their Trials for the World Bridge Team Championships. Here we had players from Canada, China, Georgia, India, Israel, New Zealand, Pakistan, Romania, Scotland and Sweden competing to represent the USA in a World Championship. Fantastic! Indeed, the USA is still a melting pot, at least in bridge.

We shall report on the first two, round-robin, stages this month and the knockout stage, which extends past our publication deadline, next month. The deals are authored by JC unless otherwise noted.

Team rosters, hand records and match results may be found at usbf.org. Detailed bid-by-bid and card-by-card records of all matches can be found at: kibitz.realbridge.online.

ROUND ROBIN I

Day I

RR I - Match I. LEBOWITZ vs. FLEISHER

Board 5. Dealer North. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Grue	Mahmood	Moss	M. Rosenberg
—	1♣	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Rosenberg led his club. Mahmood played three rounds of the suit, Rosenberg ruffing the ten and dummy overruffing. Moss led a spade to the king, drew trumps, led a diamond to the ace and ruffed a diamond. That provided him with a complete count, so he could claim, splitting out the spades three-three and losing just the ace of spades for plus 420.

West	North	East	South
Lebowitz	Korbel	A. Grossack	Lee
—	1♣	1♥	3♦ ¹
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Weak

Whatever you think of the method, Lee's choice to employ it on this deal, vulnerable against not was, at best, dubious, at worst, madness. Lebowitz led the queen of hearts and shifted to a spade. Lee ducked in dummy, so Grossack won with his queen and shifted to a trump. That allowed the defence to win two spade tricks, three heart tricks and two diamond tricks for down three, minus 800. That was 9 IMPs out of thin air to LEBOWITZ. Unfortunately, those were the only IMPs LEBOWITZ won in the match, against the 28 won by FLEISHER.

RRI - Match 5. NICKELL vs. BRAMLEY

(See top of next column.)

The West and North bidding left East guessing about who had which major – they both could have had hearts for all he knew. It's not often that an 11-card spade fit goes undiscovered.

Board 30. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Woolsey	Weinstein	Bramley	Levin
—	—	Pass	Pass
2♦ ¹	4♦ ²	Pass	5♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Weak-only Multi
2. Leaping Michaels: diamonds and either major, forcing

Bramley led a trump. Weinstein won in hand and led three rounds of hearts, overruffing Bramley's trump in the dummy. A spade ruff, heart ruff, spade ruff and a trump to the jack led to an almost-perfect elimination in this position:

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

Thanks to the ruff by East of the third round of hearts, declarer was able to ruff out the hearts, draw trumps and keep a trump in each hand. When Weinstein led a club and Woolsey followed with the six, declarer could cover with the seven and claim; plus 400. Had West put in the nine, the king would have forced the ace and the jack would then have become a winner, so declarer was going to make it anyway on the lie of the cards, no matter what the defenders did.

West	North	East	South
Hampson	Weichsel	Greco	Lall
—	—	Pass	Pass
2♠	4♦ ¹	4♣	5♦
Pass	Pass	5♠	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	6♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Leaping Michaels: diamonds and hearts, forcing

Greco (East) led a spade. Weichsel ruffed and gave it a good shot, drawing trumps while cashing a high heart, then leading a heart to the jack. He needed three discards for clubs and must have thought he had it made when the heart jack held. Alas, East showed out on the third heart; declarer ruffed a heart and led a club to the king; one off, minus 50 and 10 IMPs to NICKELL. That 10 IMPs was the only big swing in the match as NICKELL won, 12-3.

RRI - Match 5. SCHIRESON vs. SIMSON (Subeck)

Board 31. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

	♠ J 10 ♥ A Q 9 3 2 ♦ J 7 ♣ 9 8 7 5		
West	North	East	South
<i>Schireson</i>	<i>Schermer</i>	<i>D. Rosenberg</i>	<i>Koneru</i>
—	—	—	Pass
1♦	1♠	2♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening leads are always important, but sometimes they are more important. When Max Schireson was declarer in the SCHIRESON/SIMSON match, Schermer knew the spade stopper was with West and accordingly led a heart, hoping to put Koneru on lead to put a spade through declarer's hand. Koneru won the heart, continued hearts, his side collecting five tricks in the suit...and then...shifted to the jack of spades through Schireson's king to cash seven tricks there. In the end, Schermer and Koneru defeated the game eight tricks! Poor Schireson could not get in until trick 13!

West	North	East	South
<i>Simson</i>	<i>Watson</i>	<i>Aker</i>	<i>Joel</i>
—	—	—	Pass
1NT	3♠	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

At the other table, where Will Watson was on lead against three notrump, he had no reason not to lead fourth from his longest and strongest, the spade eight. Simson scooped up his king, cashed five diamonds and four clubs and succeeded with an overtrick. That was 13 IMPs to SIMSON, enough for them to lose the match by just 1 IMP to SCHIRESON, 23-22.

RRI – Match 6. NICKELL vs. FLEISHER

Board 41. Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Grue</i>	<i>Greco</i>	<i>Moss</i>	<i>Hampson</i>
—	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Double	Pass	2♥
Double	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

On the obvious heart lead, four spades looks pretty hopeless, made worse on the actual lie of the cards. Hampson had had enough by the time Moss raised to game, and he lowered the boom. The first three tricks went heart king: three, ten, ace; heart jack: queen, seven, six; heart two: eight, nine, spade three. At trick one, South had told North he had the nine of hearts and not the jack; at trick two South had told North he preferred diamonds to clubs (with the six of hearts rather than the four); and at trick three, North had told South he preferred clubs to diamonds (with the two of hearts rather than the five). This was expert defensive play at its finest, on three routine tricks.

Grue ruffed the third heart and led the nine of diamonds to the jack and queen. Hampson led the jack of clubs, ducked all around. When he then shifted to the fourth round of hearts, the deal was an open book to all. Grue ruffed in the dummy, discarding a club, and led the king of diamonds. Hampson covered with the ace, which Grue ruffed. Declarer led a spade to the king and ruffed another diamond, felling the ten and setting up the eight. When Grue led the ace and ten of spades, putting Hampson in, South had to give dummy a diamond trick. Nevertheless, that was still two off for minus 500.

At the other table, the bidding was much more straightforward and much less revealing:

West	North	East	South
<i>Levin</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>	<i>Fleisher</i>
—	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Although the East hand was a normal opening bid for Moss, it was a dead minimum for Weinstein. Levin just

bid what he thought he could make and Fleisher had no reason to demur. Here, the queen of hearts (Rusinow) went to the ace and Levin led the diamond nine to the king and ace. Two more rounds of hearts put declarer in. He led a spade to the king and a low club, ducking the jack. South exited with the queen of spades to the ace. West tried a club to the ace, but South ruffed, cashed the jack of spades and got out with his last heart. Declarer had lost five tricks already and had to lose two more clubs to North; down four, minus 400. Levin was surprised and delighted to learn that that had won him 3 IMPs.

The match score was NICKELL 6, FLEISHER 3.

RRI – Match 7. NICKELL vs. HILL

Board 43. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Dwyer	Greco	Huang	Hampson
—	—	—	1♦ ¹
Pass	1♠	Pass	INT
Double	Redouble	2♣	Double
Pass	Pass	Redouble	Pass
2♦	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 2+ diamonds 10+-15

The auction went very smoothly for North/South, not quite as much for East/West. West's final call was misjudged. On repeated diamond leads, Dwyer was held to the top diamonds and the ace of hearts for minus 1100: diamond to the nine and king; spade to the queen; diamond to the jack and ace; spade to the nine; diamond queen; spade to the ace (heart pitch from declarer); heart ducked to the queen; spade king (heart pitch from declarer); heart to king. At that point, the defence had only winners remaining.

West	North	East	South
Levin	Grainger	Weinstein	Wooldridge
—	—	—	1♣ ¹
Pass	1♥ ²	Pass	1♠ ³
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Could be 2 clubs if 4=4=3=2
2. 4+ spades
3. 2/3 spades with 11-13 balanced

Levin was not tempted to enter the auction with a one-club opener on his right. The defence led hearts at every opportunity, scoring two tricks in each red suit. That was plus 400 for Grainger/Wooldridge, but a loss of 12 IMPs, a dreadful start to an important match. The next board was even worse for HILL.

Board 44. Dealer West. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Dwyer	Greco	Huang	Hampson
Pass	1♠	3♦	4♣ ¹
5♦	6♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. Fit			

On the ace-of-diamonds lead, Greco made all the tricks; plus 1460.

West	North	East	South
Levin	Grainger	Weinstein	Wooldridge
Pass	1♠	3♦	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT ¹
Pass	5♠ ²	Pass	6NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. RKCB
2. 2 with the spade queen

With an extra trump, Grainger showed the queen. Desirous of protecting the diamond king and, knowing he was missing a key card, Wooldridge tried six no trump.

Holding the spade queen and four diamonds, Levin was pretty certain he knew the layout, so he led the jack of clubs. Declarer won with dummy's queen and led to the ace of spades, then to the king, gathering the queen. At that point he had 11 tricks and a finesse of the jack of hearts would have provided a twelfth if East had held the queen. However, Wooldridge tried to develop a three-suit squeeze without the count, which might have worked had West held both the queen and ten of hearts or any four.

So, declarer just ran the spades, reaching this position before the last one was cashed:

♠ 3
 ♥ A 9 6 5 3
 ♦ —
 ♣ 3

♠ —
 ♥ Q 7 2
 ♦ 6
 ♣ 10 9 8

♠ —
 ♥ 10 8 4
 ♦ A Q J 10
 ♣ —

♠ —
 ♥ K J
 ♦ K
 ♣ A K 5 4

Weinstein, East, had discarded the three of diamonds, encouraging, at his first opportunity, then his remaining club (completing the count) to ensure that Levin knew what was going on in that suit. Levin could also infer from declarer's line of play that Weinstein held the tenthird of hearts, otherwise declarer would have played on hearts. Similarly, Weinstein knew that Levin had to hold the queen of hearts. The defence thus came under no real pressure: Levin was able to discard a low heart with no problem. Wooldridge was held to his 11 tricks for minus 100 and 17 IMPs to NICKELL.

Board 45. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ K 5
 ♥ 10 9 8 6 5
 ♦ 6
 ♣ A K J 5 4

♠ Q 7 6 2
 ♥ J 7 4 2
 ♦ K 10
 ♣ Q 9 2

♠ 9
 ♥ Q 3
 ♦ Q J 9 8 7 5 4 3
 ♣ 6 3

♠ A J 10 8 4 3
 ♥ A K
 ♦ A 2
 ♣ 10 8 7

West	North	East	South
Dwyer	Greco	Huang	Hampson
—	1♥	3♦	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	5NT ¹
Pass	6♣	Pass	Pass

1. Pick a slam

Six clubs is an excellent contract, requiring no more than one black-suit loser. Huang led the nine of spades to dummy's jack, which held the trick. Greco banged down (figuratively, of course) the ace and king of clubs for plus 1370.

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

1. RKCB

2. 2 key cards, no spade queen

One could say that six spades also depends on losing no more than one black trick, but that likelihood is greater in a spade contract. Levin led the king of diamonds. Wooldridge won, ruffed a diamond, cashed the king of spades, led a heart to the ace and cashed the ace of spades. Learning that he had a spade loser, he cashed the king of hearts and forced out the queen of spades. Levin exited with the nine of clubs to the ace and declarer ruffed a heart. On the run of the spades, Levin was show-up squeezed in the round suits for plus 1430 and a 2-IMP gain. In this way, Wooldridge would also have succeeded with a doubleton queen of clubs offside.

Wooldridge considered cashing both hearts after the diamond ruff, then crossing to the spade king to lead another heart in an attempt to set up the suit to avoid a club loser. That line risked having the second heart ruffed before he knew the spade layout and also having West overruff the third heart if declarer ruffed with the eight, or creating an extra trump loser if he ruffed with the ten. All things considered, Wooldridge's play looks best.

RRI – Match 7. NICKELL vs. HILL (Subeck)

Board 49. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

♠ A K J 7 6
 ♥ K 10
 ♦ 6 4 2
 ♣ A Q 8

♠ 9
 ♥ Q 9 7 5 4 2
 ♦ K J 9 8 7
 ♣ K

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

♠ 8 4 3
 ♥ A J 3
 ♦ A Q 5
 ♣ 10 9 3 2

West	North	East	South
Levin	Grainger	Weinstein	Wooldridge
—	1♠	Pass	INT
2♠ ¹	Double	Pass	Pass
Redouble ²	Pass	3♣	3♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass

1. Hearts and a minor

2. Longer hearts

Joel Wooldridge took advantage of an informative auction to take 11 tricks in his three-notrump contract. Levin led the seven of diamonds. Wooldridge won the ten with the queen and played a heart to the ten, then cashed dummy's ace of spades and king of hearts. Wooldridge led a diamond to his ace and cashed the ace of hearts. A spade was ducked to Weinstein's ten. East exited with a club to West's king and dummy's ace. Wooldridge cashed the king of spades and conceded a spade to East's queen. With only clubs left, Weinstein was forced to concede the last three tricks to dummy. That was a nice series of endplays for plus 460.

West	North	East	South
Dwyer	Greco	Huang	Hampson
—	1♣ ¹	Pass	1♥ ²
2♦	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pasa	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. 16+ HCP			
2. <5 spades, 8+ HCP			

In the other room, the auction was less informative and misled declarer. Kevin Dwyer led the five of hearts. Geoff Hampson won with the jack and finessed the jack of spades, losing to Shan Huang's queen. Huang returned a diamond. Hampson rose with the ace, thinking that West held six diamonds.

Hampson led a club to the king and ace in dummy and cashed the ace and king of spades, the king of hearts and the queen of clubs before exiting with a club to East's jack. If East had had no more diamonds, he would have been forced to concede two tricks to declarer's ace of hearts and ten of clubs after taking the ten of spades. Unfortunately for declarer, Dwyer held only a five-card diamond suit. Huang cashed the ten of spades and played a diamond to Dwyer. Three notrump was defeated two tricks for 11 IMPs to HILL.

NICKELL won the match 29-20. That was a great result for HILL, having been down 29-0 after two boards.

At the close of the first day's play, DONNER (Ishmael Del'Monte/Finn Kolesnik, Gary Donner/Sandra Rimstedt, Radu Nistor/Iulian Rotaru) led the way on 100.11 VP, followed by FLEISHER on 98.63. As yet, there were no surprises.

DAY 2

RRI – Match 14. SPECTOR vs. NICKELL

Board 92. Dealer West. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Kranyak	Greco	Wolpert	Hampson
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♣ ¹	Pass	4♠ ²
Pass	5♦ ³	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Diamond splinter, no extra values promised
2. Key-card ask
3. 2 key cards, no heart queen

Kranyak led a club so Hampson could cash the two high trumps and claim 12 tricks for plus 1430.

West	North	East	South
Levin	Bathurst	Weinstein	Hurd
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT ¹
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠ ²
Pass	5♥ ³	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Serious slam try
2. Key-card ask
3. 2 key cards, no heart queen

Levin led a deceptive four of diamonds. Hurd won with the queen, led a club to the ace and tried to cash the ace and king of diamonds. Levin ruffed and Hurd overruffed in the dummy. Declarer led the ten of clubs and, if the play record is to be believed, Weinstein, with the jack-nine remaining, followed with the nine. Hurd played low and Levin won with the king. West shifted to the jack of spades, won by the queen. None of the defensive shenanigans mattered on the actual lie of the cards. It would have been difficult to find a way to go down; plus 1430 for a push.

Board 98. Dealer East. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Kranyak	Greco	Wolpert	Hampson
—	—	Pass	Pass
Pass	1♣ ¹	Pass	1♦ ²
Pass	1♥ ³	Pass	1♠ ⁴
Pass	2♥ ⁵	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. 16+ HCP
2. 0-7 HCP
3. Natural or bid balanced
4. Forced
5. Heart one-suiter, minimum

Wolpert made a lucky lead of the jack of clubs. How could a club into declarer's ace-queen be lucky? Greco won with his queen of clubs and led the queen of diamonds to the dummy, pitching a club on the second high diamond. He then took the percentage play, running the nine of hearts to Wolpert's queen. Declarer

subsequently lost three spades tricks for one off, minus 100.

West	North	East	South
Levin	Bathurst	Weinstein	Hurd
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Weinstein preferred the ten-of-diamonds lead. What was Bathurst to do? He won in dummy, pitched a club, took the club finesse and laid down the top trumps, an approximately 17% chance that came home for plus 620 and a 12-IMP win for SPECTOR, good enough for a 20-0 win.

After two of the three days' play in the first round robin, SPECTOR (Kevin Bathurst, John Hurd, John Kranyak, Warren Spector, Gavin Wolpert) led the way on 209.97, followed by HILL (Kevin Dwyer, David Grainger, Joyce Hill, Shan Huang, Joel Wooldridge), with 175.08, then NICKELL (166.74) and FLEISHER (159.49).

Day 3

RRI – Match 18. SPECTOR vs. KOLESNIK (Subeck)

Warren Spector brought this deal to our attention.

Board 22. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Gumperz	Bathurst	Clayton	Hurd
—	—	3♣	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Perhaps influenced by Hurd's failure to employ Leaping Michaels, Bathurst contented himself with simple preference. Gumperz led the ace of clubs. When that drew the king from East, West shifted to a spade. Hurd won, cashed the ace of hearts, ruffed a heart and led the ace-queen of spades, ruffed and overruffed. Another heart ruff brought down the king, so declarer cashed the ace of diamonds, ruffed a spade, drew trumps and claimed 12 tricks, plus 420.

West	North	East	South
Spector	A. Kolesnik	Wolpert	Chiu
—	—	3♣	4♦ ¹
Pass	5♣	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♦	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Diamonds and a major, 5+/5+

Spector led the ace and another club, ruffed in hand by declarer. Chiu cashed the king of diamonds and the king of spades and, fearing bad breaks everywhere from the auction, played the six of diamonds and finessed the nine! A spade was ruffed with the queen of diamonds and, when West followed suit, Chiu pulled the last trump with the ace and claimed: plus 920 and 11 IMPs. Nevertheless, SPECTOR won the match, 21-17.

RRI – Match 19. LEVINE vs. HILL

Board 32. Dealer West. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Passell	Dwyer	Lair	Huang
Pass	INT	Pass	2♥ ¹
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Spades

Lair led the jack of diamonds to the king and ace. Passell returned a diamond to the queen. Dwyer took his immediate *a priori* 25% chance (it was better than that with no high-heart lead) with a heart to the queen. Lair won and, thinking declarer may have had king-queen-ten in the suit for that early heart play, exited with the queen of clubs. Dwyer won, drew trumps and eliminated the minors, then led a heart. That was not good enough since West could win with the king, swallowing his partner's jack, and cash the ten – down one for minus 50.

West	North	East	South
Grainger	Meckstroth	Wooldridge	Garner
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♣ ¹
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Limit raise

The first two tricks were the same here. Meckstroth led a third diamond, overruffing West's ten of spades

with the jack. Declarer drew trumps, eliminated clubs and led a heart, ducked to the jack. That was more than the defence could handle – plus 420 and 10 IMPs – and enabled a 12-12 draw.

If one assumes that East would always lead a heart holding the ace and king, Dwyer's play improves to 33%. That's better than Meckstroth's odds. However, Meckstroth could still have adopted Dwyer's line when he first led a heart. He did not, and who can argue with Meckstroth's table presence, even online?

RR1 – Match 21. ROSENTHAL vs. LEVINE

The following deal cost ROSENTHAL qualifying (I'm sure there were no other boards they could have improved upon!). What would you lead from the following East hand? You may have your choice of auctions...

Board 48. Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ Q 8 7
♥ K 9 7 5 2
♦ 7
♣ Q J 10 3

Table 1

West	North	East	South
Berkowitz	F. Kolesnik	Campanile	Del'Monte
Pass	INT ¹	Pass	2NT ²
Pass	3♣ ³	Pass	3♥ ⁴
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. 14-16			
2. Puppet Stayman			
3. No 5-card major			
4. 4 spades, not 4 hearts			

Table 2

West	North	East	South
Rotaru	Willenken	Nistor	Ginossar
Pass	INT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	
1. 14+-17			

This was the full deal:

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

Zur-Campanile, at Table 1, with little information about the North hand's distribution, led a heart: minus 400. Nistor, at Table 2, knowing that North held four hearts, led the queen of clubs for plus 50. Those 10 IMPs turned a 10-1 IMP win into an 11-10 IMP loss.

After the first round robin, FLEISHER led the way, finishing 17 and 3, almost three full matches (55 VP) clear of the rest of the field. No other team won more than 13 matches. There were two mild surprises: ROSENTHAL (David Berkowitz/Migry Zur-Campanile, Eldad Ginossar/Chris Willenken, Andrew Rosenthal/Aaron Silverstein) and WILDAVSKY (Gary Cohler/Eric Robinson, Doug Doub/Adam Wildavsky, Bill Pollack/Rozanne Pollack), who finished thirteenth and fourteenth respectively. These were the qualifiers:

1. FLEISHER	301.26
2. BISHEL	246.22
3. HENNER	235.05
4. LEVINE	231.41
5. DONNER	228.60
6. NICKELL	225.28
7. GU	224.71
8. SPECTOR	223.62
9. HILL	222.77
10. BRAMLEY	218.97
11. SIMSON	218.39
12. LEBOWITZ	216.80

Round Robin 2

One curious aspect of the Trials, to me (JC) at least, was that there was no carryover from the first round robin to the second. It seemed that there should have been some small reward for doing well. Nevertheless...

Day 4

RR2A – Match 2. NICKELL vs. SPECTOR

Board 13. Dealer North. Both Vul.

♠ K 10 4
♥ K 10 7 5
♦ 8 5
♣ A K 6 3

♠ J 7 5 3
♥ 9 8 6 2
♦ J 4
♣ J 7 5

♠ Q 6
♥ Q J 4
♦ A 10 9 7 3
♣ Q 9 2

♠ A 9 8 2
♥ A 3
♦ K Q 6 2
♣ 10 8 4

West	North	East	South
Spector	Nickell	Kranyak	Katz
Levin	Bathurst	Weinstein	Hurd
—	1♣	1♦	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Both Wests led the jack of diamonds. Both Easts ducked and encouraged, Kranyak with the three and Weinstein with the seven. Both declarers won with their queen.

Katz ran the nine of spades at trick two, losing to the queen. Kranyak cashed the ace of diamonds and continued with the ten. Katz won and exited with his fourth diamond, pitching a heart and a club from the dummy, hoping to exert some pressure on the defenders. West discarded clubs on these. When East cashed the fifth diamond, the pressure exerted was on the dummy. Katz released the ten of spades, after which Kranyak could get out with a spade and there was no ninth trick; minus 100.

Hurd made a more successful play than Katz, leading to the king of spades at trick two, then continuing with the ten of spades at trick three. When the queen appeared, he had his ninth trick for plus 600 and 12 IMPs, part of a 36-0 win.

RR2A – Match 4. NICKELL vs. LEBOWITZ

Board 24. Dealer West. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Katz	Z. Grossack	Nickell	K. Rosenberg
2♠	Double	Pass	3♦ ¹
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Lebensohl: shows values

Kevin Rosenberg could not know that Zachary Grossack held such a good hand, so could not risk a pass of two spades doubled. Ralph Katz, warned off the spade lead, led a heart for a swift one off, plus 50.

West	North	East	South
Mahmood	Greco	M. Rosenberg	Hampson
2♦ ¹	Double ²	Pass ³	Pass
2♠	Double ⁴	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Weaker Multi than an opening Weak 2M
2. 13-15 balanced or any 18+
3. Bid your suit; says nothing about East's hand
4. Takeout, 18+ (otherwise, pass)

The timing of the auction provided Geoff Hampson with all the information he needed to pass two spades doubled. As I wondered how the defence could arrange to stop

the club ruff in the dummy AND make four spade tricks, Greco and Hampson quickly showed how, with brilliant defence. Greco led the ace of clubs, as Hampson encouraged with the three. North shifted to the king of spades, then the eight of hearts. Mahmood won with the jack in dummy (three from Hampson, reverse count and attitude) to lead a club. Hampson rose with the jack (nine from declarer, ten from North, remainder count) and cashed the queen of spades, getting the eight of clubs from Greco. Hampson got out with the ten of hearts to declarer's king and a suit-preference queen from Greco. Mahmood led the ten of spades to Hampson's ace and, after a diamond to Greco's ace, Hampson received his heart ruff. With a club still to come, that was plus 500 and 11 IMPs to NICKELL.

Both pairs of the LEBOWITZ team had a dreadful match, resulting in a 39-6 win for NICKELL.

RR2A – Match 5. DONNER vs. BRAMLEY

Board 29. Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

Table 1

West	North	East	South
Woolsey	F. Kolesnik	Bramley	Del'Monte
—	Pass	1♥	Pass
2NT ¹	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass			

1. Invitational-plus with 3 or more hearts

Bramley won Del'Monte's heart-five lead (three, queen, ace) and led the four of diamonds to the three, ten and jack. How should the defence handle the spades? Kolesnik led the five (third and lowest) to the six, jack and two. South cashed the ace. Curtains! Plus 620 for BRAMLEY.

Table 2

West	North	East	South
Donner	Weichsel	Rimstedt	Lall
—	Pass	1♥	Pass
INT ¹	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass			

1. FIR

On the same lead, Rimstedt won with her ace of hearts, led a diamond (seven, ace, nine) to dummy and took a

spade pitch on the ace of clubs, then led the diamond ten (jack) and played the king on Weichsel's spade-five switch. Lall won with his ace and led another trump. Declarer was left with a losing spade and a losing diamond for one off. Minus 100 meant 12 IMPs to BRAMLEY.

What went wrong at each table? At Table 1, should Kolesnik have shifted to the seven of spades? Should Del'Monte have won with the jack of spades and led another heart? At Table 2, should Rimstedt have played the way Bramley did? If she'd not had the nine of spades, would that have made a difference? (The defence could have given declarer a nasty guess by leading a spade quack from quack-nine-low if she'd not had the nine of spades.) The correct guess to these problems can be the difference between winning and losing a match or even an event.

Board 31. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Woolsey	F. Kolesnik	Bramley	Del'Monte
1♥	3♠	4♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Bramley led a trump. Kolesnik won and led a club: king, low, ace! Uh oh. Plus 790 to DONNER.

West	North	East	South
Donner	Weichsel	Rimstedt	Lall
—	—	—	Pass
1♥	3♠	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

On this auction, how would you have played four hearts if the defence had led the king of spades to the ace (ten from declarer) and another spade to the queen (psychic suit preference?), then shifted to the ten of diamonds? Donner did as many of us would have done: he rose with the ace. He recovered by running the ten of hearts for plus 420; 15 IMPs to DONNER.

In a high-scoring affair, DONNER beat BRAMLEY 38-22.

RR2A – Match 6. FLEISHER vs. Nickell

Board 38. Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Moss	Hampson	Grue	Greco
Weinstein	Lee	Levin	Korbel
—	—	3♥	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Here we had two of the best pairs in the world (all World Champions) on defence against four spades (we'll get to the bidding in a moment).

Brad Moss led the king of clubs (king from ace-king and others) and received the three from Joe Grue (upside-down count and attitude) and the four from Geoff Hampson. With no spades, Grue did not want to encourage Moss to play three rounds of clubs, so gave false count. Moss knew that another club was cashing (Grue would not have played the three from seven-five-three-two, whether he'd had a trump or not), so took it at trick two, receiving the eight, two and seven. When Moss cashed the king of clubs and Grue followed with the two, ostensibly showing an odd number, all was revealed: had he really held the five-three-two, Grue would have played the five at trick one, so Moss 'knew' Grue had just two clubs, but no trumps for the third round of the suit. Moss shifted to the queen of diamonds. Grue won that with his ace and knowing there were no more tricks available in the minors, led a heart as his only hope; Moss ruffed for one off. Was that defence brilliant, workmanlike or merely routine? Before you answer, let's look at what happened at the other table...

Stevie Weinstein led the ace of clubs (ace from ace-king and others), receiving the deuce from Bobby Levin (discouraging, but with no reference to count). Weinstein shifted to the king of diamonds, receiving the nine, encouraging, from Levin. When Weinstein followed up with a diamond continuation, Korbel was home and FLEISHER had won 10 IMPs. Would Levin have played the two from seven-five-three-two of clubs at trick one? Like Grue, he had given false count/attitude with no trumps and the more-likely holding might have been seven-three-two or five-three-two. I was certain this

Continued on page 14...



IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra



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1065. Dealer North. Neither Vul.

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

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

While most players would double the opening one club bid with his hand, West was one of those players who did not like to conceal a five-card major. Accordingly, he overcalled one heart. The bidding continued along fairly standard lines from there, although not everyone would have bid four spades over three spades.

West deduced that North/South were bidding game on thin values and had no reason not to lead the queen of trumps. This was taken in dummy with the ace and the ace of hearts was led at trick two. Declarer crossed to his hand with a low trump to his king, noting the four-one break. As a result of this development, declarer saw that he needed to play the club suit without loss and, to do that, he would have to be careful not to block the suit.

After ruffing a heart in dummy, declarer led dummy's ten of clubs to his ace. Noting West's jack of clubs, declarer ruffed his last heart in dummy. Next he led the nine of clubs and ran it when East played low. Declarer placed West with four-five in the majors. He saw that West had three vacant spaces for the queen of clubs compared to East's six (his known cards were one spade, four hearts and two clubs). So, running the nine was a

4:1 chance on this assumption and the Principle of Restricted Choice.

When the nine of clubs held, declarer continued his good work by playing the eight of clubs to his king. The defenders were now stymied. If West never ruffed a club, declarer would make two trumps, one heart, two heart ruffs and five clubs. On the other hand, if West ruffed a club, declarer would get the trick back via an extra trump trick.

Note that if declarer had failed to unblock the clubs he would be stuck in dummy on the fourth round of clubs allowing West to win the diamond off dummy and claim the rest of the tricks for the defence.

1066. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the queen of clubs, which pleased declarer, because if it was from a sequence he would take at least three club tricks. On this assumption, declarer saw that all he needed to do was hold his trump losers to one.

So, after winning the opening lead in hand with the king of clubs, declarer led a low trump to dummy's ace. When East followed with the king of trumps it appeared that he now had ten tricks – six trumps, a diamond and three clubs. Declarer was about to play a second trump

when a thought struck him: "What if West had led from club shortage?"

Declarer saw that one play was to lead dummy's two of trumps to his queen and then take the diamond finesse. This would succeed if West began with either the jack of clubs or the king of diamonds. Declarer was about to put that plan into effect when he saw that there was a line that guaranteed the contract if the king of trumps was a true card.

At trick three, declarer called for a low heart from dummy. East won the trick with the ten of hearts and continued with the ace of hearts. Declarer ruffed and led a low club from hand. As he could not profitably ruff this, West discarded a diamond. Dummy's ace of clubs won the trick (as it would if West had followed with a low club). Declarer was now in control: he exited with the ten of clubs to East's jack. East could do no better than play a heart. Declarer ruffed and led his last club: he lost only a trump, a heart and a club.

1067. Dealer West. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
2♥	3NT	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

North/South were a new partnership and had not discussed this auction. However, they had the rule: "In an undiscussed situation, assume a bid made is natural." As a result, South had an easy call of four spades and North had just as easy a pass at his second turn.

West led the queen of hearts. Declarer saw that he had ten sure tricks if trumps were two-one. So, after winning the first trick with dummy's king of hearts, declarer cashed dummy's ace of trumps.

Once West discarded a heart at trick two, the contract was in trouble. The problem was that declarer could not afford to have dummy's ace of hearts ruffed by East. So, declarer played the king, ace and queen of clubs, throwing a diamond from hand. In order to cut East/West's transportation, declarer next led dummy's remaining club and was relieved when East followed. Now he could safely throw his remaining diamond from hand on dummy's last club.

After winning the trick with the ten of clubs, East tried to reach West's hand by exiting with a low diamond.

However, declarer was in control – he ruffed and led a low trump to dummy's queen and East's king. After ruffing the diamond continuation, declarer drew East's remaining ten of spades with his jack and claimed ten tricks: five trumps, two hearts and three clubs.

1068. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

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

The auction saw North make a forcing Bourke Relay of two diamonds, discovering that North held six clubs and at most two spades. After a key-card enquiry of four-notrump North punted the grand slam in clubs, hoping that the spades could be established.

West led the ten of hearts. If clubs were three-two, declarer saw that he would make the contract by establishing tricks in spades with ruffs unless spades were five-zero. So, after winning the first trick with the king of hearts, declarer cashed his ace and king of trumps. When West discarded a diamond, the contract was suddenly in danger.

The only hope was a trump coup, which meant that declarer needed to ruff two cards in hand to reduce his trump length to match East's length there. Thus, declarer led the jack of spades at trick four. West covered with the queen and declarer made no mistake: he took the ace-king of spades and ruffed a spade in hand, East discarding a heart. Now South crossed to dummy with a heart to the ace, relieved to see East follow suit.

Next declarer played an established spade. As it would be hopeless to ruff, East discarded a diamond and declarer threw the jack of hearts from hand. Declarer next ruffed a heart in hand, with East discarding a second diamond. Now declarer was almost home: he cashed the king and ace of diamonds to reduce everyone to two cards. A spade from dummy saw East ruff with the nine of trumps and declarer overruffed with the ten. The queen of trumps was declarer's thirteenth trick.

deal would come up for a post-mortem, but it did not (Weinstein took the blame). Any one for ace asks for attitude and king asks for count?

Back to the bidding...perhaps I'm getting old, but three hearts seems crazy to me, vulnerable against not, with that ratty suit, a good-four card side suit, an ace and a void. Ask yourself, before you commit such an act, how you'd feel if it went pass, pass, double. Not all pass after that double yet, but simply pass, pass, double. You'd be ill, waiting to see what West did. In any case, fully seven of the 12 players who held this hand opened three hearts; three passed, one opened two hearts and one player from Cuckoo-land (Adam Grossack) opened four hearts! He received plus 50 defending against four spades for his sins. I don't suppose that will prevent him from being a recidivist. His brother Zachary, at the other table, raised South's three-spade overcall to game and redoubled when West chanced a double. The defence played two rounds of diamonds too early, so Zach scored up plus 880. Quite a combo, those Grossacks!

Of the ten times the deal was played in spades, declarer made 10 tricks six times and nine tricks four times. The other two times the deal was played, East/West declared in five diamonds doubled. One North held declarer to 11 tricks by leading a trump; the other led a spade, allowing an overtrick.

Gavin Wolpert earned "Best in Show" by passing, then making a fit-showing jump of John Kranyak's two-diamond overcall. Viz.:

West	North	East	South
<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Lall</i>
—	—	Pass	1♠
2♦	3♦	4♥ ¹	4♣
6♦	Pass	Pass	6♣
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. Hearts and diamonds

Kranyak could almost 'see' Wolpert's hand when he bid six diamonds: at most one spade and ace-to-four trumps. In six spades doubled, East/West found the heart ruff to hold declarer to nine tricks for plus 500. That won them 14 IMPs when John Hurd was one of the successful declarers in four spades (doubled in his case). That matched the Grossack's 14-IMP win for plus 880/plus 50.

SPECTOR won all seven matches on Day 4, and had a huge lead of almost 2 full matches, 115.89 VP of a possible 140, more than 16.5 per match.

Day 5

RR2B – Match 13. NICKELL vs. SPECTOR

There were some wild goings-on in this match, the second match of the second Round Robin (Phase 2). Confused? Me too. Remember, there were 12 teams in Round Robin 2. Those teams played a double round robin, so this is the second time NICKELL and

SPECTOR met in the second round robin. With that sorted...

Board 15. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

Prudence is a word seldom used in connection with top-level bridge today...

West	North	East	South
<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Levin</i>	<i>Wolpert</i>	<i>Weinstein</i>
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	1NT	2♥	2NT ¹
Pass	3♦	Pass	Pass
Double	3♠	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. A wish to bid, with fewer values than a direct suit-bid would have shown

It could be argued that all four players made at least one bid that was indiscreet. Kranyak led the ten of hearts. Weinstein won and led a club, queen, king, ace. West continued with the eight of clubs so that Wolpert could ruff and cash his high hearts. On the fourth round of the suit, Weinstein ruffed with the ace of spades and led the king and another for two down, minus 500. That was much better than three diamonds doubled would have been.

West	North	East	South
<i>Hampson</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Greco</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
—	—	—	1♠
2NT ¹	Pass	3♦	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Minors

Hampson was luckier than Weinstein had been, not running into the misfit. Hurd led two high spades and shifted to a heart. Bathurst won with his ace and played a club. Greco won and ruffed a club, cashed one heart for a club pitch and ruffed the jack of hearts. When he led a trump from the dummy, Bathurst split his honours, so Greco won with the king and led the queen of hearts for another club pitch, then led the fifth heart in this position, having lost just three tricks and with North reduced to trumps:

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

On the last heart, Greco threw his club loser; Bathurst ruffed and led the jack of diamonds, making just one more trump trick for one off, minus 100. That, however, was good enough for a 12-IMP gain when added to the 500 at the other table.

A ton more IMPs went SPECTOR's way when Hampson and Greco had a misunderstanding about the meaning of a pass...

Board 19. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Kranyak	Levin	Wolpert	Weinstein
—	—	—	3♣
Pass	3NT	4♣ ¹	Double ²
4♠	5♣	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

1. Majors
2. Desire to bid on

White against red, Weinstein had a rock-crusher by today's standards. Levin had enough hearts to hope that the suit would not be led in three notrump. At the vulnerability, Wolpert doubled five clubs to warn Kranyak off bidding more. The issue was that East had no defence and West had no cards. Weinstein made an easy overtrick for plus 650, thinking he might have won a few IMPs.

West	North	East	South
Hampson	Bathurst	Greco	Hurd
—	—	—	3♣
Pass	4♣	Double	Redouble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

It appears that Hampson's thinking was that, on the bidding, Greco had not even promised four spades, let alone five, and it would have been silly to choose spades when Greco might have had five cards in either red suit. From Greco's viewpoint, Hampson had three suits to bid at the four level and four notrump, five clubs and five notrump to show various takeouts. Thus, the only way for them to be able to defend four clubs redoubled was for Hampson to pass. In any case, their trains were going to different stations. Hurd made the same 12 tricks as had Weinstein, but his resulting score was plus 1120. Instead of winning 6 IMPs, Weinstein was surprised to learn he'd lost 10.

In an entertaining, but one-sided, seven-board match, SPECTOR dominated NICKELL, 42-3.

RR2B - Match 14. LEVINE vs. SIMSON

Board 26. Dealer East. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Casen	Meckstroth	Krekorian	Garner
Passell	Schermer	Lair	Koneru
—	—	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Despite the total number of high-card points in the East/West hands, three notrump required some effort. Both Souths kicked off with a club, the three from Koneru and the six from Garner. The jack forced the ace in both cases and declarer played the ace and king of diamonds (the percentage play). There, their paths diverged.

Lair played another diamond to Koneru's jack. The club six was won by the king in dummy (five from North, eight from East). Lair played the fourth diamond to Koneru's queen. The nine of clubs then went to the queen and ten (Lair discarded a heart from the dummy). From Schermer's point of view, the missing club was the seven. Who had it? Had South led the nine from an original holding of nine-seven-six-three or had Lair falsecarded from an original holding of ace-ten-eight-seven? These are situations in which unfamiliar

partnerships (as Koneru/Schermer were) go astray. North led the five of clubs to declarer's seven. Lair gratefully claimed nine tricks, making three tricks in each of hearts, diamonds and clubs; plus 600.

Koneru could have protected Schermer from making the error he did. Schermer had played the jack of clubs at trick one, marking the ten in Lair's hand.

After three rounds of diamonds, Schermer had followed to the second club with the four, marking him with four clubs, not five, with which he would have followed with a remainder-count higher card. Had they been a regular partnership, Koneru would have known that Schermer would not have woodenly followed to the second club trick with his lowest card (and perhaps he should have known, or at least assumed so anyway).

So, knowing that East had the ten-low in clubs remaining, South should have shifted to a heart, playing East for the only chance, a singleton in the suit. That would have left the defence in charge, with a spade, a heart and a club trick to come.

At the other table, Krekorian played off a high heart before continuing with diamonds. Garner won with the jack and continued with the nine of clubs, clearing up the layout of the suit for everyone. Declarer won with the king in dummy and played three rounds of hearts, leading to this *rara avis* end-position:

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

Garner made an excellent, partner-protecting, play here. He cashed the ace of spades: jack, nine, ten. When he then took the queen of diamonds (nine from dummy, spade queen from North), poor declarer was squeezed. After his club discard, Garner led his club and Meckstroth won the last two tricks with the queen and five of clubs. Plus 200 and plus 600 meant 13 IMPs to LEVINE, who desperately needed them if they were to go through to the knockout stage. LEVINE 41 – SIMSON 11.

Day 6

RR2B Match 16 – FLEISHER vs. SPECTOR

Board 39. Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Kranyak	Moss	Wolpert	Grue
—	—	—	Pass
1♠	Pass	INT ¹	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥ ²	Double
2♠	Pass	3♣ ³	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
5♣	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. FIR
2. Artificial, FIR
3. Sets trumps

On a good day, the opponents would take the ace-king of hearts and you'd set up spades or cross-ruff your way to 11 tricks. "Nicely done," teammates would say.

This, however, was not a good day. Moss led the four of hearts. Grue took the ace and king and shifted to the diamond five: queen, king, ace. Kranyak cashed the jack of hearts, led the queen of spades to the ace and, unsuspectingly, ruffed a spade with the three of clubs. Grue over-ruffed and led another diamond. Declarer ruffed but could not avoid the loss of two more tricks – he could choose which they were: two spades, two clubs or one of each; down three, minus 800.

West	North	East	South
Korbel	Bathurst	Lee	Hurd
—	—	—	Pass
1♠	Pass	INT ¹	Double
2♠	Pass	Pass	Pass
1. FIR			

One sometimes wonders, from the auctions, if both tables were playing the same boards. Korbel made five trump tricks (with diamond ruffs), one heart trick and the ace of diamonds for one off, minus 100. He was chuffed to win 12 IMPs on the deal. That was the main blow in a 26-11 FLEISHER win.

RR2B - Match 17. FLEISHER vs. NICKELL

Board 43. Dealer South. Neither Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Moss	Weinstein	Grue	Levin
—	—	—	Pass
1♠	2♣	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

I. Wide-range

The wide-range range raise to four spades after the limited one-spade opening worked wonders. Weinstein led his singleton jack of diamonds. Moss won with the ace (with the nondescript seven from Levin) to lead the jack of spades. Weinstein hopped up with the ace and shifted to the queen of hearts. Moss won, led a spade to the king and set up the fifth diamond for a heart pitch; plus 420.

West	North	East	South
Katz	Fleisher	Nickell	Martel
—	—	—	Pass
1♠	2♣	2NT ¹	3♣
3♠	5♣	Pass	Pass
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

I. Constructive, mixed, 4-card spade raise

The mixed spade raise allowed Martel in with a lukewarm club boost. That turned Fleisher's crank and Nickell led an exceedingly unlucky eight of spades, allowing Fleisher not only an entry to the dummy but also to avoid a spade loser. The successful club finesse meant just two red-suit losers for plus 550 and 14 IMPs to FLEISHER.

Board 47. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Moss	Weinstein	Grue	Levin
Katz	Fleisher	Nickell	Martel
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♣	4♥	Pass
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♣
Double	Pass	Pass	Pass

Fleisher's club opening could have been two cards in length, Weinstein's, three.

Grue led the six of diamonds. Weinstein won and led his heart. Grue won and continued hearts to the king. Weinstein led a spade to the ten and queen, ruffed the diamond return, led the ace of spades, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond and ruffed a spade. Moss was down to his four trumps. When declarer led a diamond from the dummy, Moss ruffed with the seven; Weinstein overruffed, led a club to the ace and led a diamond for the *en passant* play in trumps. Down one, minus 200.

At the other table, the tempo was slightly different when Nickell found the lead and continuation to beat five clubs two tricks. He started with the ace of hearts and shifted to a diamond. Absent an immediate entry to the dummy, Fleisher played the ace and another spade. Katz overtook Nickell's queen with the king (also the only winning play) and shifted to the ten of clubs. Fleisher ducked in hand and won the ace in dummy. He then ruffed two diamonds in hand and two spades in the dummy, cashing the king of hearts along the way. Declarer had reached:

♠ — ♥ — ♦ — ♣ Q J 6 ♠ — ♥ — ♦ — ♣ K 8 7	♠ — ♥ Q J 9 ♦ — ♣ — ♠ — ♥ — ♦ Q 9 7 ♣ —
--	--

Declarer was in the dummy, South. When he led a diamond, Katz could ruff with the seven and make the last two tricks with the king-eight to beat the contract two tricks for plus 500 and 7 IMPs. That helped FLEISHER to a 28-8 win in the match.

RR2B - Match 22. HENNER vs. LEVINE

The following deal determined who would qualify between LEVINE and HENNER. Had Meckstroth misguessed clubs at trick one, HENNER would have qualified handily for the knockout stage and LEVINE would have been eliminated. In the event, LEVINE squeaked in by 0.19 Victory Points, after having been in or near last place for much of the second round robin.

Board 80. Dealer West. EW Vul.

♠ J 10 8
♥ A 7 5 4
♦ A 10 4 2
♣ J 9

♠ 7 5 2
♥ 9 6
♦ 8 5 3
♣ Q 10 6 4 3

♠ 9 6 4 3
♥ 10 2
♦ K Q J 9 7
♣ A 8

♠ A K Q
♥ K Q J 8 3
♦ 6
♣ K 7 5 2

West	North	East	South
Passell	Henner	Lair	Ivatury
Pass	Pass	1♦	Double
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♦ ¹
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			
I. Splinter			

Lair led the ace and another club. Henner won with dummy's king and ruffed a club, overruffed; plus 450.

West	North	East	South
Zolotow	Meckstroth	Tebha	Garner
Pass	Pass	1♦	Double
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♦ ¹
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	
I. Splinter			

Tebha led the eight of clubs! Meckstroth considered for a while, then played...the king! When he led another club from the dummy, Tebha won with the ace and shifted to a trump. Meckstroth drew a second round of trumps and claimed; plus 980. That was enough for LEVINE to win narrowly, 16-15.

These were the final standings, with the top eight teams going through to the knockout phase:

1. SPECTOR	301.26
(Bathurst/Hurd, Kranjak/Spector/Wolpert)	
2. BRAMLEY	259.50
(Bramley/Woolsey, Lall/Weichsel)	
3. NICKELL	247.26
(Greco/Hampson, Katz/Nickell, Levin/Weinstein)	
4. FLEISHER	239.87
(Fleisher/Martel, Grue/Moss, Korbel/Lee)	
5. HILL	238.32
(Dwyer/Hill/Huang, Grainger/Wooldrige)	
6. GU	222.56
(Ao/Gu, Sheng/Wei)	

IBPA Annual General Meeting

Online, Saturday, December 11

Location	Time	Date
San Francisco	07:00	Sat. Dec. 11
New York, Toronto	10:00	Sat. Dec. 11
Buenos Aires, Rio	12:00	Sat. Dec. 11
London	15:00	Sat. Dec. 11
Amsterdam, Oslo	16:00	Sat. Dec. 11
Tel Aviv, Cape Town	17:00	Sat. Dec. 11
New Delhi	20:30	Sat. Dec. 11
Beijing	23:00	Sat. Dec. 11
Tokyo	24:00	Sun. Dec. 12
Sydney	02:00	Sun. Dec. 12
Auckland	04:00	Sun. Dec. 12

7. DONNER	213.97
(Del'Monte/Kolesnik, Donner/Rimstedt, Nistor/Rotaru)	
8. LEVINE	210.14
(Garner/Meckstroth, Lair/Passell, Levine/Wold)	
<hr/>	
9. LEBOWITZ	199.95
(A. Grossack/Lebowitz, Z. Grossack/ K. Rosenberg, Mahmood/M. Rosenberg)	
10. HENNER	195.92
(Ganzer/Goodman, Henner/Ivatury, Tebha/Zolotow)	
11. SIMSON	192.15
(Aker/Simson, Casen/Krekorian, Koneru/Schermer)	
12. BISHEL	165.61
(J. Bishel/T. Bishel, Clerkin/Hinton/Lyon)	

The Conditions of Contest state that knockout-phase qualifying teams of fewer than six players may augment to five or six with USBF-eligible players if both of the following additional conditions are also met:

- (i) the augmentation does not weaken the team, and
- (ii) the augmented players have not played on any other team in this Trial.

BRAMLEY augmented with Mike Becker/Michael Kamil to replace the ill Bob Hamman and GU added J.J. Wang, while neither SPECTOR nor HILL augmented.

The KO bracket, determined through "Positioning Points" (earned in the Vanderbilt, Spingold and Reisinger, as well as USBF Trials) was determined as follows: (1)NICKELL vs. (8)DONNER; (2)FLEISHER vs. (7)GU; (3)SPECTOR vs. (6)LEVINE; (4)BRAMLEY vs. (5)HILL.

NEWS & VIEWS



The FIGB Credentials Committee met on **September 2 and 5, 2021** to assess the teams' registrations for the World Championships selection. The Credentials Committee did not find any eligibility issues. However, the Committee disqualified the BORTOLETTI team because, in case of victory, there would have been insurmountable issues for the Italian Open Team in the Bermuda Bowl.

This Decision of the Credentials Committee was released on **September 6, 2021**.

Also on **September 6, 2021**, the FIGB announced the following Programme: There are four participating teams and a single phase will be scheduled.

Still on **September 6, 2021**, Carlo Bortoletti (team captain) filed a letter to the FIGB: "If the Committee does not immediately review its arbitrary decision to exclude my team, I will for sure get the lawyers on the case."

On **September 9, 2021**, the six players in Bortoletti's team filed an appeal to the FIGB Federal Tribunal.

The first hearing of the FIGB Federal Tribunal was held on **September 15, 2021**. The Tribunal ordered that Bortoletti's team be readmitted as a precautionary measure.

In the evening of **September 15, 2021**, a few hours before the matches were to begin, the FIGB announced a change: Bortoletti's team was included in the competition. Following the Tribunal's order, a new Programme was posted: the Trials will consist of two phases and there are five participating teams.

The first phase of the Italian Trials started on **September 16, 2021**. Before the event started, four captains (Bortoletti, Burgay, De Michelis, Vinci) wrote a letter to the Italian Federation asking to postpone the competition.

On **September 16, 2021**, the FIGB announced: "Following the withdrawal of the Vinci and Zaleski teams, the first phase of the Trials for the Italian National Open was not held. The other three teams move to the final phase (scheduled in Salsomaggiore Terme from October 14 to 17, 2021).

On **September 17, 2021**, Luca De Michelis wrote a letter to Italian Federation: "The captains (including me) requested to postpone the event to mid-October, due to the sudden change in format, following the readmission of Bortoletti's team. I insist that the captains' request be accepted by the Federation and that the teams who dropped out be re-admitted to the second phase."

On **September 18, 2021**, Lorenzo Lauria posted his report, in diary form, at *Neapolitan Club*.

On **September 21, 2021**, the Public Prosecutor, Sergio Bianchi, sent an appeal to the National Sports Judge requesting the following: (1.) to scrap the results of the first phase of the Open Trials for the Bermuda Bowl 2022, which took place from September 16 to 19, 2021, and (2.) to re-play the first phase of the Open Trials, to determine the finalists for the same competition.

Following this appeal, on **September 22, 2021**, the National Sports Judge has scheduled a hearing for September 29 in order to hear the captains (Carlo Bortoletti, Leandro Burgay, Luca De Michelis, Francesco Saverio Vinci, Romain Zaleski), the FIGB Secretary (Gianluca Frola) and the Chief Director (Antonio Riccardi).

On **September 22, 2021**, Vinci's Team filed an appeal to the FIGB Federal Tribunal.

On **September 29, 2021**, a hearing before the National Sports Judge was held, following the Public Prosecutor's request to reject the results of the September 16 Open Trials. Attending were:

- National Sports Judge Riccardo De Lodi
- Public Prosecutor Sergio Bianchi
- Team Captains Carlo Bortoletti, Leandro Burgay, Luca De Michelis, Francesco Saverio Vinci and Romain Zaleski
- FIGB President Francesco Ferlazzo Natoli
- FIGB Secretary Gianluca Frola
- Chief Tournament Director Antonio Riccardi

A second hearing of the FIGB Federal Tribunal was held on **October 5, 2021**. The outcome of the hearing was expected to be published by **October 7, 2021**.

The FIGB Federal Tribunal meeting to discuss the Vinci appeal will be held on **October 12, 2021**.

The second phase of the Italian Trials is scheduled to be held from **October 14 to 17, 2021**.

On **October 7, 2021**, the Italian Federal Tribunal (Antonio Feleppa, Gerardo Laguardia, Simone Rona) has approved the appeal submitted by Carlo Bortoletti and his team has been readmitted to the Open Trials for the Italian Bermuda Bowl team. The Bortoletti team consists of Carlo Bortoletti, Dano De Falco, Paolo Clair, Giovanni Genova, Fulvio Fantoni, and Massimo Moritsch.

On **October 7, 2021**, the National Sport Judge, Riccardo de Lodi, has accepted the appeal filed by the Public Procurator Sergio Bianchi. The decision was:

- The results of the first phase of the Open Trials for the Bermuda Bowl 2022, which took place on the 16th of September, are considered invalid.
- The team captained by Romain Zaleski is considered withdrawn.
- The team captained by Francesco Saverio Vinci is readmitted.
- The Italian Bermuda Bowl Trials will take place from October 14 to 17 with these teams: Bortoletti, Burgay, De Michelis and Vinci.

Institute for Bridge Arbitration

Mark Friedlander, Deerfield, IL

<http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/institute-for-bridge-arbitration/>

Because of its potential importance to the continuation of honest and fair tournament bridge, we present this article in full, unedited. It was published by Bridge Winners on September 27, 2021. – Ed.

The debacle that ensued when Fulvio Fantoni played on the Italian team at the recent European Qualification event for the 2022 Bermuda Bowl underscores the urgency of establishing a system for the adjudication of cheating accusations that is fair, efficient, and above all, respected for the knowledge and expertise of its decision-making process. If there is one thing that the vacation of the Fantoni-Nunes conviction by the Court for Arbitration of Sport in Switzerland has taught the bridge community, it is that the ultimate decisions in this kind of dispute have to be made by bridge experts with at least as much experience as the player or pair accused of cheating.

The national bridge organizations try to achieve this by resolving these accusations in disciplinary committee hearings, typically with some expert players among the deciding tribunal. But no such disciplinary hearing is immune from appeal outside the national bridge organization, and whether that appeal is to a court or to arbitration, it will be decided by judges or arbitrators who are not bridge experts – because there are almost no judges or arbitrators who are bridge experts.

That has to change – or else the bridge community will continue to see travesties of justice because non-bridge-playing judges and arbitrators simply are not capable of understanding the nuances of the game sufficiently to make sound decisions when disputes about cheating at bridge are brought before them. Something has to be done. Either:

(i) to teach judges and arbitrators enough about bridge so that they can successfully understand the “bridge evidence” that they will be hearing (probably a near-impossible task), and to make sure that these trained decision-makers are the ones chosen to hear disputes about cheating at bridge (also extraordinarily difficult to achieve); or else

(ii) to recruit and train existing bridge experts to function as judges or arbitrators (a far easier task than the reverse), with procedures being established so that they can serve as judges or arbitrators in bridge cheating disputes (which requires some creativity and thinking outside the box but is possible).

Institute for Bridge Arbitration (IBA)

For a while now, I have been working closely with A.J. Stephani of the ACBL Board of Directors (District 11)

to try to solve this problem by creating a new not-for-profit organization. We are tentatively calling it the Institute for Bridge Arbitration (IBA). The mission of the IBA is to recruit expert bridge players who are willing to donate some of their time to serve as arbitrators in bridge cheating disputes. The experts would include both world-class and strong regional players so that there are appropriate arbitrators for cases of all levels.

IBA will train the volunteering experts to be arbitrators in complex disputes and will establish a working relationship with the American Arbitration Association (and its affiliate organization, the International Centre for Dispute Resolution) so that when “bridge cases” go to arbitrations administered by these organizations, the AAA will choose the arbitrators to decide them from the roster of trained bridge experts that IBA will make available to them.

The participating national (or other) bridge organizations would be the “sponsors” of IBA and would support it financially and by writing into their dispute resolution agreements with their members the requirement that disputes over cheating (and possibly other issues) would be resolved exclusively by IBA-trained arbitrators. It should be relatively inexpensive to establish and run IBA; everyone working for or with IBA would be volunteering their time and would be reimbursed only for out-of-pocket expenses, which should be fairly nominal.

Although the proposal to establish IBA will be made initially to the ACBL and USBF, other national or similar bridge organizations would be welcome to join. They should be easily accommodated, as the International Centre for Dispute Resolution has extensive experience in international arbitrations, and bridge experts from other countries may participate in IBA governance and volunteer to be on the roster of trained arbitrators. We envision the IBA establishing credibility on the global stage.

Our concept is that arbitrations with bridge expert arbitrators certified by IBA would substitute for the disciplinary hearings that national bridge organizations typically hold as an initial adjudication of cheating allegations. In theory, it would be possible for the bridge organizations to continue to make initial decisions in their own disciplinary proceedings, but that strikes us as a duplication of effort and expense when the result of the hearing is appealed to arbitration (or court), and the entire charge and defense would have to be proven again.

We believe that the IBA approach does a good job of meeting the three criteria set out in the first paragraph of this article: fairness, efficiency, and expert decision-making.

Fairness

We think everyone agrees that the process of deciding allegations of cheating at bridge needs to be fair and even-handed. Moreover, it needs to appear to be fair to an outsider who is examining the process. Disciplinary hearings conducted by bridge organizations seem inherently suspect to an outside observer because the accusing organization is also the party that is organizing and running the adjudication process. (Yes, we know that government agencies do exactly that, but they are often criticized for it, and there are much more extensive laws and regulations endeavoring to guarantee the fairness of the government administrative process than exist for bridge disputes.)

In contrast, the IBA process is – and would be perceived as – much fairer. The bridge organization that is the accuser has no direct control over the process, which is governed by American Arbitration Association rules, which are nearly universally recognized as fair and impartial. The parties jointly select the arbitrators from the IBA roster and (within reason) can disqualify any who have real or perceived biases.

The courts have repeatedly ruled that this kind of arbitration process is fair and meets all due process requirements, and there is a detailed set of laws and court decisions protecting the sanctity of the arbitration process and rendering it virtually impossible to successfully appeal the merits of the decision. Although an appeal is possible (as it should be) if the hearing process has been abused, such as by fraud or refusal to hear one side's evidence, the bar to such an appeal is high.

Efficiency

The IBA process should not be very expensive, particularly when compared to the present cost of resolving cheating disputes. Everyone affiliated with IBA would be a volunteer. There would be no salaries to pay, just reimbursement of the relatively few expenses that the organization would have to reach out to potential bridge expert arbitrators, to train them, to organize and maintain the data, to liaise with the American Arbitration Association and sponsor bridge organizations, and to maintain insurance and its corporate status – probably in the low five figures per year or less. Cost of the arbitrations themselves can be minimized by timing and locating them around the bridge Nationals, when all of the participants are likely to be in the same city anyway.

That kind of expenditure is peanuts compared to the savings that the bridge organizations would achieve from not having to run their own disciplinary hearings and then likely be faced with an appeal. The bridge organizations wouldn't have to bear the expense and lost time of setting up, organizing, and running a

disciplinary hearing; they would just prosecute their case in an arbitration organized by the American Arbitration Association. (Some Bridge Winners members have expressed concern about “plea-bargaining” that has recently been reported, and have speculated that the ACBL's fear of incurring excessive costs under the current disciplinary approach may have led to it compromising with accused cheaters instead of fully enforcing its own rules and laws.)

Importantly, there would be no appeal of the initial decision on the merits. I know how expensive this can be from recent personal experience: I am representing the USBF in the federal court case that was initiated when Huub Bertens endeavored to appeal his conviction in a USBF disciplinary hearing to the Court for Arbitration of Sport in Switzerland, and I saw for myself how quickly the legal fees from that kind of appeal can accumulate.

Expert Decision-Making

This is the most important advantage that IBA offers. No other currently-existing mechanism in the court system or any of the various arbitration tribunals ensures that accusations of cheating at bridge are decided by expert bridge players of at least the level of expertise of the accused. This approach prevents an appeal on the merits of the decision from being taken to a different tribunal where non-bridge players can vacate or modify the ruling (which is what happened with Fantoni and Nunes in the Court for Arbitration of Sport). One of the few things that the entire bridge community can agree upon is that decisions in disputes about cheating at bridge can only properly be made by other bridge players with sufficient expertise. There is no mechanism in the currently-existing or proposed dispute resolution universe that can ensure that – except IBA.

Conclusion

So what are the obstacles to implementing IBA? Not many - mostly getting the bridge organizations to sign on. We have been working with the American Arbitration Association, who has approved the concept (they already have a division for “sports arbitration”), and has given tentative approval to a set of rules to govern the arbitrations, and is waiting for commitment from the bridge organizations before proceeding further. In the course of my representation of the USBF, I have run this IBA proposal past their key officers and directors, whose informal feedback approved the concept. A.J. Stephani is also in the process of making a formal proposal to the ACBL, urging it to sign on to IBA.

I am posting this now on Bridge Winners for two reasons. The first reason is to develop support for IBA among the various bridge organizations, both within and beyond North America. In theory, arbitrations with IBA-

certified arbitrators can be held anywhere in the world; I hope that the EBL and WBF (and their constituent national bridge organizations) will consider it to be a better alternative than the Court for Arbitration of Sport and will choose to be sponsor organizations.

The second reason that I am posting this is to encourage discussion of IBA and the alternatives that it offers. So far, IBA is just in the conceptual stage, and there may be many worthwhile ideas or improvements that A.J. Stephani and I haven't thought of. I am not offering IBA as a "finished product," but rather as an idea whose time has come and that can probably be streamlined and improved as the bridge community thinks about and develops experience with it.

Thank you in advance for your comments.

<http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/institute-for-bridge-arbitration/>

University of Stirling Showcases Research Tackling Loneliness to MSP

A Member of the Scottish Parliament has heard how experts at the University of Stirling are tackling the issue of social isolation and loneliness through technology. Researchers working on projects using digital technology to connect people and combat feelings of isolation met with MSP Alexander Stewart on Friday, September 17 to showcase their work.

In a visit to the Faculty of Social Sciences, Mr. Stewart – who represents Mid-Scotland and Fife, lives in Bridge of Allan and is the Scottish Conservative Shadow Minister for Equalities and Older People – heard how a digital version of the card game bridge had brought people together during the pandemic and helped older people to develop digital skills. Led by Professor of Sociology, Samantha Punch, the research project Bridge: A MindSport for All (BAMSA), explores how online bridge provides a crucial means of support, fun and social connection during lockdown and beyond.

Professor Punch said: "The visit was an excellent opportunity to share the health and well-being benefits of bridge with Mr. Stewart. Stewart said: "I pay tribute to the University of Stirling for their pioneering research programme.

Homage to Patrick Grenthe Emmanuel Jeannin-Naltet Lyon, France

Patrick Grenthe, who died earlier this year, was Mr. Bridge in France. As CEO of the beverage company Tropic, Grenthe successfully managed his business

career alongside his bridge career. As well as being President of the Fédération Française de Bridge, Grenthe won a World Championship in the 2011 d'Orsi Trophy in Veldhoven and was Chief Organiser of the brilliant 2012 World Bridge Games in Lille. As an administrator, Grenthe successfully lobbied the French Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale to include bridge in the school curriculum.

Here is Patrick Grenthe in action, in a deal published in my column *Bridge du Progrès de Lyon* on May 30, 2021.

Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ 9 7 5 4 2
♥ 10 9 8 7 3
♦ K 9 5
♣ —

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

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

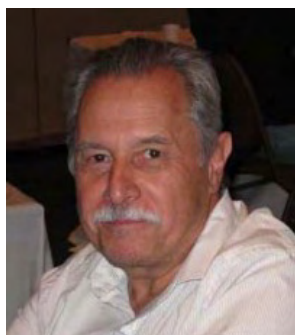
1. 3+ clubs
2. Natural
3. Asks for stopper

The deal was played toward the end of the last millennium in the 1992-1993 Division Nationale. East declared in three notrump, having shown clubs and hearts while West had shown diamonds. Grenthe, South, found the only lead to defeat the game, the king of spades – he hoped his partner had the queen or, if not, that the queen was singleton in one of the opposing hands. That was not the case, but the lead was diabolical: it effected a Merrimac Coup, knocking out the entry to the diamonds. North cooperated by not taking his king of diamonds on the first round of the suit, isolating it in the dummy.

The Merrimac Coup is named after the American naval ship that was scuttled in the bay of Santiago de Cuba in the Spanish-American War (1898) in a failed attempt to trap the Spanish fleet in the harbour. In bridge, this magnificent coup consists of sacrificing an unprotected king in an attempt to destroy an entry to an opposing hand by knocking out the ace prematurely. A Merrimac Coup is all the more remarkable when it is executed on the opening lead.

South could also have defeated three notrump with the double-dummy lead of the ace of clubs, followed by the king-of-spades shift.

Miguel Reygadas (1946-2011)



Miguel Reygadas, widely regarded as Mexico's all-time greatest bridge player and who often represented Mexico in international competitions, died on September 25, aged 75, of non-Covid-related pneumonia. Reygadas was a well-established bridge professional who had a reputation as a tough player and compassionate partner. Reygadas played in no less than 19 World Championships over 50 years, from 1968 to 2018. He was also a fixture at NABCs, winning the North American Swiss Teams in 1990 and being an ACBL Grand Life Master.

Reygadas was a handsome fellow and would not have been out of place as a hero or villain in western films. In a word, he was courtly: polite, refined, cultivated and elegant. Aidan Ballantyne has captured Reygadas's charming character and personality in a wonderful tribute to him on Bridge Winners: <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/rip-miguel-reygadas-2-2ae8uk46e2/>

Here are two deals featuring Reygadas. The first (originally reported by Steve Becker) arose in a Mexico-Canada playoff for a Bermuda Bowl berth:

Dealer East. Neither Vul.

	♠ Q		
	♥ 10 8		
	♦ Q J 7 5		
	♣ A Q 10 9 7 3		
♠ K 7 6 5		♠ A J 9 8 2	
♥ J 4 2		♥ K 3	
♦ A 9 8 4 2		♦ 10 6 3	
♣ 5		♣ J 8 6	
	♠ 10 4 3		
	♥ A Q 9 7 6 5		
	♦ K		
	♣ K 4 2		
West	North	East	South
—	—	Pass	1♥
Pass	INT ¹	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. Forcing			

Reygadas, West, led his singleton club. Declarer won with dummy's queen and led a diamond to his king. Reygadas won with his ace, led a spade to East's ace and received a club ruff. He shrewdly exited with a diamond, declarer winning and cashing one more diamond for spade discards. Declarer then led the ten of hearts to his queen. Seeing that the king and jack of hearts were about to fall under the ace, Reygadas followed to the queen with his jack. Declarer then believed he needed to get back to dummy to finesse for East's king-low of hearts, so led a club. Unfortunately for him, Reygadas ruffed with the four of hearts to beat the contract one trick; minus 50.

Perhaps declarer should have realized that had East really started with king-third of hearts, Reygadas could have beaten the contract legitimately by forcing the dummy with a spade after receiving his club ruff. As it was, Reygadas' failure to do so left declarer with a losing option.

The next deal (originally reported by Bobby Wolff) comes from the 1996 Olympiad Teams in Rhodes. In it, Reygadas and George Rosenkranz cooperated nicely on defence.

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

	♠ 10 5		
	♥ A J 5 3		
	♦ K 7 4 3		
	♣ Q J 9		
♠ A 4 2		♠ K 7	
♥ K Q		♥ 10 9 8 7	
♦ A J 10 9 8 2		♦ Q 6 5	
♣ 10 2		♣ 7 6 5 3	
	♠ Q J 9 8 6 3		
	♥ 6 4 2		
	♦ —		
	♣ A K 8 4		
West	North	East	South
<i>Reygadas</i>		<i>Rosenkranz</i>	
—	INT ¹	Pass	4♥ ²
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			
1. 11-14			
2. Transfer			

Rosenkranz, East led the ten of hearts. On this trick, Reygadas played his king and declarer won with his ace. On a spade lead toward the dummy, East played low and West won with his ace. Reygadas cashed the queen of hearts and, seeing that he could not get East in with a diamond or a club, led another trump. Rosenkranz won with his ace and, due to Reygadas' plays in the heart suit, had no trouble giving his a heart ruff for one off, minus 50.

Guide to Online Events

Here is information about cancelled live tournaments, current and planned online events, and news about some of the planned-for live tournaments in 2021 and beyond:

WBF – The next World Team Championships will be held in Salsomaggiore from March 27 to April 9, 2022; the World Bridge Series will be held in Wroclaw September 2-17, 2022. See <http://www.worldbridge.org> for details.

ACBL – Some pair and team events are on BBO. See <https://www.acbl.org> and <https://www.bridgebase.com>. Plans to begin live bridge again in 2021. The Austin Fall NABC is currently scheduled to be held face-to-face.

EBL – The 19th Champions Cup is scheduled to be held live in Pezinok, Slovakia, Nov. 11-13, 2020 – see www.eurobridge.org for details.

Zonal Organisations – Some Zones of the World Bridge Federation have run and will continue to run online championships until the pandemic ends. Check the Zonal websites for information.

NBOs – Many National Bridge Organisations have organised, and are continuing to organise, online events for their own members. Check the NBO websites for specifics.

Reynolds Knockouts – TD Tom Reynolds has been organising monthly knockout tournaments and quarterly double elimination knockouts since April, 2020. Information can be found at:

<http://www.reynoldsteammatches.com>

Alt Invitationals – Invitational tournaments, usually lasting five to seven days, have been organised by bid72 and netbridge.online. To date, there have been Alt Invitationals (open team tournaments), Alt Mixed events (all comprising eight teams), Alt Majors (32 teams) and Alt BAMs. Information can be found at <https://bid72/events>. Each event has a daily bulletin. Email info@netbridge.online for an invitation (Jan van den Hoek).

OCBL – The Online Contract Bridge League organises events. Details can be found at <https://ocbl.org>. OCBL also produces a daily journal. See also <https://www.worldbridgetour.org>

ACT Bridge & Bridgehouse – Arranges online team events with daily bulletins. Information can be found at <https://bridgehouse.club>

Monthly Invitational Teams – Organised by Christina Lund Madsen (clm@christina-bridge.com) and Denis Dobrin. See <https://mit.bridgeresults.org>. They also organise open mixed events.

All of the online tournaments named above are on BBO (<https://www.bridgebase.com/>) or RealBridge (<https://realbridge.online>). Other useful sites are <https://bridgescanner.com> and <https://bridgewinners.com>

Anyone organising an online tournament can submit details to Marek Wójcicki at marek.wojcicki@bridge.com.pl for inclusion on the IBPA website (www.ibpa.com).



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