

7th EUROPEAN
BRIDGE MIXED
CHAMPIONSHIPS

16th - 22nd
MARCH 2002
MEDIACENTER
OOSTEND - BELGIUM

PARASCHEN

DAILY BULLETIN

PDF version, courtesy of EBL

Bulletin 7

Friday, 22 March 2002

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Stoppa Pips Popova - Lavazza Too Hot for Mali



Semi Final action from the Lavazza-Mali match

The qualifying stages saw teams containing players from eight different countries qualify for the semi-finals. Going in to the last round those teams were already in the first four positions, and they played out 16/14 score lines that proved good enough to keep them there, as none of the chasing teams managed a big enough win. Pride of place at the top of the table went to **Popova** who chose to play **Stoppa**, leaving **Lavazza** to meet **Mali**.

Both matches proved to be exciting, **Lavazza** taking a big lead at half time but then having to hang on as most of it disappeared. **Popova** trailed by 14 IMPs at the half, but was ahead by 6 IMPs going into the last board. They found a good save at one table, but bid a slam that was defeated by a ruff to see **Stoppa** home by 6 IMPs.

PLAYING SCHEDULE

Today, Friday, March 22

MIXED TEAMS

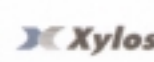
- 10.00** 6th session (2 matches, 10 boards)
Final & 3rd place match (32 boards)
- 15.30** Prize-giving & cocktail-buffet

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Prize Giving Ceremony

The Prize Giving Ceremony of the 7th European Bridge Mixed Teams Championship will be held today in the playing room immediately after the publication of the results. A buffet will follow, in the same room, in the area near the steps.



THE PLEASURE TO WORK IN A REAL TRANSNATIONAL TEAM

Another way to build Europe

A championship gives the pleasure for most of us to play, but it also gives the opportunity to meet some old friends. I am thankful to the EBL for offering me another rare pleasure to work in a team I appreciate more at each event: the so called Bulletin Staff. If you have got regularly all the week long the Bulletin early in the morning or even, sometimes, the previous evening it is through the efforts of the most transnational squad you could imagine. You should be thankful, as I am, to **Mark Horton**, from *England*, cheerful, always present to collect a good hand, watching the big fight at the tables. In the team **Jos Jacobs**, from *The Netherlands*, has done tremendous work, kibitzing all the time...when he was not writing. **Ron Tacchi**, living in *France* and pretending to be British was the man who accompanied them on the spot to catch pictures of players at the table and also responsible for proofreading. Joining the team lately but effectively was our friend **Franco Broccoli**, from *Italy*. We had also steady contributions from the local journalist bridge star, from *Belgium* **Colette Grosfils**. All this material was made attractive by our friend from *Greece* **Stelios Hatzidakis** responsible for the layout. Many tanks should go to **Jan Sijbers** and **Tom Venesoen**, who made a tremendous job printing over a thousand bulletins, sorting and stapling the pages.

See most of you in June in Salsomaggiore.

Jean- Paul Meyer, *France* or should I say Europe!

That Must Be Wrong!

Working with local software, as we quite often do, I am always anxious about its performance. So once in a while I check the outcome, which I did once more before the first morning match yesterday, round 10. And it happened that the team ranked 1 played the team ranked 2. No reason to worry, that is the main goal of a Swiss. 3 played 4, 5 played 6. Can that be right? 7 played 8, 9 against 10, 11-12, 13-14. I looked at the operator of the programme. Did you make it Danish? He didn't understand the question. After explaining he told me that the programme couldn't do Danish. 15-16, 17-18, 19-20. 'This is impossible', I said. He looked puzzled, nothing is impossible for an operator who thinks his programme works well. 'OK, no Danish, but may be you forgot the first 9 rounds and started all over again? This really can't be true.' We went through the opponents already played against. That was all right for the matches we checked. 21 played 22, 23 played no not 24, but 25. It was true after all! In all 46 matches the programme had to change the natural order only three times, which probably is a world record in the tenth round of a Swiss.

Why don't the top ranked teams not just win their matches? This almost caused me a heart attack.

Ton Kooijman

A Little Lead Problem

Dealer North. E/W Vul.

N W E S	♠ 9 7 3
	♥ 8
	♦ A 6 3 2
	♣ A 9 8 7 6

You have the East hand above and see the following auction:

West	North	East	South
	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♦	Pass	6♥
All Pass			

What would you lead?

How many points would you give to a player who led the ace of diamonds?

This was the full deal:

Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

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

Of course, you may have thought you could give your partner a diamond ruff, but South's removal to Six Hearts makes it very unlikely that the diamond bid was based on length.

The Luck Factor

The major problem with any tournament using the Swiss system as a qualification method is that there is inevitably an element of luck involved.

In Bellaria, had play stopped one round earlier, only one of the eventual top four teams would have qualified; and stopping two rounds earlier would also have produced a different line up.

One possibility would be to take the top eight teams at the cut off point, leaving them to play a complete round robin to determine the top eight places.

The next eight teams also play a round robin in a consolation final deciding the places 9-16. This might encourage more teams to enter as they would have high hopes of reaching at least the secondary final and the Championship would be of more interest.

Maureen Dennison

The Last Trains



Danielle Avon, France

On Thursday morning, each team had three more chances to maintain their qualifying spot or to qualify at another team's expense. Rather than watch tables 1 or 2 we turn our attention to the matches where the teams ranked below 4th are trying to catch their last train. So here you will find a report about the match at table 3 between the French team STOPPA, full of past European champions, against a much younger and therefore less experienced team from Iceland, ALLA.

On the first board, the slow approach worked much better, surprisingly enough:

Board 11. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ A 6 ♥ 6 ♦ A J 7 4 3 ♣ Q 10 9 5 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K J 7 3 ♥ K Q J 7 3 2 ♦ Q 8 6 ♣ —	♠ 10 9 8 5 4 ♥ 8 4 ♦ 5 2 ♣ A K J 6
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ Q 2 ♥ A 10 9 5 ♦ K 10 9 ♣ 8 7 4 2											

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Isak	Stretz	Ragnheidlir	Serf
1♦	1♥	1♠	Pass
Pass	4♥	All Pass	3♥

Well, nothing wrong with Isak Sigurdsson's opening bid, but the effect of it was that he got the timing wrong to show the true nature of his hand. The French were allowed to play in peace and made 11 tricks. STOPPA +450.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stoppa	Valur	Avon	Haraldsdottir
Pass	1♥	Pass	Pass
2NT	4♥	5♣	Dble
All Pass			

Stoppa did very well to first pass and then describe his hand in one bid later on. Bidding 5♣ thus was a matter of routine for Avon. One down, -100 but 8 IMPs for STOPPA.

Board 13 produced no swing, as both declarers were the victims of the same optical illusion:

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

♠ 10 7 3 ♥ 9 7 5 2 ♦ Q 3 ♣ 10 9 8 5	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 6 2 ♥ K Q J 8 3 ♦ 10 9 8 ♣ K J 6	♠ A Q J 5 4 ♥ A 6 ♦ 7 6 5 4 2 ♣ 2
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ K 9 8 ♥ 10 4 ♦ A K J ♣ A Q 7 4 3										



Maria Haraldsdottir, Iceland

East opens 1♠ and South ends up in 3NT on a spade lead to the jack and king. If South ducks the jack, East will continue a low spade and the effect will be the same. Now the point is that there is no point in taking the diamond finesse. Just try to count East's cards. She holds five spades and the ♠A, so after five rounds of clubs she cannot hold more than two diamonds if she has not discarded a single spade. So the diamond finesse will be wrong or the queen will drop. If East throws a spade, declarer can play a heart for her ninth trick, of course.

Near the end, the French had another substantial gain when their opponents did too much bidding.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ J 5 ♥ 5 2 ♦ J 8 6 5 4 2 ♣ K 8 4	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K Q 8 6 ♥ K Q J 7 ♦ K Q 9 3 ♣ 6	♠ A 9 4 ♥ 10 9 6 3 ♦ A 7 ♣ A J 10 7
	N											
W		E										
	S											

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Isak</i>	<i>Stretz</i>	<i>Ragnheidlir</i>	<i>Serf</i>
1♠	Pass	1♦	Pass
4♣	All Pass	3♠	Pass

With nothing to guide him, Isak Sigurdsson won the heart lead in hand with the ace and ran the ♦10. This lost to the ace and a heart came back to dummy. Declarer's third heart went on the ♦Q, but the preparations had been made now for a defensive overruffing festival when a club was led off dummy next. South took her ace and played a heart, ruffed with the 10 and over-ruffed with the jack. When South could ruff the diamond return with her ♠9, the contract was down two. STOPPA +100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stoppa</i>	<i>Valur</i>	<i>Avon</i>	<i>Haraldsdottir</i>
1♠	Pass	1♦	Dble
		3♠	All Pass

Guided by the double, Stoppa not only made the good decision to stay out of game, but also knew how to play the hand. He won the heart lead in dummy and simply led the ♠K, as it was obvious that the ♠A would be with South. South won the ace, cashed the ♣A and returned a heart, won by Stoppa in hand. Two more rounds of trumps followed, and then the ♦10 was run to the ace. Ten tricks and 7 IMPs to STOPPA who went on to win the match 27-6 or 21-9 V.P. Their qualification only looked a matter of time now.

In the intermediate round of the morning, the most interesting pairing was to be found at table 4. Would the holders, AUKEN from Denmark, catch their last train? They were playing VIVES, a

French team coming from nowhere to book a front row seat in their last train.

Something happened on the first board.

Board 11. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ J 4 ♥ K Q ♦ K J 7 6 5 ♣ K 6 3 2	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K Q 7 5 2 ♥ A 9 8 2 ♦ Q ♣ Q J 5	♠ A 10 9 8 6 3 ♥ J 10 ♦ 8 3 ♣ 10 9 7
	N											
W		E										
	S											

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Vives</i>	<i>Schaltz</i>	<i>Vives</i>	<i>Schaltz</i>
1♦	1♠	All Pass	Pass

A reasonable enough decision by Dorthe Schaltz to pass 1♠, but this time it did not work out well. The contract just made for +80.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Auken</i>	<i>Le Poder</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Curetti</i>
1♦	1♠	Pass	Pass
Pass	4♥	All Pass	2♥

Who wants to argue with success? When trumps broke and dummy had four of them, making ten tricks was not that difficult any more. VIVES +8 IMPs.

On the next board, the French again reached a good contract in one room.

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

♠ A K 6 ♥ K 10 3 2 ♦ Q 9 8 6 ♣ J 9	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 8 5 3 ♥ Q ♦ A 10 5 ♣ 10 8 7 5 4 3	♠ Q 10 9 7 4 ♥ 5 ♦ K 4 3 2 ♣ K Q 6
	N											
W		E										
	S											

♠ J 2 ♥ A J 9 8 7 6 4 ♦ J 7 ♣ A 2
--

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Vives	Schaltz	Vives	Schaltz
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♥
Dble	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

On the actual heart distribution, nine tricks were never in danger. VIVES +400. To West it was clear that his partner's jump in spades would promise something nice in the minors.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Auken	Le Poder	Auken	Curetti
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♥
Dble	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Sabine Auken's heart splinter put 3NT out of reach so the Aukens had to settle for 4♠. This would have been a make had the ♦A been doubleton anywhere. As it was, South would have to unblock the ♦J had East played a diamond to her king at any time, but having found out that it was South who was likely to have two diamonds only, Sabine Auken played for her legitimate chance of finding South with the ♦A. One down, VIVES another 10 IMPs.

Both teams missed a grand slam on board 15, but the Aukens must have been very close to reaching it:

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Vives	Schaltz	Vives	Schaltz
2NT	3♥	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	6♣	All Pass

West could not be sure at all about what exactly was going on opposite.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Auken	Le Poder	Auken	Curetti
2NT	3♥	4♦	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♣	All Pass



Catherine Vives, France

The Aukens obviously play 4♦ as forcing, so Jens might have considered going on with all his aces... As it was, no swing. The board below sealed the French win:

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Vives	Schaltz	Vives	Schaltz
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Dble	Pass	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

No chance on the lead of the ♦2, away from the ace. VIVES +100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Auken	Le Poder	Auken	Curetti
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	5♣
All Pass			

The three-card suit rebid by Le Poder worked out well when partner raised him all the way to game AND Sabine Auken found the unlucky lead of the \diamond A. Now, with the spades 3-3, declarer could no longer go down. A very lucky +600 for another 12 IMPs to VIVES.

The titleholders ended their bid for a semifinal berth in a blaze of glory.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

<p>\spadesuit K 9 \heartsuit 8 7 \diamond K J 7 5 \clubsuit A 10 8 7 2</p>	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p>\spadesuit 7 2 \heartsuit A 5 \diamond A Q 9 4 3 \clubsuit K J 5 3</p>	<p>\spadesuit A 10 8 5 4 3 \heartsuit Q J 10 9 6 2 \diamond 2 \clubsuit -</p>
	N											
W		E										
	S											

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Vives	Schaltz	Vives	Schaltz
Pass	Pass	1 \diamond	4 \diamond
Dble	Rdble	Pass	4 \heartsuit
All Pass			

The aggressive approach on this nice 6-6 had done its job, even more so as West had failed to open. The Schaltz couple thus was allowed to make a game while there was a slam on the cards for the opponents.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Auken	Le Poder	Auken	Curetti
1 \clubsuit	Pass	1 \diamond	2NT
Pass	4 \spadesuit	5 \clubsuit	5 \spadesuit
Pass	Pass	6 \clubsuit	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

Sabine judged the situation extremely well when she decided to bid one more. Five Spades goes down, of course, but making the slam created one of the biggest swings we have seen here in Ostend so far: 19 IMPs. The final result of the match thus became 35-19 or 19-11 V.P. to VIVES.

With one round to go before the cut, Popova, Mali, Stoppa and Lavazza were the leading foursome. As it happened, they all had to play each other and as both these matches ended 16-14 they all got enough V.P. to qualify, so there is no story about any team jumping into the last four at its final attempt.

The semifinals would be:

Popova v Stoppa
Mali v Lavazza

A Very Slight Amelioration But A Great Brillancy

Monica Cuzzi, playing in the Lavazza team, Catherine d'Ovidio, playing in Zimmerman's team, and perhaps few others won brilliantly Three No-Trumps on this deal in Round 10.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

<p>\spadesuit 10 7 3 \heartsuit 9 7 5 2 \diamond Q 3 \clubsuit 10 9 8 5</p>	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p>\spadesuit A Q J 5 4 \heartsuit A 6 \diamond 7 6 5 4 2 \clubsuit 2</p>	<p>\spadesuit 6 2 \heartsuit K Q J 8 3 \diamond 10 9 8 \clubsuit K J 6</p>
	N											
W		E										
	S											

East opened the bidding with One Spade, and South finished in 3NT, West led the three of spades showing three cards and the jack was taken by the king.

With eight top tricks, simple minds would just take the diamond finesse and go two down

Monica and Catherine knew better.

If the queen of diamond would be on side what could East do on five rounds of clubs?

She had to keep the ace of hearts, four spades – otherwise declarer can play a heart - and only two diamonds.

To put it in other words East could not discard a spade nor the ace of diamonds, so she had to hold only two diamonds.

The finesse has no merit, and having seen no interesting discard our declarers played the ace and king of diamonds and down came West's queen of diamonds.

The chance to find the queen of diamonds second in the hand who has only three spades but four clubs is nothing more than 4%. But that was the case. Well done girls to foresee the situation so clearly.

Of course Four Hearts makes with no skill needed but is difficult to bid.

Curse of Jonson strikes at last

When one has teams called Jonsson and Johnson in the same tournament, one can call it a small miracle that it takes 13 rounds for the confusion to strike.

At one table East and West had both already explained their system to the opponents, when it turned out they did not know one another.

In fact, the player that turned out to be at the wrong table was not needed at all, since her teammates had meanwhile started their match without her.

The Semifinals

As LAVAZZA made it easy going in the first half of their semi-final v. MALI, we will concentrate in this report on the other semifinal match: STOPPA v. POPOVA. The latter team won the qualification and thus earned the privilege to choose an opponent, but in spite thereof one would expect a close match here, as the experienced French were doing better and better as the championship went on.

The first board was a nice test in declarer play, successfully passed by both declarers.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ 9 6 3 ♥ Q J 10 5 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ K 9 4	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	♠ 4 2 ♥ K 8 6 4 3 ♦ 10 9 4 3 ♣ 10 7
N								
W	E							
	S							
	♠ A 10 8 7 5 ♥ A 2 ♦ K 8 5 ♣ Q 8 6							

At both tables, South was in 4♠ and found the correct line. Duck the lead of the ♥Q, win the next round, draw trumps and play a club to the jack followed by a club to the queen.

No swing.

On the next board, there was a swing, however, when the Bulgarian opening NT range led to a game being missed.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

♠ Q 9 4 3 ♥ K J 7 ♦ 6 4 3 ♣ K 10 7	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	♠ 7 5 2 ♥ 6 5 3 2 ♦ J 10 ♣ Q J 4 2
N								
W	E							
	S							
	♠ K 6 ♥ 9 8 4 ♦ K 9 8 7 5 ♣ 6 5 3							
	♠ A J 10 8 ♥ A Q 10 ♦ A Q 2 ♣ A 9 8							

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Haramati	Stretz	Zobu	Serf
Pass	3♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	3♠



Ahu Zobu, Turkey

West, already thrown in at trick 1 so to speak, led a club to dummy's queen. Declarer next ran the ♦J successfully and then led a spade. When East went in with the king, the rest had become relatively easy. Ten tricks, STOPPA +630.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stoppa	Gunev	Avon	Popova
		Pass	2NT

All Pass

As 2NT was systematically 19-21 hcp. one can imagine North's Pass. He was unlucky to find his partner with a super-maximum 21, probably well worth a higher range opening NT bid.

The same ten tricks on a spade lead, but 10 imps to STOPPA. The next board produced yet another swing:

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ K ♥ K 9 3 ♦ K J 8 5 3 2 ♣ 8 6 5	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	♠ J 10 8 3 ♥ A 6 4 2 ♦ 6 4 ♣ K Q 2
N								
W	E							
	S							
	♠ 9 6 2 ♥ 10 8 5 ♦ A Q 10 9 ♣ J 10 3							
	♠ A Q 7 5 4 ♥ Q J 7 ♦ 7 ♣ A 9 7 4							

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Haramati	Stretz	Zobu	Serf
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

An aggressive opening bid brought EW in a stretched game contract, but due to the lucky layout it might even have made. Strange things happened in the play, however. North won the ♠8 lead with the ace and switched to the ♣K, on which South played the jack. Next came the ♣Q and another. When declarer chose to play the ♣9, South scored a surprise ♣10, cashed the ♦A and exited with a heart. Declarer won this in hand, crossed to the ♠K and tried to establish the diamonds by playing ♦K and another.

This meant down three and 300 to STOPPA.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stoppa	Gunev	Avon	Popova
Pass	1♦	1♠	Pass
INT	Pass	2♣	All Pass

When the experienced Stoppa could not conjure up an opening bid out of the West cards in second seat, it was left to Gunev to open a Precision-style 1♦. Avon carefully showed her twosuit, and there it quickly rested. The contract just made for another +90 and 9 imps to STOPPA.

A few boards later, the French made the better of a balancing situation.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stoppa	Gunev	Avon	Popova
INT	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	All Pass	2♥	Pass

Even though non-vulnerable, South did not venture a balancing 2NT. In 2♠ Avon lost the obvious five tricks for +110 to STOPPA.



Jean Louis Stoppa, France

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Haramati	Stretz	Zobu	Serf
INT	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	3♦	Pass	2NT
		All Pass	

At the other table, Marianne Serf did balance, and right she was. In 3♦, Stretz did well to play ♦A, ♦10, thus picking up West's trump holding for no loser. STOPPA another +110 and 6 imps. They led 29-0 at this stage.

After another overtrick imp to France, their opponents finally were to get off the mark when the French stuck to the discipline of their Standard Français.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Haramati	Stretz	Zobu	Serf
Pass	INT	Dble	2♦
Pass	2♥	All Pass	

The double showed four of a major and five of a minor. When Stretz could do nothing but accept the transfer, Serf understandably made no further move. Ten tricks. STOPPA +170.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stoppa	Gunev	Avon	Popova
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

The strong Club worked well here. South showed her 5-4 distribution and simply bid game when North showed his support. Ten tricks and 6 imps to POPOVA.

Two boards later, we saw a mistimed French balancing action leading to a substantial adverse swing:

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Haramati	Stretz	Zobu	Serf
Pass	INT	1♦	Pass
Pass	INT	All Pass	

On a heart lead, this went two off, POPOVA +200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stoppa	Gunev	Avon	Popova
		1♦	All Pass

Gunev did much better, showing no interest holding a four-card diamond suit himself. This unhappy contract suffered the same fate as INT at the other table: two off for a swing of 9 imps to POPOVA. From 30-0 they had come back to 32-15.

There was little in the remainder of the first half, the score at halftime being 37-23 to STOPPA. In the other match, LAVAZZA led 56-15 v. MALI at halftime.

2002 EBL CHAMPIONS CUP**CA-IB TROPHY**

Warsaw, Poland
25th-27th October 2002

The EBL is proud to announce the first ever European Champions Cup in collaboration with CA-IB Bank. The event will be held in Warsaw, Poland, from 25th to 27th October 2002.

Right to participate

The EBL Champions Cup - CA-IB Trophy is an official EBL competition reserved to EBL NBOs which have their own National Open Teams Championship structured in series, with a pyramidal format.

The Open Team Champions of the first 7 NBOs classified in the European Open Teams Championship in Salsomaggiore Terme, June 2002, plus the Team Champions from the Host Country, will be allowed to participate. If the Host country is already classified in the first seven positions of the ranking, the 8th will also be allowed to participate. An official invitation from the EBL will be sent to the Federations of all these teams before 1st July 2002.

The Federation should send their replies, with the name of the Teams, Captain and Players, by 31st July 2002. After the approval from the EBL Credentials Committee, confirmation will be sent to the Federations in the next 48 hours.

If a Federation is unable or not permitted to participate, the Champions Teams of the following NBOs in the ranking of the European Open Teams Championship will be invited.

Format

The Teams will be divided into two groups of four which will play a complete Round-Robin of 20 board matches after which the two top teams of each group will play a 32 board K.O. semi-final match. The winning teams will play a 32 board K.O. final match for the 1st place and the loser a 24 boards K.O. play-off match for 3rd place. The other four Teams will play another two matches to classify for 5th place.

Schedule of Play

Friday 25th	- 16.00	Welcome Cocktail
	- 16.30	Round-Robin 1st Match
	- 20.45	Round-Robin 2nd Match
Saturday 26th	- 10.00	Round-Robin 3rd Match
	- 15.30	Semi-finals / Consolation
Sunday	- 11.00	Final / Play-off
	- 19.00	Prize-giving & Victory Banquet

Prizes

The EBL Champions Cup - CA-IB Trophy will be awarded to the winning Team and replicas to the players. Gold, silver and bronze medals will be awarded to the players of the first 3 Teams classified.

Cash prizes totalling \$15.000 will be awarded:

1st team \$7.000, 2nd \$3.500, 3rd \$2.250, 4th \$1.250, 5th \$1.000.

MIXED TEAMS

Results after 14 matches

5 Auken	247.0	49 Churlin	208.0
6 Willard	244.0	50 Juuri-Oja	207.0
7 Riberol	241.0	51 Blondal	205.0
8 Zimmermann	238.0	52 Porteous	205.0
9 Blouquit	237.0	53 Kondoch	205.0
10 Grenthe	236.0	54 Henri	204.0
11 Labaere	234.0	55 Al-Shati	204.0
12 Miszewska	234.0	56 Van Woerden	203.0
13 Van der Neut	233.0	57 Maybach	202.0
14 Fornaciari	233.0	58 Meyer	202.0
15 Vives	233.0	59 Backstrom	202.0
16 Burgay	232.0	60 Barr	200.0
17 Uisk	232.0	61 Kostur	199.0
18 Damiani	231.0	62 Garthwaite	199.0
19 FIGB I	230.0	63 Chodorowska	199.0
20 Farholt	226.0	64 Resta	198.0
21 Allix	223.0	65 Smykalla	198.0
22 Hochecker	223.0	66 Marsal	197.0
23 Huijben	222.0	67 FIGB 2	197.0
24 Ulla Koch	222.0	68 Thordarson	196.0
25 Bonori	221.0	69 McGloughlin	195.0
26 Kitabgi	219.0	70 Tobias	194.0
27 Ditetova	219.0	71 McGowan	191.0
28 Beccuti	219.0	72 Brekiesz	189.0
29 De Botton	218.0	73 Budd	188.0
30 Vriend	218.0	74 Sagiv	187.0
31 Mavromichalis	217.0	75 Johnson	187.0
32 Senior	216.0	76 Toffier	186.0
33 Sterkin	216.0	77 Weir	185.0
34 Renoux	216.0	78 Leitner	182.0
35 Juhas	215.0	79 De Graeve	181.0
36 Dehaye	215.0	80 Harris	178.0
37 Russo	214.0	81 Samy	178.0
38 Bruchhauser	213.0	82 Xtrouble	177.0
39 Ivarsdottir	213.0	83 Alberti	176.0
40 Kaplan	212.0	84 Budzik	176.0
41 Eginton	211.0	85 Hardeman	176.0
42 Sin Deut	211.0	86 Meehan	172.0
43 Bamberger	211.0	87 Sigurjonsd	171.0
44 Tisserand	211.0	88 Jonsson	170.0
45 Vechiatto	210.0	89 Langston	167.0
46 Alla	209.0	90 Mayda	148.0
47 Gotard	209.0	91 Volina	116.0
48 Falay	208.0	92 Sanglier	111.0

MIXED TEAMS

Semifinal Results

	1-16	17-32	Total
Popova - Stoppa	23 - 37	27 - 21	50 - 58
Mali - Lavazza	15 - 56	35 - 10	55 - 66

A Little Play Problem

How would you have tackled this problem from Round 9 of the Team Championships?

You have the South cards (the hands have been rotated for convenience) and Open One Club. The player on your left over-calls One Diamond and leads the king of spades against the final contract of Five Clubs.

How do you play?

♠ A 7 3									
♥ A Q J 8									
♦ A 3									
♣ 10 9 7 4									
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	N								
W		E							
	S								
♠ 9 6 4									
♥ K 10									
♦ J 8 6									
♣ A Q J 8 3									

There appear to be three possibilities:

Win the ace of spades and simply take the club finesse. Win the ace of spades, cash the ace of clubs and then play on hearts.

Win the ace of spades and play on hearts at once, intending to view the trump suit later.

Without attempting an exhaustive analysis, we suspect that the last line is best. This was the full deal:

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

♠ K Q 5 2									
♥ 9 6 5 2									
♦ K 10 9 7 5									
♣ -									
♠ 9 6 4									
♥ K 10									
♦ J 8 6									
♣ A Q J 8 3									
<table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S	
	N								
W		E							
	S								
♠ A 7 3									
♥ A Q J 8									
♦ A 3									
♣ 10 9 7 4									
♠ J 10 8									
♥ 7 4 3									
♦ Q 4 2									
♣ K 6 5 2									