



NEC Bridge Festival

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Welcome to the 9th NEC Cup Bridge Festival: 2004

This year's 9th NEC Cup boasts the largest and one of the strongest international fields ever, including many of the world's top players. Stage One will be an 8-round Swiss Teams consisting of 20-board matches, IMPs converted to Victory Points, qualifying eight teams for the KO phase. The 42-team field has been divided into top and bottom halves and the first Swiss match has been arranged so that each team in the top half is matched at random against a team from the bottom half; subsequent match pairings will be based on current VP totals. The quarter-finals and semi-finals will consist of 40-board matches while the final will be contested over 64 boards.

The Daily Bulletin Office/Secretariat and the Chief Director

As always, we need your help. Please report anything amusing, challenging, or skillful that happens in your matches (bridge or otherwise) to the **Daily Bulletin Office, a.k.a. The Secretariat** (E206). If we're not there, leave a note on one of our three computers (they're on the wall facing you as you enter the room). The **Secretariat** will open each day at 10:00 am. If you're trying to reach someone you can't find, leave a message with us and we'll do our best to get it to them. The **Chief Tournament Director** for this year's **NEC Bridge Festival** will once again be the witty, urbane, unflappable and occasionally immovable **Richard Grenside**. Call him if you wish, but just as if you choose to draw an inference from an opponent's tempo or manner, you do so at your own risk.

The NEC Cup Guest List

A special welcome to all the *gai jin* visiting Japan for the first time, but we're happy to see everyone again too. The NEC Cup has an entry of 52 teams this year, a new record. At the end of the 8th round of the Swiss (20 board matches) only eight teams will qualify for Knockout play, and as we've seen so often in the past, it's not always the most famous teams that are still playing on the evening of Day Three, so we encourage all of you to keep your morale high and play your hardest til the end. Miracles have been known to take place at this tournament.

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Players Welcomed at Opening Ceremony

Yesterday evening's opening ceremony was a posh affair. Emcee **Haruko Koshi** was at her usual best as the JCBL celebrated its 50th Anniversary. **Fujita Kimio**, JCBL President and **Goto Tetsurou**, NEC Corporation representative, were on hand to enliven the ceremony with some well-chosen words of welcome.



Goto Tetsurou



Fujita Kimio

NEC Cup 2004: Conditions of Contest

- An 8 round Swiss, qualifying the top 8 teams to the Knockout phase; no playbacks.
- V.P. Scale WBF 20-board scale (a copy can be found in the score book provided in your NEC Bridge Festival bag).
- Seating Rights Blind seating 10 minutes before the start of match
- KO-Phase Seating The winner of a coin toss has the choice of seating in either of the two 20-board segments. In the four 16-board segments of the final, the choices will alternate over segments.
- Swiss Pairings For the first and second Swiss matches, pairings will be determined by randomly pairing each of the teams numbered 1-26 with one of the teams numbered 27-52. Subsequent match pairings will be based on current VP totals.
- Home and visiting 1st numbered team sits N/S in open room, E/W in closed room.
- Tie-Breaks At the end of the Swiss: ties will be broken by the result of the head-to-head match (if one was played) or an IMP quotient otherwise. If more than two teams are involved, WBF 2002 Conditions of Contest procedures will apply.
- In the Knockout Phase, the team with the higher position from the Swiss will be assumed to have a ½-IMP carryover.
- Systems No HUM methods will be permitted in this event.
 In the Swiss, no Brown Sticker methods will be permitted.
 In the KO Phase, Brown Sticker methods will be permitted only if filed before the start of the Swiss. Written defenses to such methods may be used at the table.
- Length of Matches 2 hours and 50 minutes will be allotted for each 20-board segment (or 2 hours and 20 minutes for each 16-board segment of the final). In addition a 5-minute grace period will be allotted to each team. Overtime and slow play penalties as per WBF 2001 Conditions of Contest.
- Appeals The WBF Code of Practice will be in effect. The Chief Director will have 12C3 authority. Appeals which are found to be without merit may incur a penalty of up to 3 VPs.
- Match Scoring Pick-up slips are to be completed and all match results are to be verified against the official result sheet (posted at the end of each match); score corrections and notifications of appeals will be permitted up until the start of the next session.
- KO Draw The team finishing 1st in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 4th-8th. The team finishing 2nd will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 4th-8th group. And so on.
- In addition, before the start of the Knockout Phase and after all quarter-final draws have been determined, the team that finishes 1st in the Swiss chooses their semi-final opponent from any of the other three quarter-final matches.
- 3rd/4th Places Unless the two losing semi-finalists both agree to play off for 3rd and 4th place, there will be no playoff and the prize money will be divided evenly between the two teams.
- Smoking No smoking in the playing areas. You may not leave the playing room to smoke.

NEC Cup Guest List (cont.)

No one will bet against the England team's winning for a third year in succession, but if they're going to win again they will have their work cut out for them. Last time we looked **Pablo Lambardi** had not arrived and the usual English tradition of finding a last-minute fill-in for a round or two seemed like a real possibility, which begs the question: how much is a **Duckworth, Chris**?

Iceland has sent a fierce team and Europe is also represented by powerful national teams from Bulgaria, Israel, a combined Poland/Russia team and **Sabine Auken**, who with USA's **Kerri Sanborn** will prove to anyone paying attention that women really do play better than men most of the time. That will be good news for their American teammates **Mark and Janice Molson**. There is very little truth to the rumor that when told Japan was such a safe country that she could leave her purse in a busy subway station and find it in the same spot when she returned an hour later, Janice asked whether the same rules had to apply to spouses.

There is no doubt that one third of the Editorial staff is rooting for Canada (ex-teammates, like ex-spouses, seem to grow more precious with age), while the other two thirds have ties to Israel and USA, which gives us something (else) to argue about when the lights go out in the exhibition hall. The all-American team contains some of the top professionals on the US tournament scene.

China has sent both an Open and a Women's team while Chinese Taipei is being represented by four members of its national Women's team, an all-star Open team (Yeh Brothers) and Taiwan-NaCS. Indonesia and Australia always send competitive teams and this year is no exception. Don't be fooled by the fact that two of the Indonesian stars played in the recent Seniors Bowl in Monte Carlo. Life begins after 55. At least we hope so.

Korea has no less than four entries in NEC IX, an amazing number for a nation with a very small bridge population.

In addition to Japan's three formidable Olympiad-bound teams, the home country is fielding several strong teams that foreigners might not readily recognize. We speak in particular of Slam Dunk, Nagasaka, Hayashi, Skotii, Midori-Kame and Esperanza.

We would very much like to introduce to you in these pages some of the invited teams and perhaps, if space permits (sorry, small joke) some of the Japanese teams. In order to do this, we'll need the cooperation of the teams. Elsewhere in these pages you will learn more about the Canadian team. Although sometimes less is better, you will get a feel for the sort of capsule introductions we're looking for: not much about bridge achievements but a closer look at personalities without getting too serious. In tomorrow's edition you will see one man's view of the Israeli team. The sooner you submit your team's story the better the chance that we'll get them published before the tournament ends. Come see us in E-206 any old time.

It goes without saying that we'd like to hear about anything you think others will be interested in reading, from the brilliant to the bizarre. There will be Bulletin Prizes for the Best Story, Best Bid, Played and Defended deals, Unluckiest result, and a special Twilight Zone prize for the weirdest deal. As the awarding of these prizes is contingent upon having entries submitted, you are being asked to share your achievements or (better) those of your opponents with us. Or not. You be the judge. Play well. But if you can't, please play quickly.

Team Rosters: 9th NEC Cup

#	Name	Members
1	England:	Brian Senior, John Armstrong, Brian Callaghan, Pablo Lambardi
2	Iceland:	Throstur Ingimarsson, Bjarni Einarsson, Anton Haraldsson, Sigurbjorn Haraldsson
3	Germany/USA:	Sabine Auken, Kerri Sanborn, Janice Seamon-Molson, Mark Molson
4	Israel:	Israel Yadlin, Doron Yadlin, Michael Barel, Migry Zur Campanile
5	Canada:	George Mittelman, Allan Graves, Joey Silver, John Carruthers
6	Poland/Russia:	Adam Zmudzinski, Cezary Balicki, Andrew Gromov, Alexander Petrunin
7	Indonesia:	Henky Lasut, Eddy Manoppo, Santje Panelewen, Franky Karwur, Munawar Sawiruddin
8	China Open:	Li Xin, Sun Shaolin, Kang Meng, Li Xiaoyi, Fu Zhong, Zhao Jie
9	China Ladies:	Hou Yunyan, Zhu Xiaoyin, Yan Ru, Dong Yongling, Lu Yan, Wang Yanhong
10	Chinese Taipei Ladies:	Fang-wen Gong(PC), Sheau-fong Hu, Lin-chin Liu, Wen-chuan Tsai
11	USA:	Garey Hayden, Jim Robison, Simon Kantor, Mark Itabashi
12	Australia:	Cathy Chua, Simon Hinge, Robert Fruewirth, Bill Jacobs
13	Bulgaria:	Gueorgui Stamatov, Ivan Tsonchev, Rumen Trendafilov, Kalin Karaivanov
14	Happy Bridge (Korea):	SUNG Kyunghae, HWANG Inryung, KWON Sooja, KO Jaehyun
15	Dum-Dum's (Korea):	SYNN Soohi, PARK Myungki, NOH Heajung, KIM Sookyung
16	Amante (Korea):	HAHN Myungjin, LIM Hyun, SUH Eunae, KIM Yoonkyung
17	Acacia (Korea):	HAN Sunhee, YOO Kyungwon, PARK Jungyoon, YANG Sungae
18	Yeh Bros (Taiwan):	Chen Yeh, Chia-Hsin Wu, Chih-Kuo Shen, Chi-Hua Chen, Jung-Fong Cheng, Yi-Wen Lai
19	Taiwan-NaCS:	Kao Cheng, Tom Cheng, Chen Hung Yu, Lin Yung Yi, C. C. Chen
20	Japan Olympiad Open:	Tadashi Teramoto, Masayuki Ino, Tadashi Imakura, Hideki Takano, Hiroshi Kaku, Masaaki Takayama
21	Japan Olympiad Ladies:	Kyoko Shimamura, Ayako Amano, Hiroko Ota, Miho Sekizawa, Nobuko Setoguchi, Shoko Fukuda
22	Japan Olympiad Senior:	Kyoko Ohno, Akihiko Yamada, Yoshiyuki Nakamura, Makoto Hirata
23	SLAM DUNK:	Yasuhiro Shimizu, Kenji Miyakuni, Sakiko Naito, Chen Dawei, Kazuo Furuta
24	NAGASAKA:	Hiroya Abe, Sei Nagasaka, Liang Ping, Akira Morozumi, Misuzu Ichihashi
25	HAYASHI:	Nobuyuki Hayashi, Seiya Shimizu, Takehiko Nagahama, Takeshi Hanayama, Takashi Maeda
26	MIDORI-KAME:	Natsuko Nishida, Tomoe Nakao, Koji Ito, Tadashi Yoshida, Midori Sakamoto, Yuko Yamada
27	ESPERANZA:	Haruko Koshi, Mieko Nakanishi, Mizuko Tan, Yoko Osako, Junko Arai, Toyoko Saito
28	Gryffindor:	Michiko Iwahashi, Michiko Ohno, Hiroko Sekiyama, Kazuko Banno
29	Drami & Alice:	Makiko Sato, Koji Yamada, Yuko Yamada, Eiji Otaka, Yuko Noda, Hiroyuki Noda
30	GIRASOL:	Sachiko Yamamura, Taeko Kawamura, Kimi Makita, Keiko Matsuzaki
31	SKOTII:	Tsuneo Sakurai, Takahiro Kamiyo, Kenichi Izaki, Atsushi Kikuchi, Takehiko Tada
32	AOGUMI:	Yoko Nenohi, Kyoko Toyofuku, Kumiko Matsuo, Toshiko Kaho, Yoshiko Sakaguchi, Hiroko Janssen
33	Spice:	Yukiko Umezu, Etsuko Naito, Makiko Hayashi, Yayoi Sakamoto
34	PS-JACK:	Masako Otsuka, Masakatsu Sugino, Shoko Imai, Takako Fujimoto, Yoko Maruyama, Yukiko Hoshi
35	KACHOFUGETSU:	Akiko Miwa, Kunio Kodaira, Teruo Miyazaki, Makoto Nomura, Fumiko Nanjo, Ryoji Fujiwara
36	KOSAKA:	Kazuko Kawashima, Yasuko Kosaka, Koichi Onishi, Nobuko Matsubara
37	OZAWA:	Toyohiko Ozawa, Toru Nishiwaki, Kenichi Asaoka, Kazuhisa Kojima
38	SWAN:	Minako Hiratsuka, Aiko Banno, Naomi Terauchi, Natsuko Asaka, Kotomi Asakoshi, Michiko Shida
39	MERRY QUEENS & J:	Teruko Nishimura, Junko Nishimura, Toyoko Nakakawaji, Toshiko Hiramori, Tomoya Yamaguchi
40	NETORA:	Yoko Saito, Yoshiko Shimazumi, Chieko Ichikawa, Mamiko Odaira, Kuniko Saito, Junko Den
41	NANIWADA:	Takako Nakatani, Masaru Naniwada, Atsushi Kimura, Nobuko Tanai, Harue Iemori, Yumi Yanagida
42	Good Luck:	Osami Kimura, Kinzaburo Nishino, Setsuko Kimura, Toshiko Miyashiro
43	KATSUMATA:	Atsuko Katsumata, Yasuyo Iida, Misae Kato, Kimiko Kamakari, Keiko Oshio, Mayumi Hirota
44	MY-Bridge:	Noriko Yoshizawa, Masafumi Yoshizawa, Kuniko Miyauchi, Yoshitaka Agata, Shigeyuki Murano
45	COSMOS:	Nobuko Wakasa, Masaharu Wakasa, Keiko Enomoto, Yoko Takahashi, Kazuko Tsumori, Noriko Komiyama
46	Kinki:	Toru Tamura, Mimako Ishizuka, Sonoko Namba, Atsuko Kurita, Chizuko Sugiura
47	ATHENE:	Sachiko Kunitomo, Fumi Hosoda, Kyoko Tstsumi, Seizo Hirao, Takehiko Takagi, Mitsuko Yamaguchi
48	MATSUBARA:	Ryo Matsubara, Ayako Matsubara, Kiyoshi Asai, Katsumi Tokiwa, Ryohei Orihara, Naoko Orihara
49	Konishi:	Chizuno Saito, Momoko Kumano, Yoshihisa Konishi, Masaru Yoshida, Minoru Mizuta
50	Fairy Tale:	Takao Onodera, Yukinao Honma, Ryo Okuno, Takeshi Higashiguchi, Kazunori Sasaki, Zhang Shudi
51	POODLE:	Emiko Tamura, Yoshiko Murata, Hiroko Kobayashi, Chizuko Tsukamoto
52	AKQ:	Alan Sia, Shunsuke Morimura, Tomoyuki Harada, Makoto Kohno, Chieko Yamazaki

First-round match-ups: 1 vs 46; 2 vs 38; 3 vs 36; 4 vs 43; 5 vs 35; 6 vs 52; 7 vs 37; 8 vs 45; 9 vs 28; 10 vs 47; 11 vs 34; 12 vs 33; 13 vs 49; 14 vs 27; 15 vs 41; 16 vs 29; 17 vs 31; 18 vs 39; 19 vs 42; 20 vs 44; 21 vs 30; 22 vs 32; 23 vs 40; 24 vs 51; 25 vs 48; 26 vs 50

A Look Back at a Shining Victory

by Pietro Campanile

During the 2000 Olympiad held in Maastricht, The Netherlands, the Japanese Ladies team performed above even their own expectations and managed to secure several important victories: none more impressive than the 19-11 VP win against the titled English team.

Their success in this match came mostly thanks to two very good boards, which showed off some insightful bidding from both Japanese pairs:

Bd: 10	♠ AKQ4		
Dlr: East	♥ KQ109		
Vul: Both	♦ Q62		
	♣ AJ		
♠ 7532		♠ 986	
♥ J7		♥ 6532	
♦ A108		♦ 4	
♣ Q965		♣ K7432	
	♠ J10		
	♥ A84		
	♦ KJ9753		
	♣ 108		

Bd: 16	♠ A104		
Dlr: West	♥ J83		
Vul: E/W	♦ Q10		
	♣ A6432		
♠ KJ76		♠ Q983	
♥ Q742		♥ A	
♦ A87		♦ 65432	
♣ K8		♣ QJ10	
	♠ 52		
	♥ K10965		
	♦ KJ9		
	♣ 975		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Amano</i>	<i>Brunner</i>	<i>Sekizawa</i>	<i>Goldenfield</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT(1)	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♠(2)	Pass
4♠	All Pass		
(1) Relay to 3♣			
(2) Trial bid requesting cover in clubs			

The Japanese ladies succeeded in finding the very thin game in spades, mainly thanks to **Miho Sekizawa's** aggressive game try, a commendable action given the likely increased value of her singleton ♥A and her fit with **Ayako Amano's** diamonds (after the 1♦ opening). Goldenfield led a trump (on a diamond lead, declarer would survive by ducking one round to sever the defensive communications), Brunner won and returned another trump. Sekizawa won in hand with the ♠Q and deceptively played the ♣J to the king and Brunner's ace. She won the trump return in dummy and continued with two more rounds of clubs, pitching a diamond. Now the ♦A and a diamond put Brunner on play again and she exited with a heart to the ace. Declarer ruffed a diamond and claimed the rest; +620 and 11 IMPs to Japan, as at the other table Penfold-Senior played in 1NT.

The final score of the match was 52-32, which translated into a comfortable 19-11 win for the Japanese.

It's good news for Japan that the federation will again be represented by this experienced and very capable team in the 2004 Olympiad.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Amano</i>	<i>Brunner</i>	<i>Sekizawa</i>	<i>Goldenfield</i>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

All Pass

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Penfold</i>	<i>Shimamura</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Fukuda</i>
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♠
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

In the Closed Room Goldenfield-Brunner got to 3NT. The Japanese ladies, instead, explored the hand more thoroughly: **Shoko Fukuda** started off with a multi-purpose 3♦, which could be a variety of hands as well as the normal five-plus hearts; her 3♠ was a puppet to 3NT to clarify her hand type and 4♠ showed a diamond suit with slam interest. **Kyoko Shimamura** accepted her partner's invitation and bid 6♦. A very good effort, which was rewarded by a gain of 12 IMPs!

Zar Points Bidding

by Zar Petkov

Ever wondered how experts bid “aggressive” games that “somehow, “magically” turn out to be cold? It’s simple: they just use their expert judgment, which advanced and intermediate players just don’t have yet. Zar Points supply the tool for advanced and intermediate players to obtain this expert-level “aggressive” judgment and never miss a game again—be it a “somehow-magical” or just a “regular, plain” contract, while also stopping in a part-score when no game is in sight.

The Zar-Points theory is a result of exhaustive research of thousands of “aggressive” contracts bid by world-class experts like Hamman, Wolff, Soloway, Meckwell, Lauria, Versace, DeFalco, Zia, Helgemo, Chagas, Sabine Auken and Karen McCallum, proven through over a million boards played at Double-Dummy. You can study all these at the Zar Points website:

<http://public.aci.on.ca/~zpetkov/>

The initial hand evaluation is where it all starts, and the question is how you can better capture the three main components of the hand's playing potential: the shape, the controls, and the “standard” Milton Work 4-3-2-1 HCP. The re-evaluation as the bidding progresses covers the placement of the honors and the suit-lengths in light of partner’s and opponents’ bidding.

For the **high-card points** we use the 6-4-2-1 scheme, which adds the sum of your **controls** (A=2, K=1) to your standard Milton **HCP** in the 4-3-2-1 scheme (A=4, K=3, Q=2, J=1). You will see how these values were determined by solving series of over-determined systems of equations on hundreds of thousands of boards when you get to the website – these values are not a matter of “personal opinion”.

Calculating **distribution points** is not news in Bridge: Charles Goren introduced **Goren Points** more than a half-century ago. It counts 3 points for every void, 2 points for every singleton, and 1 point for every doubleton. Of course, indirectly it also holds implicit valuation for the long suits, since the sum of all four suit lengths is 13, so with a 5-5 two-suiter you get 3 Goren points (either 2+1 for a singleton and a doubleton or 3 for a void). With **Bergen Points** you add your HCP to the sum of your longest two suit lengths and use the **Rule of 20** as a guideline for

opening, while with Goren you need to count **13 HCP** to open.

If we denote your longest suit as **a**, your second longest suit as **b**, your third longest suit as **c**, and your shortest suit as **d**, Bergen Points are **HCP+(a+b)**, which is a step forward on the way to better capturing the distribution. Zar Points go much farther than that: we add the **three suit differences** (a-b)+(b-c)+(c-d) which boils down to (a-d) after a simple transformation. Thus, the distribution part of Zar Points is **(a+b)+(a-d)**, and the total number of initial Zar Points is **HCP +Controls+(a+b)+(a-d)**. You need **26** to open.

The flat 4-3-3-3 distribution has the minimum amount of Distributional Zar Points, (4+3)+(4-3)=**8** points, while the 7-6-0-0 has (7+6)+(7-0)=**20**, for example. If you increase the length of the longest suit, the valuation also increases, of course: 9-4-0-0 has (9+4)+(9-0)=**22**, and the wildest 13-0-0-0 hand gets the max of (13+0)+(13-0)=**26**. The wilder the distribution the less HCP and Controls you need to open, and the more Controls you have, the less HCP you need. Here are some opening examples:

10 HCP: ♠x ♥Kxxxx ♦Kxxx ♣Axx
Zar Points calculation:
HCP CTRLs (a+b) (a-b) TOTAL
10 + 4 + 9 + 4 = **27**

9 HCP: ♠KQxxx ♥KJxxx ♦xxx ♣—
Zar Points calculation:
HCP CTRLs (a+b) (a-b) TOTAL
9 + 2 + 10 + 5 = **26**

8 HCP: ♠Axxx ♥A10xxx ♦xxxx ♣—
Zar Points calculation:
HCP CTRLs (a+b) (a-b) TOTAL
8 + 4 + 9 + 5 = **26**

7 HCP: ♠Kxxxxx ♥Axxxx ♦xx ♣—
Zar Points calculation:
HCP CTRLs (a+b) (a-b) TOTAL
7 + 3 + 11 + 6 = **27**

An important difference to note is that while 5-4-2-2, 5-4-3-1 and 5-4-4-0 distributions all have the same value in Bergen, in Zar they get 12, 13, and 14 points respectively, all coming from adding the three differences in lengths.

If Zar Points seem a bit aggressive to you, let’s

have a look at a couple of opening hands from the First Open European Championship last summer in Menton, France.

♠Axxx ♥AJxxxx ♦x ♣xx (Daily Bulletin 9)

This hand has 9 HCP but still both **Duboin** and **Ludewig** opened it in the Open Teams. And indeed, the distribution Zar Points are 10+5=15 plus the 4 controls and the 9 HCP=28! Well above the opening minimum of 26.

♠Qx ♥Akxxx ♦Jxxxx ♣x (Daily Bulletin 11)

"**Chagas**' light distributional opening bid changed matters." In fact, the hand has 10+4=14 distributional Zar Points plus the 9 HCP (Qx)+3 controls=27 Zar Points, well into the opening hand range. Nothing special indeed, once you have a proper view on the potential of the hand.

You get 1 **upgrade point** if **all** your points are concentrated within three suits (if you have a strong hand of 15+ HCP) or within two suits (if you have a normal opening of 11-14 HCP). Obviously, in light openings you can never get this 1-point upgrade. This actually takes care of the value added by having your honors in **combination** rather than scattered among the four suits.

One final touch in the Initial Hand Evaluation concerns holding the **spade suit**, the so called resident suit. In borderline cases, when you have 25 Zar Points, you add 1 point for holding the spade suit. ONLY when you are at the border of opening, holding the spade suit gives you the right to add 1 Zar Point and get to the 26-Zar-Points opening.

Here is an example of such an opening coming again from Menton, with the to-be-European-Champion **Eric Rodwell** in action:

♠AQxx ♥Jx ♦Axxx ♣xxx (Daily Bulletin 13)

"**Rodwell** opened 1♦ and as the commentator said "EW were talked out of their game by Rodwell's light opening bid..." He actually has 11 HCP (depreciates the ♥Jx but gets 1 point back for three-suits concentration of points) plus 4 controls for 15 points, plus the 8+2=10 DP for a total of 25 Zar Points. When you upgrade the hand for holding the "president's suit" of spades by 1 point, you reach the 26 needed to open.

On top of the aggressive **constructive** advantage that "light openings" present, there is one more thing to consider: the very fact that you have entered the bidding effectively **puts the opponents in a defensive bidding track**.

After you study the matter a bit further, you come to the following summary of light openings using Zar Points:

1) With 8 HCP you need AT LEAST 5-5, 6-4 or 5-4-4-0 distribution with two aces.

2) With 9 HCP you need AT LEAST 5-4-3-1 distribution with two aces.

3) With 10 HCP you need AT LEAST 5-4 distribution and corresponding controls.

4) With 11 HCP you need EITHER a five-card suit OR 5 controls as a minimum.

Let's have a look at the responding side. Your partner has already opened and it's your turn to respond. You first do the Initial hand evaluation that has been already been covered, and THEN make certain adjustments—adjustments to partner's suit and adjustments to the opponents' suit (if they have overcalled). The minimum point count that allows you to act is **16**:

- 1 additional point for the trump honors (including the 10), up to a MAX of 2.
- 1 additional point for the Invitational-second-suit honors (including the 10), up to a MAX of 2. The total allowance here is 2, whether 2, 3, 4 or 5 are held (the rest is 'duplication values').

The last upgrade you make is for "superfit" in both the primary and secondary fits (if you have a secondary fit). You get 3 Zar Points for every card that brings the number of cards above 8, so if your partner has opened 1♠ (five-cards) and you have four spades you get 3 Zar Points for the fourth trump.

So how do you judge the level at which you are ready to play? Here are the **Game Calculations**:

- 52 Zar Points for a four-level game or 3NT (based on "Two opening hands make a game");
- 57 Zar Points for the five level;
- 62 Zar Points for a slam at the six level;
- 67 Zar Points for a GRAND slam.

Plain and simple: 5 points per level. These 5 points may come from an additional king in

partner's suit (3 points from the HCP, 1 from the control, and the premium 1 from the honor in partner's suit), from an additional outside ace (2 from the controls plus 4 from the HCP), from 2 additional trumps in the superfit, etc. On the website you will see the **Zar Bidding Machine**

which bids in **Goren, Bergen, and Zar Points** simultaneously, so you will have a chance to play and get a feel for the way things work.

Good luck.

Bridge has often been unjustly labeled as the quaint harmless pastime of high society ladies. During the explosive boom of popularity which it enjoyed in the 1930s, however, there were those who had a much more sinister view of our game. Here is an excerpt from a belligerent piece from the *New Rotarian* magazine advocating nothing less than its banning!

Should We Abolish Bridge? Yes Sir!

by Silas Bent



Let me confess at the outset that I am a bridge addict. I am virtually illiterate, however, never having read a book about the game, even though a volume on psychic bidding was once presented to me. My acquaintance with trick values, "approach-forcing," the pitfalls of no trump, the conventions and the various "systems" has come by word of mouth or by painful experience at the card table.

Culbertson boasted that he popularized contract bridge and his books by appealing to the sex instinct and to fear. Despite his boasts about his intellectual theft he has never, so far as I can find, tried to advance the game as improving the mind, the faculties of concentration and deduction, or the character. Sex and fear, all of us will agree, are not among the noblest qualities to which to appeal in the promotion of any enterprise, whether of amusement or industry.

Professor Josephine Rathbone of Columbia University has pointed out the unhealthy effects of prolonged and frequent bridge playing. Sitting with the shoulders hunched, tensely and stiffly, with the head seldom moving freely, usually in a smoke-laden atmosphere, for hours at a stretch, obviously is not conducive to the best physical results. Professor Rathbone believes it induces, in some cases, organic heart trouble. An

acquaintance of mine, who is subject to angina pectoris—not caused, let me hasten to say, by playing cards—was forbidden for a long period by his physician to play contract bridge and, even now, is permitted to play only a few rubbers in an evening.

It is true enough that there have been some notable figures in the bridge world who have lived to ripe old age. Some of them are still living, and it must not be supposed that Professor Rathbone meant to consign all the victims of the game to an early grave.

But her strictures seem to me well grounded in the main. The effect of this game on blood pressure and the heart must be obvious, for it is even more exciting than poker, almost as exciting as alcohol when taken as a beverage. Some of my friends have told me that they cannot get to sleep after a hard bout at bridge.

Aside from these deleterious factors, bridge is vulgar because it puts a positive damper on conversation, one of the amenities hard put to it for survival in the United States even without this handicap; and because it is unsportsmanlike. The man who has bid and made a game in a minor suit unblushingly and as a matter of course rubs it in on opponents who had the

cards for a game declaration in a major suit. The player who has achieved a slam is so filled with self-aggrandizement that his boasts continue, between hands, for perhaps half an hour. The diversion is vulgar because it kills time which might better be devoted to a good magazine or a good book or good music, and in other ways is inimical to the graces of life.

And it is vindictive, if for no other reason, because such devices as the "squeeze" and the "end-play" are related in their nature to the rack and the thumbscrew. Competition is a form of warfare, which by militarists may be regarded as good sport, but which is manslaughter in one of its cruelest forms; and nowhere is the spirit of devastating competition more fiercely aroused than in contract bridge. Husbands and wives quarrel, families are sundered, because of mistaken bidding or the fall of the cards.

The fact that a king is on the wrong side of the board, and that a finesse therefore fails, may precipitate a tempest. The fact that a good card was not employed by the declarer to sluff the last of a losing suit may bring ignominy, and even more disastrous results, upon him.

Contract bridge has introduced to the language a new terminology and a new slang. It has popularized at least one German word, "kibitzer." The kibitzer illustrates afresh the predilection of the American public for what has been called "spectatoritis," a disease of looking on instead of participating in events.

At most major bridge tournaments the doors are locked against these creatures, each team plays in a separate room amid a sepulchral silence, broken only in low-spoken bids and responses, and the god of chance operates in privacy. But at the recent US Championship convention when seven national titles were to be decided, announcements were broadcast through a loud-speaker, all the players in action assembled in one hall, boisterous conversation was heard on every side, and the kibitzer was in his glory. The occasion monopolized more public attention than the Presidential Campaign then getting into its stride. Now, it must be admitted that the game of politics is so intricate that the average citizen has much less chance of learning its ins and outs than he has of mastering the two-over-one system of bidding.

One reason we have so many absentees from the polls and so little intensity of interest in campaigns is that the novice, unable to understand the complexities of politics, usually lets the bosses take the reins. Yet these are no reasons for arguing that contract bridge is better entitled to public interest than politics, which is the lifeblood of a republic.

The truth is that contract bridge, as I see it, has brought a distortion of values and maladjustment of the national life, which needs to be remedied. Our best hope, I think, is that the fad will cure itself, or kill itself.

Biographies of this Year's NEC Cup Canadian Team

John Carruthers (JC) lives in Toronto with his wife **Katie Thorpe** and their four cats: Justine, Balthazar, Mountolive and Clea. JC is a Project Manager for the Ontario provincial government and is close enough to retirement to think he might live long enough to achieve it. Rumor has it that Katie has been nominated for sainthood after 30 years of JC. John has won a number of Canadian and North American titles and two Forbo titles in the Netherlands. JC has been NPC of eight Canadian teams and one American team. He is also the Editor of the International Bridge Press Association Bulletin. This is his third trip to Yokohama; the first was as NPC of Canada's 1991 Venice Cup team. He claims to have been Japanese in a previous life.

Joe Silver is the senior partner in his own law firm in Montréal and has been successfully keeping his clients out of jail for several decades. The streets of Montréal are reputedly not as safe as they might otherwise have been if Joey had not been so successful. Among his many championships, Joey counts the Cavendish Pairs as one of the most important. Joey was a key part of the Canadian team that won the silver medal in the Bermuda Bowl in Beijing in 1995 and the team that won gold in the 2002 IOC Cup in Salt Lake City. "Life in the fast lane," describes Joey's style at bridge and in life. Joey is here with Muriel, his girlfriend from when they were teenagers; they have revived their romance after...some years. Joey played with Irving Litvack and Rhoda Habert on earlier trips to

Japan.

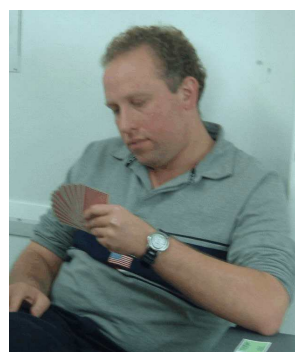
George Mittelman claims that if things don't go well for him soon he may have to return to his previous residence on a Toronto park bench. He'll have to displace the homeless man who has been sleeping there for the past few years, though. After a number of close encounters with the authorities years ago, George turned to legalized gambling in the stock market. George took over from **Bruce Gowdy** as the 'enfant terrible' of Canadian bridge, and **Dianna Gordon**, his wife, may well achieve sainthood before JC's wife Katie. George has a complete set of medals from World Championship play (two gold, one silver, three bronze) and has won more Canadian Championships than any other player, which has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that he's played in more of them than any other player. George played on the Canadian team in the 2000 NEC Cup that lost a tie-breaker for the final playoff spot to the Japan Ladies Olympiad Team. He vows this time will be different.

Allan Graves currently resides in Victoria, British Columbia and was known as Chewbacca when at his most hirsute. Allan has won many titles in North America and elsewhere. When Allan and George Mittelman were partners in the 1980s, Allan was coming to Toronto for the first time so they could work on their system. Allan asked George if he had space to put him up while he was in town. "Sure, no problem," said George, "you can have the park bench next to mine!" Allan wisely decided to stay with Eric Murray instead. Murray recalls that he left Allan with the following instructions when he went to the office early one morning: "Take out the garbage and keep the cat in." Allan is non compos mentis so early in the morning, and when Eric came home that evening he found that Allan had put the cat out and brought the trash in! This is Allan's first trip to Japan, and he would like everyone to make him feel welcome by playing badly against him and George.

Bridge from the Twilight Zone: The Tale of the Singleton Two of Spades

by Pietro Campanile

Ladies and Gentlemen, make yourselves comfortable for the story I am about to narrate is likely to change the way you will look again at a pack of cards.



Michael Barel

Michael Barel, who is competing here for the first time at the NEC as a member of the Israeli team, has a deceptively youngish look for his age, considering that the events that befell him and that I am about to relate could easily have made him age 20 years overnight.

Michael started off his international career as a junior and afterwards he immediately gained the qualification to represent Israel at the 1996 Rhodes Olympiad, with his partner **Aric Perlmutter**. Little did he know that the beautiful surroundings of the Greek island were to be the starting scene of a nightmare that would follow him for the next five years.

Curtain up on the match between un-fancied Tunisia and Israel in the qualifying round-robin. After a disappointing series of flattish hands in the first half this board came up:

Dir: North	♠ QJ10643	
Vul: E/W	♥ K4	
	♦ 9	
	♣ J973	
♠ A975		♠ K8
♥ QJ107		♥ A953
♦ AK832		♦ QJ104
♣ —		♣ AQ2
	♠ 2	
	♥ 862	
	♦ 765	
	♣ K108654	

After Perlmutter opened a Multi 2♦ in North, the Tunisian E/W bid quickly to 6♥, played from the East seat.

Barel naturally led his singleton ♠2, five, jack, king. Now declarer, realizing that there was

some danger of a spade ruff but failing to appreciate that a heart finesse would have been a completely safe play within that scenario, decided on a rather different type of "safety" play. He continued with the ♥A and a heart, to the amazement of North who must have been sure that his ♥K would have a very short life expectancy with ♥QJ10x in dummy. Barel dutifully echoed in hearts but this delicate signal was probably lost on his partner who must have still been looking in disbelief at his ♥K holding the trick.

Perlmutter eventually looked up and started thinking and thinking and thinking, while in the meantime his partner was in agony waiting for his ruff to come. Aric spent a few very long minutes looking alternatively at declarer and at the ♠A97 in dummy. He was clearly worried that if Barel could not ruff the return of the ♠Q declarer would establish a third spade winner (for a diamond discard) after the ruffing finesse against his ♠J. Eventually he came to a decision and played back a club!

6♠ made. Israel lost 8 IMPs, and the deal came back to haunt the Israelis who missed qualification by 1.5 VP.

Curtain down.

Years go by, thousands of deals are played and forgotten but that board stayed fresh in Barel's mind as he battled and defeated all comers to successfully gain the right to represent Israel at the 2001 European Championships in Tenerife.

To further exorcise the ghost of the singleton spade, our hero made sure to relate the funny story to his new partner, **Yoram Aviram**, on the flight there, especially since the venue name, Tenerife, had some affinity with the Hebrew for give me a ruff (in slang: "enli ruff").

The tournament had its ups and downs, but the Israelis managed a powerful surge in the last rounds to get back in contention for a qualifying spot to the Bermuda Bowl.

Curtain up on the match between Israel and Belgium, two rounds from the end of the tournament.

After a disappointing first half after which they

trailed by 20 IMPs, Board 17 came up. North dealt with both sides vulnerable.

Barel, sitting West, held:

♠2 ♥10932 ♦932 ♣K10853.

He must have felt a little tingle when he noticed a certain singleton spade in his hand, but it all got a lot worse when the bidding started to take a dreadfully familiar course:

West	North	East	South
<i>Barel</i>		<i>Aviram</i>	
	1♥	2♠	3♦
Pass	3♠	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

With a horrible feeling of *deja vu*, Barel led his ♠2, taken perforce by dummy's ace as the following dummy appeared.

North (Dummy)
♠ A
♥ KQJ85
♦ 87
♣ AQ976
West (Barel)
♠ 2
♥ 10932
♦ 932
♣ K10853

Declarer played a diamond to the jack and the ♦K, taken with the ace by **Yoran Aviram**, who then started to think.

Disbelief, amazement, panic, all those emotions were playing a macabre dance in our hero's mind: " Could it happen again? That same cursed singleton ♠2 clouding the thoughts of my partner giving away another slam and the qualification with it? My ruff, I want my ruff! Give me my ruff!!"

This agony took several long minutes, but finally Aviram played...the ♠K, the ♠Q and then at last Barel got his ruff, five years too late maybe, but still enough for a gain of 14 Imps leading to a couple more good results and a 20-10 win. Israel qualified for the Bermuda bowl, by 2 VPs.

Maybe 2 is not such a bad number after all!

Six Nos Trump

by John Carruthers, Toronto

Okay, okay, I confess. I'm a word freak—the article's title is a bit of a play on words—and English is such an interesting or bizarre language, depending on your point of view. It has by far the most words of any language (more than one million and counting), and unlike, say, Italian, every rule of grammar has exceptions.

My title stems from the fact that some English phrases pluralize the first word rather than the second or third, depending on which word is the noun and which is the adjective (Attorneys General, Members of Parliament, not Attorney Generals or Member of Parliaments; but State Senators and Supreme Court Justices).

Since every single one of the adjectives in those examples can also be used as a noun in a different context, it's no wonder that even native, as well as non-native, English speakers have trouble with the language.

So, what should the plural of six no trump be? Probably six no trumps, but that might seem to be the British version of the singular (North American) six no trump. See, English is ambiguous as well.

In any case, it's time to get your warmup suits on (in this case, warmup is the adjective and suits the noun!).

Here are two six no trump contracts (also, in English, there is always a way to avoid an awkward or ambiguous construction). In the first deal you have to find the best line of play, in the second the best opening lead. Here we go...

1. IMPs.

Dir: South	♠ J943
Vul: None	♥ AQ98
	♦ A102
	♣ 64
	♠ AK
	♥ K65
	♦ KQJ4
	♣ KJ72

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	2NT(1)
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	5NT(2)	Pass	6NT

All Pass

(1) 21-22, but South thought 20-22.

(2) Intended as super-invitational to 6NT, but taken as forcing to 6NT and invitational to 7NT

You didn't think it would be easy did you? Obviously, the idiots who held these cards (I confess to being one of them) had no idea what they were doing. At any rate, how would you play on the lead of the ♦6 (third from even, lowest from odd)?

Suppose you win the ♦10 (East plays the three, standard count and attitude) and lead a club (it looks like you need at least the ♣AQ onside to get home). East rises with the ace (good news), West following with the four, and returns the ♠2 to your king, West following with the five. Please continue.

2. IMPs. Dealer North. Both Vul. You are West, and hold: ♠K9♥102♦J96542♣843. The auction proceeds:

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

(1) Positive with hearts

What would you lead?

Answers:

1.	♠ J943	
	♥ AQ98	
	♦ A102	
	♣ 64	
♠ Q875		♠ 1062
♥ J742		♥ 103
♦ 976		♦ 853
♣ 94		♣ AQ1083
	♠ AK	
	♥ K65	
	♦ KQJ4	
	♣ KJ72	

I came under tremendous fire from partner for my line of play. I played as described, winning the spade return, cashing the diamonds, both defenders following to three rounds and discarding a spade on the fourth. When I next cashed the ♠A and West followed with the eight and East the ten, I thought West probably had the ♠Q (East needn't have exited a dangerous spade if he'd had the queen).

I next played off the ♥AK, noting the fall of the ten with some interest. When I led the third heart, the moment of truth had arrived. I reasoned that East had three spades; I knew he'd had three diamonds. So he either held ♥J103 and four clubs or ♥103 and five clubs. Since a four-three club break was more likely with all other suits breaking evenly, I went against Restricted Choice and played the queen. When no one was squeezed, down I went.

Essentially, I would have made 6NT when the same opponent guarded hearts and clubs or clubs and spades, or when I could guess hearts. I would go down when the ♠Q was with four hearts. By playing clubs first, as partner (the one-and-only Eric Murray) not too kindly suggested, the spade-heart squeeze would have worked (but, as he ignored, the club-spade squeeze would not).

There was an improvement. Playing the way I had, at the crucial moment, Katie Thorpe suggested finessing the heart, since (Restricted Choice in hearts aside) West may have preferred a heart lead with three small rather than the diamond he'd actually led (Restricted Choice on opening lead!).

Even better would have been to play off two heart tricks ending in the dummy rather than in hand. Then, when East followed with the ♥10, and assuming West had the ♠Q, East must hold clubs, so clubs should be played next since the transportation is no longer needed for the club-spade squeeze. Phew!

2. Thinking about what partner had for his bidding, I reasoned he must have a ruff and a trick against 6♥, but, obviously, two tricks against 6NT. Thus he must have a diamond ruff and the ♠AQ (or ♥AK) or a club ruff and the ♦AK, the ♥AK or the ♠AQ.

Now, moving to South's bidding, he cannot be

missing both the ♥AK and jump to 6♥. That would be suicidal opposite a partner who may have no hearts at all. So, Partner must have the ♠AQ or ♦AK.

Over to North. Suppose partner is ruffing a diamond (plus he holds the ♠AQ). That would leave North with something like ♠J1098 ♥— ♦AK ♣AKQJ1098 (say). He could have three diamonds rather than two. Would he have bid that way? No way! He'd have bid 3NT over 3♦.

Tempting as it is to think partner must have a diamond ruff against 6♥, it is really not logical for that to be the case. For everyone's bidding to make some sense, the full deal must be something like this:

	♠ AQJ10	
	♥ —	
	♦ 7	
	♣ AKQJ10976	
♠ K9		♠ 8765432
♥ 102		♥ 6543
♦ J96542		♦ AK
♣ 843		♣ —
	♠ —	
	♥ AKQJ987	
	♦ Q1083	
	♣ 52	

Congratulations if you worked it all out. Was that the way it was? Almost, but not exactly. East was 6=3=3=1 with the ♦AK and the rest all small cards! He'd made a psychic Lightner Double to convince the opponents to run to 6NT! Honestly, this actually happened! You might say East knew his customers.

Thanks to Andy Stark for Problem 2.

(John Carruthers, playing here for Canada, is the editor of the International Bridge Press Association (IBPA) Bulletin. The IBPA is a worldwide organization of about 500 bridge journalists. Many of the world's top players and writers, such as Eric Kokish, Alan Truscott, Bobby Wolff, Sabine Auken, Gabriel Chagas, and Zia Mahmood are members. Information and membership forms can be found at www.ibpa.com. Or John will be pleased to enroll you.)

The Last Deal

by Eric Kokish and Beverly Kraft

Beverly: "With two boards to go, it seemed certain that Italy, ahead by 21 IMPs, would win the 2003 Bermuda Bowl. However, on the penultimate board, Italy's Bocchi-Duboin (uncharacteristically) went wrong by stretching to 5♥ uncontested and presented 10 IMPs to their desperate American opponents.

"It was exciting watching the action 'live' on my computer, thanks to the efforts of Bridge Base Online and e-bridge. Thousands of us watched these free web-casts from home. I had just returned from Monte Carlo after our Canadian women's team had lost in the quarterfinals to USA2, but Eric was still there, fulfilling his dual role as coach of USA1 and Vugraph commentator. There had been many lead changes and a lot of tired bridge through the first 127 deals of the match and I felt Eric's pain as his team repeatedly missed opportunities down the stretch. Tell us about the incredible ending, Kokes."

Eric: "Where there had been unbridled Italian joy since their team had come back from 28 IMPs behind to take the lead, there was now a definite atmosphere of Italian fear in the Vugraph theatre, mingled with hope from the beleaguered American supporters. Italy's lead was down to 11 IMPs and anything was possible now.

"With only E/W vulnerable, the Americans needed to make a non-vulnerable game in one room and collect a non-vulnerable *two*-trick set or a *doubled* one-trick set in the other to tie, or gain the equivalent of a full vulnerable game swing to win.

Bd:128	♠ 2	
Dir: West	♥ AJ93	
Vul: E/W	♦ KQ109865	
	♣ 5	
♠ J10		♠ A6543
♥ 542		♥ KQ1086
♦ A7		♦ 42
♣ K107642		♣ A
	♠ KQ987	
	♥ 7	
	♦ J3	
	♣ QJ983	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>
Pass	1♦(1)	2♦(2)	Pass
2♥	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

- (1) Precision, 2+ diamonds
- (2) Hearts and spades

"The Closed Room result was a poor one for Italy: Bocchi-Duboin over-reached to 4♥ after stopping at 2♥ and went four down. They were lucky that no one doubled, but -400 could not be regarded as a triumph.

"Suddenly, all the Americans needed in order to tie was +100 from Hamman-Soloway, +200 or more to win. But how could they achieve *any* plus score with the E/W cards? N/S were unlikely to get higher than 3♦, and if E/W competed to 3♥, the terrible breaks would be impossible to overcome.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Hamman</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Soloway</i>	<i>Versace</i>
Pass	1♦	2♦(1)	Dbl(2)
2♥	3♦	Pass	Pass
3♥	5♦	Dbl	All Pass

- (1) Hearts and spades
- (2) Cards

"Sure enough, Lauria-Versace stopped at 3♦. The Americans could not win and were unlikely to tie by passing out 3♦, but Hamman kept his team's hopes alive by protecting with 3♥. Now all Lauria had to do in order to give Italy its first Bermuda Bowl in 28 years was...pass.

"But he didn't know that, of course, although he believed the match was very close. Had he competed to 4♦, we might still be playing, but Lauria boldly jumped to 5♦, ironically paralleling teammate Bocchi's decision to bid game when his side had stopped in a partial.

"Soloway doubled and led the ♣A, Hamman contributing the neutral seven. While Soloway was deciding what to play next (two rounds of trumps would have led to -300 or -500 and an American victory), Versace left the room, a bizarre move at any time but particularly unorthodox with the match on the line. Lauria was now obliged to play both his own cards and dummy's.

Soloway switched to the ♡Q. Lauria won the ace and returned the ♡J, ruffing East's king in dummy. Declarer ruffed a club with the ♦8 and ruffed the ♡3 with the ♦J, hoping to fell the ten in West. Now Lauria was 'sure' to go two down, reducing the Italian supporters to a near-catatonic state. Lauria reached over to dummy to lead the ♠K, jack, deuce, ace.

"Everyone 'knew' that Soloway would cash the ♡10 and that the ♦A would provide the second undertrick for -300. However, Hamman had given Soloway the wrong remainder count in hearts, indicating a four-card holding. On that basis Lauria was out of hearts, so it couldn't hurt for Soloway to play a spade as Hamman might be ruffing it, and if he couldn't, it wouldn't matter, as declarer would be 1=3=8=1.

"When Soloway played a spade, the Italian supporters who had not given up had something to cheer about as Lauria would be able to pitch his heart loser on the ♠Q and escape for -100. The match would be tied and the teams would

play another eight boards to *try* to break it!

"But that is not what happened. Lauria, either because he was expecting Soloway to cash the ♡10 or because he didn't see what Soloway had played, reached out and detached the ♠7 as his *discard* from dummy. We saw it happen on the Bridge Vision screen and heard the card caller (Babette Piganeau) name that card on the microphone. After West followed suit with the ♠10, Lauria saw what had happened. He tried to replace the ♠7 with the queen, but the Tournament Director, after confirming the facts, ruled that the ♠7 was a played card, as declarer had detached it with the intent of playing it. It was an unfortunate mental error, but an error nonetheless, and the ruling was a clear decision on a point of law. So Lauria had to lose the ♡3 after all and was down 300. The Americans gained 12 IMPs, just enough to win the Bermuda Bowl by a single IMP, 304-303."

Beverly: "It's over now, sweetie, you can exhale."

The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Here

by Pietro Campanile

During the 2001 European Championships in Tenerife the Russian stars **Andrei Gromov** and **Alexander Petrunin**, playing on VuGraph against the Italians Bocchi-Duboin, stunned the audience with an auction that became a strong candidate for best bid hand of the tournament.

West	North	East	South
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Petrunin</i>
Pass	1♣	Pass	Pass
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠	Pass	2♡
Pass	4♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	5♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	7♣	Pass	5♠
		All Pass	

Gromov opened a strong club and Petrunin showed 8-10 points with his 1NT reply. 2♣ was natural, but initiated a rely sequence. Petrunin's 2♡ showed a balanced hand and denied a four-card major and 3♠ indicated a five-card diamond suit. 4NT was RKCB in clubs and 5♦ asked for the ♣Q. The only remaining unknown factor for Gromov was the quality of South's diamond suit (the ♦J becoming a huge card in 7♣), but he decided that the slam would have a lot of play in many different layouts opposite the shape and the values that Petrunin had promised and backed his judgment by jumping to the grand slam. After winning the heart lead, Gromov drew trumps and claimed.

Bd: 10	♠ A96
Dlr: East	♡ A6
Vul: Both	♦ KQ
	♣ AKJ1063
♠ KJ87	♠ Q1043
♡ K74	♡ J10953
♦ 10952	♦ 43
♣ 74	♣ 95
	♠ 52
	♡ Q82
	♦ AJ876
	♣ Q82

Snapshots of Monte Carlo: Out of Control(s)

by Eric Kokish

No one could accuse Lorenzo Lauria and Alfredo Versace of lacking courage and flair, and their track record at the highest level is magnificent. Early in the 2003 Bermuda Bowl Final, however, they encountered back-to-back slam zone deals that left them talking to themselves:

Bd: 2	♠ 764		
Dlr: East	♥ KJ976		
Vul: N/S	♦ KQ8		
	♣ 103		
♠ 109852		♠ AKJ3	
♥ AQ82		♥ 10	
♦ A106		♦ 974	
♣ 5		♣ KQJ87	
	♠ Q		
	♥ 543		
	♦ J532		
	♣ A9642		

Bermuda Bowl; Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Freeman</i>
1♠	Pass	1♣(1)	Pass
4♣(2)	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	4♥(3)	Pass
6♠	All Pass	5♣(4)	Pass

- (1) 2+ clubs
- (2) 1st or 2nd-round club control
- (3) 1st or 2nd-round heart control, no diamond control
- (4) 1st or 2nd-round club control, slam-suitable non-minimum

Our heroes climbed all the way to 6♠. Lauria was hoping that 4♣ would deliver the ♣A and not a shortness control, and thought he could afford to go past game even without a diamond control. Versace, expecting a bit more, committed to slam on the strength of his first-round controls in diamonds and hearts and his fifth spade. Perhaps 5♦ would have been enough over 5♣, although the damage was already done.

With the diamond lead clearly indicated on the auction, Versace had no chance in 6♠ and went two down: -100. 11 IMPs to USA.

Versace believes he bid too much, but the Italian misery was largely due to their control-showing style, which gives first- and second-round

controls equal weight in most situations. With this deal as the catalyst, Lauria-Versace have revised their methods: Today 3NT would show a high-card control in opener's first suit, 4♣ a shortness control.

Bd: 3	♠ AK104		
Dlr: South	♥ 83		
Vul: E/W	♦ K1063		
	♣ J43		
♠ 8		♠ J953	
♥ AKQ9752		♥ J104	
♦ J4		♦ AQ87	
♣ K106		♣ A9	
	♠ Q762		
	♥ 6		
	♦ 952		
	♣ Q8752		

Bermuda Bowl; Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Nickell</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Freeman</i>
1♥	Dbl	2NT(1)	Pass
3♣(2)	Pass	3♦(3)	Pass
3♠(4)	Pass	4♥	All Pass

- (1) Limit raise or better in hearts with three trumps
- (2) Inquiry
- (3) Opening bid or more
- (4) Spade control, slam try

Where the auction reveals that North has most of his side's high cards, 6♥ is an excellent contract for E/W, but West's singleton spade and East's doubleton are difficult assets to show.

Lauria-Versace were well into slam-try mode, with East describing his hand type accurately in the early auction. It's wildly unusual for the Italians to refuse to show a control below game in a slam sequence, but Lauria was not keen to go down in back-to-back slams and suppressed not one control but two. As this was an uncharacteristically pessimistic view for him, we can assume that there were other factors than pure bridge reasoning involved in his decision.

As Eric Rodwell opened a heavy 4♥ at the other table, the Americans had no chance to reach slam, but for Lauria-Versace, it was an opportunity wasted after the favorable 1♥ opening.

The 8th NEC Cup Final

In their semifinal top-seeded Poland easily outdistanced the Japanese team **Tajima**, the surprise of the tournament, in a match that was never really close, winning by a score of 109-68. In the other semifinal between England and USA it was anyone's match until midway through the second half. However, beginning on Board 10, England started a 63-0 run over the next seven boards to put the match out of reach. USA picked up 12 IMPs over the last four boards but it was much too little, too late. The final score was 98-63 and the English would try and keep their title against the Polish pretenders in the 64-board final.

After the first half Poland seemed to be cruising with a commanding advantage of 70-23 with 32 boards to go. It could have been all over after this board:

Bd: 39	♠ J106	
Dlr. South	♥ J1095	
Vul: Both	♦ J	
	♣ A10543	
♠ K52		♠ A843
♥ Q2		♥ AK864
♦ KQ1076		♦ A42
♣ Q76		♣ K
	♠ Q97	
	♥ 73	
	♦ 9853	
	♣ J982	

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
			Pass
1♣(1)	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♦(2)	Pass
3♦	Pass	4♦	All Pass

(1) Includes all bal. hands not opened NT

(2) Transfer to hearts, weak hearts or GF

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
			Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣(1)	Pass
2NT	Pass	6♦	All Pass

Pszczola's sequence to 2NT was forcing to game and he knew Kwiecien's shape and that he held an honor in hearts. We can see that 6♦

can be made after the lead of the ♠J, but declarer does not want to choose a line that prevents him from discovering in time that South has jack-fourth of trumps. With that in mind, Kwiecien won the ♠K and cashed the ♦K, intending to go to the ♦A. When the jack of trumps appeared there was no guarantee that it was singleton so declarer played a second trump to the ace, then led a club. North led a second spade to knock out dummy's ace and it was no longer convenient to take a club ruff as the ♥Q was the only entry to the closed hand and drawing trumps would then be impossible.

Accordingly, Kwiecien decided not to take his club ruff and instead took his remaining trumps and tried to run the hearts if his spade was not high. Pain. Misery. One down: -100. Had Kwiecien won the first spade in dummy to lead a trump to the king, he might then have conceded a club and arranged his ruff with the entry position fluid. Indeed, even two rounds of trumps and then a club would have worked had the ♠K still been in the closed hand. Having spent a half hour on this deal already, I'm convinced it merits even more, but we can't see a sure trick line that deals with all the relevant options: pick up four-one trumps, take a club ruff, ruff out the hearts and get back to them and still take a club when trumps are four-one.

And so it was that England gained 7 IMPs where a loss of 13 seemed inevitable at first glance. Poland still led 76-35 at this point and in fact managed to increase its lead to 50 IMPs with one board to go in the third quarter. On the last decisive 16 boards. First sizeable swing in board 54 (sixth of the set):

Bd: 54	♠ K	
Dlr: East	♥ 109	
Vul: E/W	♦ AJ8432	
	♣ 9652	
♠ Q6		♠ 743
♥ KJ842		♥ A53
♦ 95		♦ KQ76
♣ AQ43		♣ KJ10
	♠ AJ109852	
	♥ Q76	
	♦ 10	
	♣ 87	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
		1♣	3♠

Dbl All Pass

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
		1♣	3♠

Dbl Pass 4♦ Pass
4♥ All Pass

The fact that N/S can't beat 3NT doesn't mean E/W can find a reasonable excuse to get there, and as 4♥ can be beaten Pszczola's decision to pass his partner's negative double would appear to be the winner. On a diamond lead, declarer started hearts but had to lose three of those and two clubs for -100. And the fact that 4♥ can be defeated doesn't mean that it shall be. Any club player could and would lead the ♠K against 4♥ after partner's preempt but real experts lead the ♦A and continue with the suit-preference ♦8 to give their partner a ruff and invite him to play his ♠A to get a spade ruff in turn.

Marcin Lesniewski, an expert's expert to the core, was pleased to see his partner ruff the second diamond. He was less pleased a moment later when he unexpectedly found himself on lead with the ♠K, when his partner had imaginatively underled his ♠A. Now declarer's second spade went on the ♦K after trumps were drawn and Armstrong recorded a neat +620 on the "we" side of his private score. 11 IMPs to England, 79-108. If you think this couldn't happen to you, ask yourself how you'd like to defend if North had king-and-one spade and only five diamonds.

As if spurred by this unlikely gain, England went on to whittle away at the lead until they actually managed to draw in front after this board:

Bd: 60	♠ J862		
Dir: West	♥ J932		
Vul: N/S	♦ K8		
	♣ J63		
♠ —		♠ AQ954	
♥ 8		♥ K10654	
♦ AQ1096542		♦ J3	
♣ AKQ4		♣ 8	
	♠ K1073		
	♥ AQ7		
	♦ 7		
	♣ 109752		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Armstrong</i>	<i>Lesniewski</i>	<i>Callaghan</i>	<i>Martens</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kwiecien</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Pszczola</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

6♦ is a reasonable slam because North may not lead a heart, and even if he does, there's a fair chance of avoiding a diamond loser. I'm a big John Armstrong fan but even as a tactical move his 4NT seems like an odd choice and in the end it told him nothing. Here hearts were unbid so Lesniewski led one: +400, another excellent result for England.

Things were looking positive for Poland, however, when the bidding was displayed on the Vugraph screen. Lambardi had not doubled Pszczola's 4♥ cue bid so Senior was likely to lead a spade. Right? Wrong!

With his second-best heart so much better than his second-best spade (!), Brian's fingers settled on the ♥3. One down, -50, 10 IMPs to England, now ahead in the match by 3 IMPs, 111-108. The remaining four boards were flattish and allowed the Poles to pull back only 2 IMPs thanks to inspired declarer play and left them as very disappointed seconds by the huge margin of 1 IMP (who says overtricks don't count in team matches?).

England had trailed by 50 IMPs with one deal remaining in the third quarter, their nadir in the match. They started the final set 40 IMPs behind, with a half-IMP carryover to help them lose if the teams were tied at the table after 64 boards. The defending champions showed strength and character by holding their powerful opponents to just 7 IMPs over the final 16 deals while scoring 48 themselves. The final score was 111-110.

The Polish team did not fall apart down the stretch. Indeed, they did many good things along with their bad ones, but it's never easy to beat a team of destiny, England earning that label when they qualified for the knockout phase on IMP quotient to break a tie with South Africa. Although both teams could have avoided some

of their soft results, it's fair to say that Poland did not lose this match but England won it.

their opponents, two great teams that gave us everything we could hope for in a final.

A toast to the back-to-back champions and



2003 NEC Cup winners



2003 NEC Cup Runners Up

9th NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Location
Tuesday (Feb. 10)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 1	F201/202 (20 boards/match)
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 2	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 3	
Wednesday (Feb. 11)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 4	F201/202
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 5	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 6	
Thursday (Feb. 12)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 7	F201/202
	13:10-16:00	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 8	
	16:00-17:10	Lunch Break	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Quarter-Final 1	
Friday (Feb. 13)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final 2	F206
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final 1	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Semi-Final 2	
Saturday (Feb. 14)	10:00-12:20	NEC Cup Final 1 & Playoff for 3 rd	F206
	12:30-14:50	NEC Cup Final 2 & Playoff for 3 rd	
	14:50-16:00	Lunch Break	
	16:00-18:20	NEC Cup Final 3	
	18:30-20:50	NEC Cup Final 4	
	10:00-17:00	Yokohama Swiss Plate	
Sunday (Feb. 15)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup	F201-204
	18:00-19:00	Closing Ceremony	F205-206