

# Daily Bulletin

## 21<sup>st</sup> European Youth Team Championships



Jesolo - Italy  
11<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> July 2007



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Bulletin 6

Wednesday, 18 July 2007

# ITALY TAKES LEAD



The Playing Area

Italy had a solid day in the Junior Championship to move into the lead as previous leaders Norway struggled. The leaders are now Italy with 235, ahead of Norway 224, Netherlands 220.5, Poland 215, Sweden 205.5, and Germany 205.

I would like to welcome Bulgaria to these championships. Their Schools team lost narrowly in the first round but in Round 2 had Bulgaria's first win at a Youth Championship since 1988 – the last time any Bulgarian team took part. Not only that, but the win was 24.5-0 over Netherlands, and they followed it up by demolishing Hungary 25-0 in Round 3 then beat Czech Republic 18-12 to lie fourth on 81.5 behind Poland and England, tied on 89, 1 VP ahead of Sweden on 88. Meanwhile, spare a thought for Wales, who have started 1, 1, 0, 0. Ouch! Let's all wish them a change of fortune today.

### TEAM

#### PHOTOGRAPHS



Today it is the turn of the following teams to have their photographs taken for the EBL database. Would the captains please ensure that **all players** of the team plus the **npc** are present outside the

front door of the Palace as follows:

|             |       |         |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| Italy       | 13.00 | Juniors |
| Bulgaria    | 13.00 | Schools |
| Czech Rep.  | 13.00 | Schools |
| Denmark     | 13.00 | Schools |
| England     | 13.00 | Schools |
| France      | 13.30 | Schools |
| Germany     | 13.30 | Schools |
| Hungary     | 13.30 | Schools |
| Israel      | 13.30 | Schools |
| Italy       | 17.00 | Schools |
| Latvia      | 17.00 | Schools |
| Netherlands | 17.00 | Schools |
| Norway      | 17.00 | Schools |
| Poland      | 17.00 | Schools |

**Maria Ploumbi** - EBL Photographer



### VUGRAPH MATCHES

|                                |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| England - Poland (Juniors)     | 10.00 |
| Netherlands - Sweden (Juniors) | 14.00 |
| Bulgaria - Denmark (Schools)   | 17.30 |



APTOURISMO  
Ambito Turistico Jesolo Eraclea



# JUNIOR TEAMS



## RESULTS



## TODAY'S PROGRAM

### ROUND 11

| Match |                        | IMP's   | VP's    |
|-------|------------------------|---------|---------|
| 1     | GREECE SWEDEN          | 39 - 28 | 17 - 13 |
| 2     | ROMANIA SLOVAKIA       | 68 - 20 | 25 - 5  |
| 3     | CZECH REPUBLIC CROATIA | 37 - 54 | 11 - 19 |
| 4     | BELGIUM TURKEY         | 68 - 41 | 21 - 9  |
| 5     | ENGLAND LATVIA         | 57 - 38 | 19 - 11 |
| 6     | POLAND SCOTLAND        | 45 - 18 | 21 - 9  |
| 7     | HUNGARY AUSTRIA        | 64 - 39 | 20 - 10 |
| 8     | DENMARK NORWAY         | 48 - 30 | 19 - 11 |
| 9     | RUSSIA FRANCE          | 20 - 34 | 12 - 18 |
| 10    | GERMANY NETHERLANDS    | 14 - 33 | 11 - 19 |
| 11    | ITALY PORTUGAL         | 56 - 19 | 23 - 7  |

### ROUND 13

|    |                |             |
|----|----------------|-------------|
| 1  | GREECE         | AUSTRIA     |
| 2  | SCOTLAND       | NORWAY      |
| 3  | LATVIA         | FRANCE      |
| 4  | TURKEY         | NETHERLANDS |
| 5  | CROATIA        | PORTUGAL    |
| 6  | SLOVAKIA       | ITALY       |
| 7  | SWEDEN         | GERMANY     |
| 8  | ROMANIA        | RUSSIA      |
| 9  | CZECH REPUBLIC | DENMARK     |
| 10 | BELGIUM        | HUNGARY     |
| 11 | ENGLAND        | POLAND      |

### ROUND 12

| Match |                       | IMP's   | VP's    |
|-------|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| 1     | POLAND GREECE         | 28 - 23 | 16 - 14 |
| 2     | HUNGARY ENGLAND       | 16 - 49 | 8 - 22  |
| 3     | DENMARK BELGIUM       | 45 - 34 | 17 - 13 |
| 4     | RUSSIA CZECH REPUBLIC | 32 - 48 | 12 - 18 |
| 5     | GERMANY ROMANIA       | 51 - 29 | 20 - 10 |
| 6     | ITALY SWEDEN          | 53 - 30 | 20 - 10 |
| 7     | PORTUGAL SLOVAKIA     | 62 - 38 | 20 - 10 |
| 8     | NETHERLANDS CROATIA   | 27 - 23 | 16 - 14 |
| 9     | FRANCE TURKEY         | 43 - 55 | 13 - 17 |
| 10    | NORWAY LATVIA         | 40 - 60 | 11 - 19 |
| 11    | AUSTRIA SCOTLAND      | 42 - 37 | 16 - 14 |

### ROUND 14

|    |             |                |
|----|-------------|----------------|
| 1  | HUNGARY     | GREECE         |
| 2  | DENMARK     | POLAND         |
| 3  | RUSSIA      | ENGLAND        |
| 4  | GERMANY     | BELGIUM        |
| 5  | ITALY       | CZECH REPUBLIC |
| 6  | PORTUGAL    | ROMANIA        |
| 7  | NETHERLANDS | SWEDEN         |
| 8  | FRANCE      | SLOVAKIA       |
| 9  | NORWAY      | CROATIA        |
| 10 | AUSTRIA     | TURKEY         |
| 11 | SCOTLAND    | LATVIA         |

### Entry into the Playing Area



Please note that entry to the playing area after play has started is at the discretion of the tournament director.

### Today's Schedule

- 10.00 Schools Teams, Round 5
- 10.00 Junior Teams, Round 13
- 14.00 Schools Teams, Round 6
- 14.00 Junior Teams, Round 14
- 17.30 Schools Teams, Round 7
- 17.30 Junior Teams, Round 15

### ROUND 15

|    |                |             |
|----|----------------|-------------|
| 1  | GREECE         | SCOTLAND    |
| 2  | LATVIA         | AUSTRIA     |
| 3  | TURKEY         | NORWAY      |
| 4  | CROATIA        | FRANCE      |
| 5  | SLOVAKIA       | NETHERLANDS |
| 6  | SWEDEN         | PORTUGAL    |
| 7  | ROMANIA        | ITALY       |
| 8  | CZECH REPUBLIC | GERMANY     |
| 9  | BELGIUM        | RUSSIA      |
| 10 | ENGLAND        | DENMARK     |
| 11 | POLAND         | HUNGARY     |

## SCHOOLS TEAMS



### RESULTS



#### ROUND 2

|   | Match                 | IMP's    | VP's    |
|---|-----------------------|----------|---------|
| 1 | CZECH REPUBLIC LATVIA | 37 - 56  | 11 - 18 |
| 2 | HUNGARY FRANCE        | 12 - 98  | 0 - 25  |
| 3 | SWEDEN ISRAEL         | 65 - 28  | 23 - 7  |
| 4 | DENMARK NORWAY        | 47 - 37  | 17 - 13 |
| 5 | NETHERLANDS BULGARIA  | 9 - 96   | 0 - 25  |
| 6 | TURKEY GERMANY        | 57 - 63  | 14 - 16 |
| 7 | ENGLAND WALES         | 101 - 26 | 25 - 1  |
| 8 | ITALY POLAND          | 13 - 91  | 1 - 23  |

#### ROUND 3

|   | Match                 | IMP's    | VP's    |
|---|-----------------------|----------|---------|
| 1 | LATVIA ENGLAND        | 35 - 57  | 10 - 20 |
| 2 | ITALY TURKEY          | 69 - 45  | 20 - 10 |
| 3 | POLAND NETHERLANDS    | 112 - 18 | 25 - 0  |
| 4 | WALES DENMARK         | 11 - 123 | 0 - 25  |
| 5 | GERMANY SWEDEN        | 24 - 26  | 15 - 15 |
| 6 | BULGARIA HUNGARY      | 85 - 5   | 25 - 0  |
| 7 | NORWAY CZECH REPUBLIC | 41 - 37  | 16 - 14 |
| 8 | ISRAEL FRANCE         | 41 - 45  | 14 - 16 |

#### ROUND 4

|   | Match                   | IMP's    | VP's    |
|---|-------------------------|----------|---------|
| 1 | ISRAEL LATVIA           | 69 - 46  | 20 - 10 |
| 2 | FRANCE NORWAY           | 25 - 38  | 12 - 18 |
| 3 | CZECH REPUBLIC BULGARIA | 32 - 47  | 12 - 18 |
| 4 | HUNGARY GERMANY         | 23 - 35  | 13 - 17 |
| 5 | SWEDEN WALES            | 114 - 29 | 25 - 0  |
| 6 | DENMARK POLAND          | 11 - 34  | 10 - 20 |
| 7 | NETHERLANDS ITALY       | 44 - 54  | 13 - 17 |
| 8 | TURKEY ENGLAND          | 17 - 69  | 5 - 25  |



### TODAY'S PROGRAM

#### ROUND 5

|   |             |                |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| 1 | LATVIA      | SWEDEN         |
| 2 | DENMARK     | HUNGARY        |
| 3 | NETHERLANDS | CZECH REPUBLIC |
| 4 | TURKEY      | FRANCE         |
| 5 | ENGLAND     | ISRAEL         |
| 6 | ITALY       | NORWAY         |
| 7 | POLAND      | BULGARIA       |
| 8 | WALES       | GERMANY        |

#### ROUND 6

|   |                |             |
|---|----------------|-------------|
| 1 | WALES          | LATVIA      |
| 2 | GERMANY        | POLAND      |
| 3 | BULGARIA       | ITALY       |
| 4 | NORWAY         | ENGLAND     |
| 5 | ISRAEL         | TURKEY      |
| 6 | FRANCE         | NETHERLANDS |
| 7 | CZECH REPUBLIC | DENMARK     |
| 8 | HUNGARY        | SWEDEN      |

#### ROUND 7

|   |          |                |
|---|----------|----------------|
| 1 | LATVIA   | ITALY          |
| 2 | POLAND   | ENGLAND        |
| 3 | WALES    | TURKEY         |
| 4 | GERMANY  | NETHERLANDS    |
| 5 | BULGARIA | DENMARK        |
| 6 | NORWAY   | SWEDEN         |
| 7 | ISRAEL   | HUNGARY        |
| 8 | FRANCE   | CZECH REPUBLIC |

### Today in History



On July 18, 64 A.D., a fire broke out in Rome, spreading rapidly throughout the market area in the centre of the city. When the flames finally died out more than a week later, nearly two-thirds of Rome had been destroyed. Emperor Nero used the fire as an opportunity to rebuild Rome in a more orderly Greek style and began construction on a massive palace called the Domus Aureus. Some speculated that the emperor had ordered the burning of Rome to indulge his architectural tastes, but he was away in Antium when the conflagration began. According to later Roman historians, Nero blamed members of the mysterious Christian cult for the fire and launched the first Roman persecutions of Christians in response.



## JUNIOR TEAMS

### RANKING AFTER ROUND 12

|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| 1 ITALY           | 235   |
| 2 NORWAY          | 224   |
| 3 NETHERLANDS     | 220,5 |
| 4 POLAND          | 215   |
| 5 SWEDEN          | 205,5 |
| 6 GERMANY         | 205   |
| 7 RUSSIA          | 198,5 |
| 8 ENGLAND         | 191   |
| 9 DENMARK         | 186   |
| 10 FRANCE         | 185   |
| 11 LATVIA         | 180   |
| 12 CROATIA        | 179   |
| 13 CZECH REPUBLIC | 174,5 |
| 14 HUNGARY        | 174   |
| 15 TURKEY         | 162,5 |
| 16 BELGIUM        | 156   |
| 17 SCOTLAND       | 154   |
| 18 GREECE         | 147   |
| 19 ROMANIA        | 143   |
| 20 SLOVAKIA       | 138   |
| 21 PORTUGAL       | 137   |
| 22 AUSTRIA        | 119,5 |

## SCHOOLS TEAMS

### RANKING AFTER ROUND 4

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| 1 ENGLAND         | 89   |
| POLAND            | 89   |
| 3 SWEDEN          | 88   |
| 4 BULGARIA        | 81,5 |
| 5 DENMARK         | 63   |
| ITALY             | 63   |
| 7 NORWAY          | 61   |
| 8 ISRAEL          | 60   |
| 9 GERMANY         | 58,5 |
| 10 FRANCE         | 54   |
| 11 CZECH REPUBLIC | 51   |
| 12 LATVIA         | 47   |
| 13 TURKEY         | 44,5 |
| 14 HUNGARY        | 29   |
| NETHERLANDS       | 29   |
| 16 WALES          | 2    |

## Pessimism Can Pay

The French and English Junior teams played out a hard-fought draw in Round 10. We are all used to bidding the thinnest of games at IMPs, particularly when vulnerable, but sometimes that can prove to be an expensive approach and a touch of pessimism can be highly profitable.

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

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

In the other room, the French N/S pair bid their combined 25-count to 3NT. The hands fit together only moderately well while the opposing cards lie very badly – unless declarer plays double dummy. The French declarer got nothing right and was down three for –300.

For England, Duncan Happer opened 1♣ with the South cards, either natural or, more likely, 11-13 balanced. Many would look at the North hand and drive to game but Ben Green didn't like the 4-3-3-3 shape with no intermediates and no honour combinations – plus, they open all flat 11s – so contented himself with an invitational 2NT response, which ended the auction.

It is true that 3NT can be made, as the hearts can be played for three winners and the diamonds for two, but you might start to hold your cards very close to your chest in future against anyone who managed that. Making 2NT would ensure a sizable gain for England but eight tricks were quite a way off on the automatic spade lead from East.

Green ducked the first spade but won the continuation in hand and led a low heart to the ten and jack. West switched to a low club and Green won the ace then played ace and another heart. He ducked West's club continuation but, of course, won the next club. Now it all came down to the diamonds. Leading low to the ten could result in making no further tricks if West held the jack, plus, the distribution was known and jack-doubleton was a realistic possibility. Accordingly, Green led to the ♦Q, cashed the long heart and played the low diamond for the jack, king and ace. That gave him eight tricks for +120 and 9 IMPs to England.

## GIRLS TEAMS

## ROUND 11



SWEDEN

v

GERMANY



Going into the final round of the Girls competition, Sweden was lying third. A good win would give them a chance of finishing second, depending on the Dutch result, while a poor result could see them overtaken by Israel and finish outside the medals. Germany, meanwhile, was likely to finish fifth but could hope for better if they won and Israel lost.

First blood went to Sweden.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

♠ K Q 6 5 4 2

♥ 4 3

♦ A 6 3

♣ J 3

♠ 3

♥ A J 10 8 5

♦ K Q 10 2

♣ K 9 4



♠ 9

♥ Q 7 6 2

♦ J 9 8 4

♣ A 10 7 5

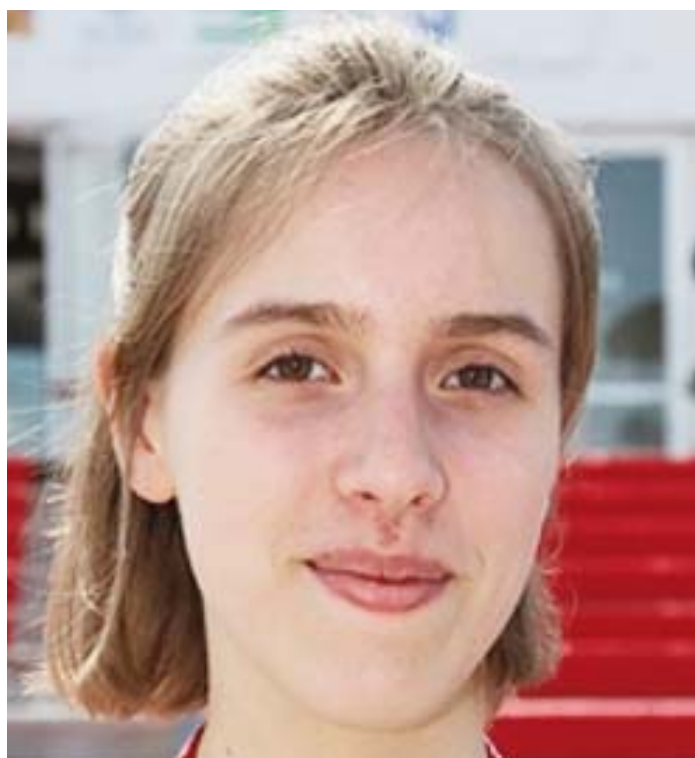
♠ A J 10 8 7

♥ K 9

♦ 7 5

♣ Q 8 6 2

| West    | North      | East        | South    |
|---------|------------|-------------|----------|
| Sjoberg | Giampietro | S. Rimstedt | Eggeling |
| Pass    | 2♦         | Pass        | 2♥       |
| Dble    | 2♠         | Pass        | 4♠       |
|         | All Pass   |             |          |



Marie Eggeling

In the other room, the Swedish N/S pair managed to play 4♠ undoubled, down two for -100. Here, Cristina Giampietro opened with a multi and Marie Eggeling responded 2♥, pass or correct. Emma Sjoberg had the wrong shortage to get involved at this point so passed, and found that the auction had reached 4♠ when it came back to her. Now she doubled, take-out of spades, and Sandra Rimstedt judged correctly that she did not have sufficient distribution to bid at the five level so passed. Rimstedt led a heart to the king and ace and Sjoberg switched to the queen of diamonds; down two for -300 and 5 IMPs to Sweden.

The first two major swings were both in favour of Germany.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ Q 7 5 2

♥ A J

♦ K J 6 4

♣ A 7 4

♠ K J 9

♥ K 10 4 2

♦ 5 3

♣ K Q 6 5



♠ A 10 8 6

♥ Q 9

♦ A Q 8 7 2

♣ 10 9

♠ 4 3

♥ 8 7 6 5 3

♦ 10 9

♣ J 8 3 2

| West    | North      | East        | South     |
|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| Sjoberg | Giampietro | S. Rimstedt | Eggeling  |
| 1♦      | INT        | Dble        | All Pass  |
| West    | North      | East        | South     |
| Rowold  | Nedlich    | Heim        | Andersson |
| 1♣      | INT        | Dble        | 2♥        |
| Pass    | Pass       | Dble        | All Pass  |

It is not obligatory to overcall INT with that North hand. With hindsight we can say that the heart holding is poor; there are no intermediates, a lack of good honour combinations, and the point count is completely minimum for the bid. Indeed, were one writing an article about hand evaluation, one might well use this hand as an example of a hand that was not worth a INT overcall. Having said all of that, many experts would overcall INT because the only sensible alternative is to pass and there may be no better opportunity to show the hand. After all, partner does not have to hold a one-count with length facing our shortage. Although the 1♦ opening was obviously loose, I have a little more sympathy with bidding over 1♦, where I have a useful positional holding in the suit opened, than I have over 1♣, where I have a very unpositional stopper. Anyway, be that as it may, both Norths did overcall and both Easts doubled.

I would have thought that it was normal to run with the South hand, which may produce zero tricks or help for partner in a no trump contract. Eggeling passed, however, and her side gained points on the board, though that perhaps had as much to do with the defence as the desirability of the contract.

Rimstedt, naturally enough, led a diamond. Dummy's nine won the trick and, for want of anything better to do, Giampietro returned the suit. Rimstedt won the  $\diamond Q$  and played ace and another diamond, establishing the fifth diamond. Now Giampietro played ace and jack of hearts. Sjoberg, who had pitched a club and a heart on the diamonds, allowed Rimstedt's queen to hold the trick, and she switched to the spade eight to the king. Eventually the defenders crashed their spade honours and set up the  $\spadesuit 7$  to allow declarer to escape for -500.

Freja Andersson did run to  $2\heartsuit$  and Anna-Marie Rowold had to pass that and wait for Anne Heim to double for take-out, which she could convert to penalty by passing again.

Rowold led the king of clubs, ducked, then switched to a diamond to Heim's queen. Back came a club to the jack, queen and ace. Andersson tried a diamond but Heim went in with the ace and gave her partner a ruff as declarer threw a spade from hand. A club ruff was followed by a low spade to the king to allow the fourth club to be played – ruffed with the jack and over-ruffed. A diamond was ruffed and over-ruffed and now a low heart to dummy's bare ace meant that Rowold still had the  $\heartsuit K$  to come; down four for -1100 and 12 IMPs to Germany.

In other matches, E/W played 3NT five times, twice going down, which suggest that five Norths did not overcall. North played  $2\heartsuit$  undoubled twice, two down and four down,  $2\clubsuit$  doubled -3 once,  $2\heartsuit$  doubled -3 once and -4 once.



Kristin Nedlich

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

|  |  |   |         |   |   |
|--|--|---|---------|---|---|
| $\spadesuit$ A Q 2<br>$\heartsuit$ A 4<br>$\diamond$ 9 5<br>$\clubsuit$ Q J 10 5 4 2   | <table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> | N   | W     E | S | $\spadesuit$ 4 3<br>$\heartsuit$ K J 5 2<br>$\diamond$ K J 4 3 2<br>$\clubsuit$ 9 8 |
| N  |  |   |         |   |   |
| W     E  |  |   |         |   |   |
| S  |  |   |         |   |   |
| $\spadesuit$ J 10 8<br>$\heartsuit$ Q 10 8 7 6<br>$\diamond$ 10<br>$\clubsuit$ A 7 6 3 |  | $\spadesuit$ K 9 7 6 5<br>$\heartsuit$ 9 3<br>$\diamond$ A Q 8 7 6<br>$\clubsuit$ K |         |   |   |

| West           | North             | East               | South           |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Sjoberg</i> | <i>Giampietro</i> | <i>S. Rimstedt</i> | <i>Eggeling</i> |
|                | 1 $\clubsuit$     | 1 $\diamond$       | 1 $\spadesuit$  |
| Pass           | 2 $\clubsuit$     | Pass               | 2 $\diamond$    |
| Dble           | 2 $\spadesuit$    | Pass               | 4 $\spadesuit$  |
| All Pass       |                   |                    |                 |

In the other room, the Swedish N/S pair played  $3\clubsuit$ , making twelve tricks for +170, when North opened  $2\clubsuit$  and reverted to  $3\clubsuit$  over her partner's forcing  $2\spadesuit$  bid. Here, the Germans quickly found their spade fit and bid to the excellent game, where Eggeling made eleven tricks for +650 after a diamond lead; 10 IMPs to Germany.

Trailing by 5-22, at this point Sweden were in real danger of missing out on the medals as Israel were doing well against Italy.

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vul.

|   |  |  |         |   |   |
|---|--|--|---------|---|---|
| $\spadesuit$ A 4 3 2<br>$\heartsuit$ K Q 5<br>$\diamond$ A K J 7<br>$\clubsuit$ 5 3 | <table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table> | N  | W     E | S | $\spadesuit$ -<br>$\heartsuit$ A 9 8<br>$\diamond$ Q 10 9 4<br>$\clubsuit$ K 10 9 8 7 4 |
| N   |  |  |         |   |   |
| W     E   |  |  |         |   |   |
| S   |  |  |         |   |   |
|   |  | $\spadesuit$ K 10 7 5<br>$\heartsuit$ 7 6 2<br>$\diamond$ 8 5 2<br>$\clubsuit$ A Q 2 |         |   |   |
|   |  | $\spadesuit$ Q J 9 8 6<br>$\heartsuit$ J 10 4 3<br>$\diamond$ 6 3<br>$\clubsuit$ J 6 |         |   |   |

| West           | North             | East               | South            |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Sjoberg</i> | <i>Giampietro</i> | <i>S. Rimstedt</i> | <i>Eggeling</i>  |
| 1 $\clubsuit$  | Pass              | 2 $\clubsuit$      | Pass             |
| 3NT            | All Pass          |                    | Pass             |
| West           | North             | East               | South            |
| <i>Rowold</i>  | <i>Nedlich</i>    | <i>Heim</i>        | <i>Andersson</i> |
| INT            | Pass              | Pass               | Pass             |
| 4 $\spadesuit$ | Pass              | 5 $\clubsuit$      | All Pass         |

Sjoberg opened a strong club and, facing a passed partner, simply jumped to 3NT opposite the natural positive

response. That got her to the wrong game but had the merit of giving little information to the opening leader. Perhaps spades would not be led? No, Giampietro found the lead of the ♠5 to the jack. Technically, Sjöberg should have ducked this and hoped to find the long spade and ♣A in separate hands. She would have been successful by ducking until the fourth round. However, she chose to win the first spade in the hope of looking stronger in the suit than was actually the case. She led a club at trick two and Giampietro took her ace and led a second low spade. When Eggeling went up with the queen, the defence could no longer get at the fifth spade and Sjöberg survived for +600.

Either defender might have done better. Firstly, North can see that she has only four spades, insufficient to break the contract, so might have continued with king and another rather than a low one. Secondly, South might also have spotted the problem and put in the eight on the second round – partner led the five on the first round and continued with the seven, so what is the spade position?

The German convention card appears to say that four-level responses to INT are RKCB, presumably for the suit bid. That is consistent with Rowold's 4♠ rebid, but it is a horrible way to treat the East hand. The fact that Germany actually reached a better contract via this route than did the Swedes at the other table, does not make it feel any better – both pairs missed the best game of all, 5♦. Five Clubs made very easily as there was no sensible way to lose more than two trump tricks as the cards lay; +600 and a flat board.

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

|   |  |   |         |   |   |
|---|--|---|---------|---|---|
| ♠ K Q 6<br>♥ J 10 2<br>♦ K 8 7 5<br>♣ A 5 2 | <table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> | N   | W     E | S | ♠ 10 9 2<br>♥ K 8 7 5 3<br>♦ 9 4 2<br>♣ 6 3 |
| N   |  |   |         |   |   |
| W     E                                     |  |   |         |   |   |
| S   |  |   |         |   |   |
| ♠ J 8 7 5 4<br>♥ A Q 9 6<br>♦ Q 10 3<br>♣ 4 |  | ♠ A 3<br>♥ 4<br>♦ A J 6<br>♣ K Q J 10 9 8 7 |         |   |   |

| West           | North             | East               | South            |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Sjöberg</i> | <i>Giampietro</i> | <i>S. Rimstedt</i> | <i>Eggeling</i>  |
| Dble           | Rdbl              | 1♥                 | 3♣               |
| 3♥             | 4♣                | Pass               | 4NT              |
| Pass           | 5♣                | Pass               | 6♣               |
| All Pass       |                   |                    |                  |
| West           | North             | East               | South            |
| <i>Rowold</i>  | <i>Nedlich</i>    | <i>Heim</i>        | <i>Andersson</i> |
| Pass           | 2NT               | Pass               | 3♣               |
| Pass           | 4♣                | Pass               | 4♦               |
| Pass           | 4♠                | Pass               | 4NT              |
| Pass           | 5♦                | Pass               | 6♣               |
| All Pass       |                   |                    |                  |

Both pairs did well to bid to the cold slam on this deal for a flat board at +1370. In the other matches, only two out of eight pairs got to six.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

|  |  |  |         |   |   |
|--|--|--|---------|---|---|
| ♠ A 3<br>♥ A 4 2<br>♦ 9 5 3<br>♣ J 8 7 3 2 | <table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> | N  | W     E | S | ♠ K Q 9 2<br>♥ Q 8<br>♦ A Q 10 4<br>♣ K 9 4 |
| N  |  |  |         |   |   |
| W     E                                    |  |  |         |   |   |
| S  |  |  |         |   |   |
|  |  | ♠ J 10 4<br>♥ K 10 9 6 5 3<br>♦ J 6<br>♣ A 6 |         |   |   |

| West           | North             | East               | South            |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Sjöberg</i> | <i>Giampietro</i> | <i>S. Rimstedt</i> | <i>Eggeling</i>  |
| Pass           | Pass              | INT                | Pass             |
| 2NT            | Pass              | 3NT                | All Pass         |
| West           | North             | East               | South            |
| <i>Rowold</i>  | <i>Nedlich</i>    | <i>Heim</i>        | <i>Andersson</i> |
| Pass           | Pass              | INT                | 2♦               |
| Pass           | 2♥                | Pass               | Pass             |
| 2NT            | Pass              | 3NT                | All Pass         |

Andersson's 2♦ overall showed either hearts or both black suits and 2♥ was pass or correct. Andersson led a heart to the jack and queen and Heim crossed to the ace of spades, Andersson playing the ten, to play a club to the king and ace. Andersson continued with the king of hearts and declarer ducked, won the next heart throwing a diamond from hand, played a diamond to the queen then ran the ♣9 to the ten. Nedlich cashed the ♣Q then played a spade and Heim put in the nine. That lost to the jack and the contract was down three for -300.

Eggeling did not come in with the South hand but she too led a heart to the jack and queen. Rimstedt did very well in the play. She started with the king of clubs from hand, which was ducked, then played a spade to the ace and ran the nine of diamonds to the jack. She ducked the heart continuation, won the next heart and took the diamond finesse. When that held she cashed the ♦A then played spades from the top and was rewarded when the jack and ten fell; nine tricks for +600 and 14 IMPs to Sweden.

Declarer could, of course, also have succeeded by continuing clubs at trick three.

That board clinched a 44-28 IMP, 18-12 VP win for Sweden and the bronze medal.





# 2006 Bridge Awards in China

by Fu Tsiang



In 2006, the CCBA (China Contract Bridge Association) Magazine organized the selection of their Hands of the Year in the following categories: bidding, play and defence. The awards are named after Shen Hua, the sponsor.

During the year, editors collected many deals from events held by the CCBA. In March 2007, a

committee consisting of players, journalists and officials voted for the winners. Coincidentally, all of the winners are from Beijing, but they play for different bridge clubs.

## 2006 Shen Hua Bidding Award

**Winner:** Hou Xu

**From:** Open Final of National Championship, 30th March

Board 49. Dealer North. None Vul.

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

| West   | North      | East   | South        |
|--------|------------|--------|--------------|
| Hou Xu | Shi Haojun | Li Jie | Zhuang Zejun |
|        | 1♣         | 1♥     | 3♦           |
| 4♥     | 4♠         | Pass   | Pass         |
| 5♥     | Pass       | Pass   | 5♠           |
| 6♣!    | Pass       | 6♥     | All Pass     |

After East's One Heart overcall, it was easy for West to visualize a slam. At many other tables, West jumped directly to Seven Hearts with this hand. But Hou Xu treated it more skillfully and successfully.

When South showed a spade pre-empt, with his 3♦ bid,

Hou Xu knew that, although they could make a heart slam, the trouble was that their suit was lower than that of the opponents. If North/South followed the heart contract with a spade bid step by step, EW would never get the slam bonus. Worse, they didn't know how many tricks a spade contract would be down.

First, Hou Xu selected a little Four Heart bid. Even if it were passed out, maybe it could result in a higher score than was available from a spade penalty. North called Four Spades and Hou Xu bid Five Hearts as planned. This was passed to South, who saved in Five Spades.

Now Hou Xu popped the long-planned and serious Six Clubs. He hoped Six Clubs would have two effects: firstly, it requested a club lead if North declared a spade contract. At such a high level, this would normally show a club void. If North/South believed this, possibly they would not continue to the six or seven-level – East/West could play their heart slam in peace.

Secondly, if North/South still bid to Six Spades, Hou Xu was ready to bid Seven Hearts. South might be confused by the pseudo-cuebid and make a wrong lead. If South didn't lead a club, Seven Hearts might be made even if East did not hold the club ace.

Finally, North/South kept quiet and East/West played the heart slam they hoped for.

In the other room the auction was:

| West | North    | East | South |
|------|----------|------|-------|
|      | 1♣       | 1♥   | 1♠    |
| 4♥   | 4♠       | Pass | Pass  |
| 5♠   | Dble     | 7♥   | 7♠    |
| Dble | All Pass |      |       |

Six Hearts plus one versus Seven Spades doubled down four won Hou Xu's team 5 IMPs, even though they did not reach the grand slam.





# SCHOOLS TEAMS ROUND 2



**ITALY**

**v**

**POLAND**



Italy and Poland both had good wins in the first round of the Schools Championship and now met on vugraph in Round 2. Poland have won the last two Schools Championships and are looking here to complete a hat-trick. This match did those ambitions no harm at all as swing after swing went in favour of the holders.

heart to the ace and a heart back to his queen, then back to dummy with a spade to the ace to lead another heart up. Di Franco took the king and returned a club but Machno judged correctly to finesse, drew the last trump and soon had twelve tricks for +1430 and 13 IMPs to Poland.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| ♠ A Q 5 4<br>♥ A 9 3<br>♦ A 7 5 3<br>♣ 9 2 | <div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 60px; height: 60px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span>N</span> <span>W</span> <span>E</span> <span>S</span> </div> | ♠ K 10 9<br>♥ Q J 6 5 2<br>♦ K<br>♣ A Q J 8 | ♠ 8 6<br>♥ K 10 7 4<br>♦ Q 9 2<br>♣ K 7 6 4 |
|  | ♠ J 7 3 2<br>♥ 8<br>♦ J 10 8 6 4<br>♣ 10 5 3  |   |   |

| West              | North            | East          | South            |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Igla</i>       | <i>Di Franco</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Mistretta</i> |
|                   |                  |               | Pass             |
| 1♣                | Pass             | 1♥            | Pass             |
| 1♠                | Pass             | 2♣            | Pass             |
| 2♠                | Pass             | 2NT           | Pass             |
| 3♦                | Pass             | 3♥            | Pass             |
| 3♠                | Pass             | 4NT           | Pass             |
| 5♦                | Pass             | 6♥            | All Pass         |
| West              | North            | East          | South            |
| <i>Delle Cave</i> | <i>Jassem</i>    | <i>Botta</i>  | <i>Zatorski</i>  |
|                   |                  |               | Pass             |
| 1♦                | Pass             | 1♥            | Pass             |
| 1♠                | Pass             | 2♣            | Pass             |
| 2♦                | Pass             | 2♥            | Pass             |
| 4♥                | All Pass         |               |                  |

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| ♠ 9 6 4<br>♥ K J 5 3<br>♦ 6<br>♣ Q 10 9 7 3 | <div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 60px; height: 60px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span>N</span> <span>W</span> <span>E</span> <span>S</span> </div> | ♠ A J 7 5<br>♥ 7 6<br>♦ A 8 4 3<br>♣ J 8 2 | ♠ K 8<br>♥ Q 2<br>♦ Q J 10 9 7 2<br>♣ A K 5 |
|   | ♠ Q 10 3 2<br>♥ A 10 9 8 4<br>♦ K 5<br>♣ 6 4  |  |   |

| West        | North            | East          | South            |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Di Franco</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Mistretta</i> |
|             | INT              | Pass          | 2♣               |
| Dble        | Pass             | Pass          | Rdbl             |
| Pass        | 2♦               | 3♣            | 3♥               |
| Pass        | 3NT              | All Pass      |                  |

We are a little (OK then, a lot) short on system details I'm afraid, so all I can tell you is that the essentially natural Italian auction stopped in game, which seems to be a good idea looking at the just the E/W hands, while the Polish Club got all the way to six. A nearly hopeless contract on a diamond lead.

Giorgia Botta, for Italy, received a club lead to the king and ace and made eleven tricks easily enough for +650, winning the club and running the queen of hearts at trick two so losing two trump tricks.

For Poland, Artur Machno had to take a little more care. He too received a club lead but Massimiliano Di Franco did not put up the king so Machno's eight scored. Declarer played a



Artur Machno

| West              | North         | East         | South           |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Delle Cave</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Botta</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
|                   | INT           | Pass         | 2♣              |
| Pass              | 2♦            | Pass         | 3♠              |
| Pass              | 3NT           | All Pass     |                 |

Both Norths declared 3NT after South had shown his five-four hand in the majors. The difference was that Bartlomiej Iгла had doubled 2♣ for the lead – not altogether a secure action with that suit – while Guiseppe Delle Cave had not.

With no helpful double to help with the lead, Botta led a low diamond, which did not hurt declarer in the slightest, of course. Pawel Jassem won dummy's king and continued the suit. After a heart switch, he settled for a safe nine tricks and +600.

Machno, of course, led a club, ducked. Di Franco won the second club and played a diamond to the king then a spade to the king and ace. The clubs were cleared but now he had no quick entry back to the diamonds. He played the ten of diamonds, which held the trick then, in desperation, ran the heart queen. The contract was two down for -200 and 13 IMPs to Poland.



Eugenio Mistretta

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

| West        | North            | East          | South            |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Iгла</i> | <i>Di Franco</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Mistretta</i> |
|             |                  | Pass          | 1♣               |
| Pass        | 1♦               | Pass          | 1♥               |
| Pass        | 2NT              | Pass          | 3♣               |
| Pass        | 4♥               | All Pass      |                  |

| West              | North         | East         | South           |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Delle Cave</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Botta</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
|                   |               | Pass         | 1♣              |
| Pass              | 1♦            | Pass         | 2♦              |
| Pass              | 2♥            | Pass         | 2NT             |
| Pass              | 3♣            | Pass         | 3♥              |
| Pass              | 5♥            | Pass         | 6♥              |
| All Pass          |               |              |                 |

Both 1♣ openings were forcing but that is the end of the similarity between the two auctions. Again, we lack system

information. Piotr Zatorski's 2♦ rebid was artificial and game-forcing and Jassem eventually admitted to some useful values but nothing to cuebid when he jumped to 5♥. That was enough for Zatorski, who had all five key cards, a useful side-suit and ruffing values, to go on to slam. Seven Hearts is cold but Jassem slightly lazily only made twelve tricks, winning the trump lead and drawing trumps before taking one diamond ruff, when it is safe to play for two ruffs after drawing a second trump and finding the suit breaking evenly. Not to worry, with the Italians languishing in game and also making only twelve tricks, that was another 11 IMPs to Poland.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

| West        | North            | East          | South            |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Iгла</i> | <i>Di Franco</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Mistretta</i> |
|             |                  |               | Pass             |
| Pass        | Pass             | INT           | 2♣               |
| Dble        | 2♥               | Dble          | All Pass         |

We do not have the auction from the other room but E/W reached 5♦ and you will not be altogether surprised to hear that this contract failed by a trick; -100.

Machno judged that the East hand was a strong no trump opening. I can't say that I agree with him, but I doubt that this will concern him overmuch, and it worked big-time. I don't like Eugenio Mistretta's 2♣ overcall very much either and, on reflection, he may agree with me. It is dangerous to come in on a moderate eight-count vulnerable facing a passed partner and, while conceding a large penalty is the biggest downside, a partscore is the only upside. When Igla could double 2♣, it was easy for Machno to double 2♥, which ended the auction.

Machno cashed the ace of spades then switched to a diamond, not best, as Di Franco could now play three rounds of diamonds to throw a losing club from dummy. He played a trump next and Igla won the bare queen. Machno won the club and played three rounds of trumps, leaving declarer with just one spade trick to come; down three for -800 and 14 IMPs to Poland who, after seven deals, led by an imposing 58-0 IMPs.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

|   |  |  |         |   |   |
|---|--|--|---------|---|---|
| ♠ A Q 4 3<br>♥ 6<br>♦ K 9 7 6 5 3<br>♣ K Q    | <table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> | N  | W     E | S | ♠ -<br>♥ K Q J 10 9 8 7 5 2<br>♦ -<br>♣ A J 4 3 |
| N   |  |  |         |   |   |
| W     E                                       |  |  |         |   |   |
| S   |  |  |         |   |   |
| ♠ K J 10 7 5 2<br>♥ -<br>♦ Q J 8 4<br>♣ 9 7 2 |  | ♠ 9 8 6<br>♥ A 4 3<br>♦ A 10 2<br>♣ 10 8 6 5 |         |   |   |

| West              | North            | East          | South            |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Igla</i>       | <i>Di Franco</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Mistretta</i> |
|                   |                  |               | Pass             |
| 3♠                | Pass             | 4♥            | All Pass         |
| West              | North            | East          | South            |
| <i>Delle Cave</i> | <i>Jassem</i>    | <i>Botta</i>  | <i>Zatorski</i>  |
|                   |                  |               | Pass             |
| 3♠                | 3NT              | 4♥            | Dble             |
| All Pass          |                  |               |                  |

That 3NT overcall is very aggressive, particularly facing a passed partner. Mind you, Jassem may have thought that he was playing with his opponents' money by this stage of the match.

Where E/W had the auction to themselves, Machno ruffed the diamond lead, knocked out the ace of hearts and subsequently played clubs in straightforward fashion for two losers so made ten tricks; +420.

Zatorski can hardly be blamed for doubling the unbeatable game when holding two aces opposite a hand that could overcall 3NT. He led the eight of clubs to the nine,

queen and ace. Botta played the ♥K, ducked, then the ♥Q to the ace. Zatorski now switched to a spade to the king and ace, ruffed. Declarer now rattled off all but one of the trumps before playing the ♣J in an attempt to pin the ten, so was one off for -100 and 11 IMPs to Poland. It was 73-0 but finally came a little relief for Italy:

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

|  |  |  |         |   |   |   |
|--|--|--|---------|---|---|---|
| ♠ 6<br>♥ K J 6 5 3<br>♦ K J 3 2<br>♣ K 9 2 | <table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> | N  | W     E | S | ♠ A K 7 4<br>♥ A 8 2<br>♦ 10 9<br>♣ Q 6 5 4 | ♠ J 8 5 2<br>♥ Q 10 4<br>♦ Q 8 7 6 5<br>♣ 3 |
| N  |  |  |         |   |   |   |
| W     E                                    |  |  |         |   |   |   |
| S  |  |  |         |   |   |   |
|  |  | ♠ Q 10 9 3<br>♥ 9 7<br>♦ A 4<br>♣ A J 10 8 7 |         |   |   |   |

| West              | North            | East          | South            |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Igla</i>       | <i>Di Franco</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Mistretta</i> |
| Pass              | 1♦               | Pass          | 2♣               |
| Pass              | 2NT              | Pass          | 3♥               |
| Pass              | 4♥               | Pass          | 4♠               |
| All Pass          |                  |               |                  |
| West              | North            | East          | South            |
| <i>Delle Cave</i> | <i>Jassem</i>    | <i>Botta</i>  | <i>Zatorski</i>  |
| 1♥                | Dble             | 2♥            | 4♠               |
| All Pass          |                  |               |                  |



Massimiliano Di Franco

Deep Finesse assures us that 4♣ is unbeatable, but try it on a red-suit lead and you begin to see that it is not easy at all.

Zatorski won the heart lead and played ♠A, ♠K and a spade to the ten, then ace and another club. Machno ruffed the club and cashed the queen of hearts before switching to a diamond and that was a loser in each suit; -100.

Mistretta also won the heart lead but started with a spade to the queen then back to the ace. Getting the spades wrong was not such a bad thing as it put declarer in the right hand to take the club finesse. However, when this lost, West gave his partner a club ruff. But East now switched to a diamond, allowing Mistretta to win the ace, draw the last trump and pitch a diamond on the long club; +620 and 12 IMPs to Italy.

West returned the ♣2 after winning the king. Assuming normal suit-preference methods, it looks as though he has to take the blame for this one as he has asked for a diamond return.

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

|   |  |  |         |   |   |
|---|--|--|---------|---|---|
| ♠ 8 6 3 2<br>♥ K 7 6 5<br>♦ 10 7<br>♣ 9 3 2 | <table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> | N  | W     E | S | ♠ 7 4<br>♥ Q J 10 4 3<br>♦ 8 6 5 3<br>♣ 5 4 |
| N   |  |  |         |   |   |
| W     E                                     |  |  |         |   |   |
| S   |  |  |         |   |   |
| ♠ Q J<br>♥ A 9 8<br>♦ K 9 2<br>♣ A Q J 8 7  |  | ♠ A K 10 9 5<br>♥ 2<br>♦ A Q J 4<br>♣ K 10 6 |         |   |   |

| West        | North            | East          | South            |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Di Franco</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Mistretta</i> |
| 2♣          | 3♠               | Pass          | 1♠               |
| All Pass    |                  |               | 4♣               |

| West              | North         | East         | South           |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <i>Delle Cave</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Botta</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
| INT               | 2♣            | Pass         | 1♣              |
| All Pass          |               |              | 4♠              |

Both declarers did well to pick up the spades without loss, one after the lead of the ♠Q, the other the ♠J. Italy gained an overtrick IMP but lost the match very heavily; 13-91 IMPs, 1-23 VPs.

Four Spades was played 14 times and it made on 11 occasions. One declarer failed on the lead of the jack of spades. Two Wests led ace then queen of clubs, establishing a second trick in the suit and leaving declarer powerless.

The two successful leaders were Peter Sinkovicz for Hungary against France and Sigrid Spangenberg for Netherlands against Bulgaria. Neither of their teams scored a single Victory Point in the match!

## Further Analysis

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

|   |  |   |         |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|---------|---|--|---|
| ♠ 10 7 6<br>♥ K J 10 3<br>♦ A J 10 8<br>♣ 9 3 | <table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table> | N | W     E | S | ♠ A K Q 4<br>♥ Q 9 8 7 6 5<br>♦ 2<br>♣ K 5 | ♠ 5 3<br>♥ A 4 2<br>♦ Q 9 7 5<br>♣ Q 10 8 6 |
| N   |  |   |         |   |  |   |
| W     E                                       |  |   |         |   |  |   |
| S   |  |   |         |   |  |   |
| ♠ J 9 8 2<br>♥ -<br>♦ K 6 4 3<br>♣ A J 7 4 2  |  |   |         |   |  |   |

| West             | North           | East         | South         |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Seguineau</i> | <i>Katerbau</i> | <i>Vinay</i> | <i>Rehder</i> |
| Pass             | 1♥              | Pass         | Pass          |
| Pass             | 3♠              | Pass         | 1♠            |
| All Pass         |                 |              | 4♣            |

Both N/S pairs had normal auctions to the normal contract. Paul Seguineau led the nine of clubs to the queen and ace and Martin Rehder crossed to the king of clubs then ruffed a heart and played the jack of clubs. When Seguineau ruffed in, Rehder pitched dummy's diamond loser. Seguineau didn't see the danger of a crossruff and returned a cunning jack of diamonds, but Rehder could now make all his trumps separately in a red-suit crossruff and that meant ten tricks for +420.

The above is what appeared in yesterday morning's bulletin. Paul Seguineau called in to explain the reasoning behind his defence. At the point where he switched to the diamond jack, he knew that a spade return would be no use. Declarer could win in dummy, ruff a second heart, then play a spade to dummy, drawing the remaining trumps in the process, give up a heart, ruff the return and give up another heart to establish the suit - ten tricks. Seguineau hoped to find his partner with jack-doubleton spade. Now the crossruff would fail because East would ruff in on the fourth round of hearts and return a trump.





## SCHOOLS TEAMS

## ROUND 1



LATVIA

v

POLAND



## The Leading Question

by Peter Ventura

We sat down to have a look at the title-holders, Poland, when they met Latvia in the first round of the Schools. The Poles were E/W in the Open Room, thus N/S in the Closed Room.

The Poles had their engines going from the start and the score was 11-4 to Poland after two boards. Then Latvia struck back.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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



Bartłomiej Igła

Closed Room

| West        | North         | East           | South           |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Imsa</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Bethers</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
| 1♣*         | INT*          | 2♦             | Pass            |
| Pass        | 3♣            | All Pass       | Pass            |

INT showed clubs. East led a low spade to the ace and then West erred by switching to the queen of diamonds, covered by the king and ace. As there is only one entry to dummy, West has to play on spades (or switch to a heart). When the defence gave necessary aid in diamonds, declarer now could use his only entry to dummy to take the trump finesse; N/S +110.

Open Room

| West        | North         | East          | South       |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Cimins</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Olte</i> |
| 1♣*         | INT*          | Dble          | Pass        |
| All Pass    | All Pass      | All Pass      | All Pass    |

North again showed clubs with INT and East's double closed the auction. The Lettish pair claimed that South's pass was to play INT. What an aggressive approach with that rubbish!

East led a diamond to the queen and king. Janis Cimins crossed to dummy with the ace of hearts and, thanks to the successful club finesse, he could take nine tricks, recording +380, and that was 7 IMPs to Latvia.


Jan Wohlin, a multiple Swedish champion and successful in the Swedish national team for many decades in an earlier bridge era, coined the phrase 'Don't ever lead!' That was a useful saying in the match. Try this leading problem for example.

|          | ♠ K 10 5 3 |      |       |
|----------|------------|------|-------|
|          | ♥ J 4      |      |       |
|          | ♦ 10 5 3 2 |      |       |
|          | ♣ A Q 7    |      |       |
| West     | North      | East | South |
| Pass     | 1♣*        | 1♥*  | Pass  |
| 2♣*      | Pass       | 2♦*  | Pass  |
| 3♠       | Dble*      | Pass | 4♥    |
| All Pass |            |      |       |

North opened a Polish Club, then showed 15+ with lengths in clubs and hearts, and your partner has shown

spades and diamonds. Sitting West, what's your lead? Stop reading until you have made your choice!

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Open Room

| West        | North         | East          | South       |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Cimins</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Olte</i> |
| Pass        | 1♣*           | Pass          | 1♦*         |
| Pass        | 1♥            | Pass          | 2♥          |
| All Pass    |               |               |             |

Closed Room


| West        | North         | East           | South           |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Imsa</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Bethers</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
| Pass        | 1♣*           | 1♥*            | Pass            |
| 2♣*         | Pass          | 2♦*            | Pass            |
| 3♠          | Dble*         | Pass           | 4♥              |
| All Pass    |               |                |                 |

In the Open Room North was declarer in 2♥, so when Arthur Machno led the jack of clubs the defence had four tricks for N/S +140.

Adrians Imsa tried a trump against 4♥, but that was not a very successful move, as declarer now could take the trick in dummy and then pitch a club in hand on the second diamond honour. On a spade lead East wins the ace, then he can beat the game by switching to a club. Did you find the winning spade lead?

After six boards the score had moved on to 28-11 in favour of Poland.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

Open Room

| West        | North         | East          | South          |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Cimins</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Olte</i>    |
| 1♥          | 1♠            | 4♥            | 1♦<br>All Pass |

Closed Room

| West        | North         | East           | South           |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Imsa</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Bethers</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
| 1♥          | Dble          | 4♥             | 1♦<br>All Pass  |

This board was flat in our match, as both declarers finessed in spades for an overtrick. However, in the Juniors, this board made a huge contribution to the Scottish victory over Romania (20-10 VPs). This was the auction in the Open Room:


| West             | North         | East            | South         |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Wilkinson</i> | <i>Stafie</i> | <i>Sinclair</i> | <i>Nistor</i> |
| 2NT*             | Pass          | 3♦*             | 1♦<br>Pass    |
| 3♥               | Pass          | 5♥              | Pass          |
| 6♥               | All Pass      |                 |               |

2NT showed a two-suiter and 5♥ was invitational to slam. North led the ace of diamonds and then continued the suit. Alexander Wilkinson ruffed in hand, crossed to dummy with the spade ace, and then finessed in clubs. When this line was successful he ruffed a club then played a heart to the king and ace. The king of clubs dropped under the ace, so the two losing spades could be discarded on high clubs. Just made!

The Scots were the only pair bidding and making 6♥. That was worth 18 IMPs to Scotland as the Romanian E/W pair had an unpleasant time in 4♠, which went four off.

At half time Poland was leading 35 to 11. This was Latvia's largest swing in the match.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

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



Karlis Olte

Poland recovered quickly, though.  
By the way, try another leading question!

♠ A Q 7  
♥ 6 3  
♦ 10 4 3  
♣ 9 8 6 4 3

|             |              |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b> | <b>South</b> |
| Pass        | 1♥           | 2♦          | Pass         |
| 2♠          | Pass         | 2NT         | Pass         |
| 3♦          | Pass         | 3NT         | All Pass     |

North's opens a five-card 1♥. Sitting South, what's your lead? Again, stop reading until you have made your choice!

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

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

Closed Room

|             |               |                |                 |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>    | <b>South</b>    |
| <i>Imsa</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Bethers</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
|             |               |                | 1♥              |
| Pass        | 2♦            | Pass           | 2NT             |
| Pass        | 3♣            | Pass           | 3NT             |
| All Pass    |               |                |                 |

Jassem gave up on a minor-suit slam when partner bid no trump twice. Nonetheless, it might have been sensible to give it one more try. In any case, you can land on your feet in five in either minor. However, 3NT was just made on a spade lead; N/S +400.

Open Room

|             |               |               |              |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>   | <b>South</b> |
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Cimins</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Olte</i>  |
|             |               |               | 1♥           |
| Pass        | 2♦            | Pass          | 3♣           |
| Pass        | 4♣            | Pass          | 4♦*          |
| Pass        | 4♥            | Pass          | 6♣           |
| All Pass    |               |               |              |

Here Karlis Olte showed five hearts and at least four clubs and that was all North needed to know to go past 3NT. Four Diamonds was explained as a cuebid at both sides of the screen, but the Latvian players had forgotten the fact they were using 4♦ in this situation as asking for key cards. When North cuebid 4♥ Olte simply leaped to 6♣. The ace of spades was led and declarer could eventually claim twelve tricks as the cards lay. That was a well-deserved 11 IMPs to Latvia, now trailing by 13 IMPs only.

Open Room

|             |               |               |              |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>   | <b>South</b> |
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Cimins</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Olte</i>  |
| Pass        | 1♥            | 2♦            | Pass         |
| 2♠          | Pass          | 2NT           | Pass         |
| 3♦          | Pass          | 3NT           | All Pass     |

Closed Room

|             |               |                |                 |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b>  | <b>East</b>    | <b>South</b>    |
| <i>Imsa</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Bethers</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
| Pass        | 1♥            | 2♦             | Pass            |
| 2♠          | Pass          | 2NT            | Pass            |
| 3♦          | All Pass      |                |                 |

In the Open Room Machno took a shot at game. The defence started as expected, by leading a heart to the ace and the heart queen. From here on declarer had an easy journey as the diamond king and the spade ace were on side; N/S -400. As you probably already have spotted, the game can be beaten on a spade lead. Not easy to find after partner has opened 1♥!

Against 3♦, South led a low heart to partner's ace and eventually declarer had nine tricks in his basket, recording -110, and that was 7 IMPs to Poland.

As you will most likely have found the wrong lead on all of the problems to this point, you will be given the opening lead and must find the defence from there on.

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

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | N |   |
| W |   | E |
|   | S |   |

♠ 4 2  
♥ Q J 3 2  
♦ Q 9 8  
♣ Q 9 3 2

| West | North    | East | South |
|------|----------|------|-------|
|      | Pass     | Pass | 2♣    |
| Dble | Pass     | 2♥   | Pass  |
| 2♠   | Pass     | 3♠   | Pass  |
| 4♠   | All Pass |      |       |

Your partner opens 2♣, showing 10-15 with at least six clubs or at least five clubs with either four-card major suit. You lead a top diamond and see dummy follow with the eight, partner with the six and declarer with the two. Your methods are to play low either as encouraging in the suit led or for suit preference. It's your turn again – what will be your next move? Stop reading until you have decided what to do!

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

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

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | N |   |
| W |   | E |
|   | S |   |

♠ 4 2  
♥ Q J 3 2  
♦ Q 9 8  
♣ Q 9 3 2

♠ A Q J 7 6 3  
♥ A K 4  
♦ J 5 3 2  
♣ –

♠ K  
♥ 10 8 7 5  
♦ 10 6  
♣ A K 7 6 5 4

Open Room

| West        | North         | East          | South       |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Cimins</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Olte</i> |
|             | Pass          | Pass          | 2♣          |
| Dble        | Pass          | 2♥            | Pass        |
| 2♠          | Pass          | 3♠            | Pass        |
| 4♠          | All Pass      |               |             |

Cimins switched to the jack of clubs after taking the first trick with the king of diamonds. This should not be too hard to work out regardless of which type of signals you use, as you have all the clues from the auction. West has

denied four hearts and South has promised at least five clubs. This tells us that South must have five or six clubs and four hearts, therefore West is likely to hold 5-3-4-1, 6-3-4-0, or 6-3-3-1. With the first two hand shapes there are only two diamonds left for South, thus he can ruff the third round of diamonds. So, is the third hand shape dangerous for North? Yes, in case West has a solid spade suit aside with the two tops in hearts, then a club trick can go away. But that would not be the case here, since South has opened 2♣. Even if West holds:

♠ A K Q J x x  
♥ A 10 8  
♦ x x x  
♣ x

giving South a poor opening hand such as:

♠ x  
♥ K 7 5 4  
♦ J 10 x  
♣ A K x x x

a club trick won't go away after three rounds of diamonds.

This was the auction in the Closed Room:

| West        | North         | East           | South           |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Imsa</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Bethers</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
|             | Pass          | Pass           | Pass            |
| 1♣*         | Pass          | 1♦*            | Pass            |
| 1♠          | Pass          | INT            | Pass            |
| 3♠          | Pass          | 4♠             | All Pass        |

Jassem worked out the appropriate defence, thus he cashed his top diamonds and then played another diamond. A trump trick had to come, for one down and 12 IMPs to Poland.

The score had moved on to 60-26 in favour of Poland with only two boards to play.

What's your lead, holding this hand as North?

♠ A J 9  
♥ Q 10 6 3  
♦ –  
♣ Q 10 8 7 5 3

| West | North | East | South    |
|------|-------|------|----------|
|      |       | Pass | Pass     |
| 1♠   | 2♣    | 2♠   | 3♣       |
| 4♣*  | Pass  | 4♠   | All Pass |

\* Cuebid

Cimins had more information than his counterpart had and might have found the killing lead.



Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

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

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

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



Open Room

| West        | North         | East          | South       |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>Igla</i> | <i>Cimins</i> | <i>Machno</i> | <i>Olte</i> |
| 1♠          | 2♣            | Pass          | Pass        |
| 4♣*         | Pass          | 4♠            | All Pass    |

Closed Room

| West        | North         | East           | South           |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Imsa</i> | <i>Jassem</i> | <i>Bethers</i> | <i>Zatorski</i> |
| 1♣*         | INT*          | Pass           | Pass            |
| Pass        | 2♣            | Dble           | Pass            |
| 3♠          | Pass          | 4♠             | All Pass        |

In the Closed Room INT was for clubs. At both tables a club was led, which gave declarer the opportunity to pitch a losing heart. On a heart lead the defence cuts off declarer from dummy, thus 4♥ is doomed to go down.

A few IMPs went the Lettish way in the last boards, but the Poles didn't let(t) Latvia come too close, giving Poland a final winning margin of 60-31 IMPs, 21-9 VPs.



Janis Cimins

## New Ways To Lose IMPs

English international, Alan Mould sent me an email featuring a story which I hope you will enjoy.

Players find all sorts of ways to lose points but well-known player, Paul Hackett apparently judged particularly badly on a deal from an old tournament.

Hackett held, with both sides vulnerable, against Bernard Goldenfield (an English Senior international):

♠ A K x  
♥ A Q x x  
♦ Q x  
♣ x x x x

The bidding went:

| West | North | East         | South |
|------|-------|--------------|-------|
| 1♦   | 2♠    | Dble         | 2NT   |
| 3♦   | 4♠    | 4♥ (yes, 4♥) |       |

By agreement, 2NT was an enquiry. Hackett accepted the insufficient bid and doubled it. He found it was cold!

The full hands were:

♠ Q J x x x x  
♥ x  
♦ x x x  
♣ K x

♠ x  
♥ x x x  
♦ A K 10 x x x  
♣ Q J x

♠ x x  
♥ K J 10 9 x  
♦ J x  
♣ A 10 x x

♠ A K x  
♥ A Q x x  
♦ Q x  
♣ x x x x

So that was -790.

You will note that 4♠ is excellent, needing a finesse through an opening bid which happens to be wrong, so you are one off.

However, if Hackett had not excepted the insufficient bid, presumably East would have passed (it was a big bid by him as it was!).

Now there are lead penalties, so East leads a diamond and declarer can cover then insist on a heart lead from West round to the tenace for +620 (a club goes away from declarer's hand on the second heart) instead of -100 or the actual -790.

Every day there are new ways found to lose IMPs!

# DELLE OCCASIONI MANCATE

by Furio Meneghini

La FIGB ha annunciato una giornata di lutto nazionale per commemorare una delle più pesanti sconfitte rimediate da una nostra rappresentativa in competizioni internazionali. La Polonia godeva di alta considerazione alla vigilia, e davanti al pubblico del Rama ha confermato quanto di buono si diceva, ricevendo apprezzamenti unanimi da tutti i commentatori (compresi quelli di BBO). Ma ovviamente per concedere 91 IMP in 20 boards bisogna usare anche la farina del proprio sacco, anzi di più di un sacco.

A metà gara lo score recitava 62-0 (non è un errore di stampa) con i contributi maggiori portati da quattro smazzate in rapida successione (dalla 4 alla 7). Prima uno slam leggermente fortunoso (deve andare bene un'impasse e si deve pagare una sola presa in atout con A-9-3 a fronte di Q-J-6-5-2, al netto di tagli); a seguire un 3NT realizzato in una sala con l'attacco nella sesta occultata del dichiarante e battuto nell'altra dopo un'improvvida Stayman che consente alla difesa di chiamare l'attacco ♣ (la mano si farebbe ancora, ma l'impegno è molto maggiore).

Continuando un arresto a manche dove a ♠ si realizzano sempre 13 prese di testa: carte di N/S


|           |  |             |
|-----------|--|-------------|
| ♠ 4 2     |  | ♠ A T 9     |
| ♥ Q J 9 3 |  | ♥ A K T 5   |
| ♦ J 9 5 2 |  | ♦ A         |
| ♣ Q T 9   |  | ♣ A K J 8 4 |
|           |  |             |

dopo la sua apertura forte Mistretta ha senz'altro valutato il salto a 4♥ del compagno come un fast arrival molto debole (in effetti non c'è un straccio di controllo, ma le due Dame sono nei semi del compagno), però la sua mano è apparsa ai più meritevole di un altro sforzo.

Infine i siciliani si fanno pizzicare a 2♥ (tutti rossi) e pagano 800, ma il danno sembrerebbe limitato dato che gli orizzontali non possono andare down a 3NT; invece Botta-Delle-Cave approdano a 5♦, mancanti di AKQJ in cinque carte.

Il parziale è di quelli fiacca-elefanti, e gli azzurrini ne risentono perchè nella seconda tornata perdono almeno un paio di ghiotte occasioni per ridurre la sconfitta in termini onorevoli.

Board 11 – S- None


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

L'approdo a 4♥ è scontato, il Contro dei verticali è discrezionale, e infatti arriva solo in sala chiusa, seguito dall'attacco di ♣8. il contratto è adesso blindato inserendo il 2 del morto, perchè delle due una: o il Fante fa presa immediata, o dopo aver catturato un onore maggiore con l'Asso si rimane con J-9-7 a fronte di K-T e cartina di qualunque avversario. Invece la dichiarante si fa prendere dall'automatismo di superare con il 9, ma niente sarebbe ancora perduto, stante la distribuzione reale; poi batte un'atout di troppo togliendosi la chance delle ♣ 3-3 (ma gli eventi sembrerebbero darle ragione, dato che alla fine S molla una ♣ e prepara il campo per la surlevee) e a quattro carte dalla fine piazza sul tavolo il Fante, dicendo addio ad ogni futura presa nel seme. Avesse giocato la piccola, si sarebbero spostati 18 IMP, di cui si sentiva un disperato bisogno.

Nonostante la necessità di ricupero la stessa coppia poco dopo sottolcita su entrambi i lati e non chiama neanche con 26 e il fit 5-4 a ♥, lasciando altri 6 IMP per strada.

L'ultima occasione viene sprecata alla terzultima:

Board 18 – E- N/S

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

In chiusa E non indovina in atout e va due down liscie a 3♠: poco male, dicono i commentatori, perchè S può portare a casa 4♥ (DF non è d'accordo, perchè trova l'attacco sotto A terzo di ♠...). Infatti Mistretta, che eredita l'impegno, riceve l'attacco ♠A e ♠J, e adesso può vincere scartando ♦ dal morto e avendo in mano gli ingressi sufficienti per i due sorpassi vincenti; invece taglia (nella speranza del J di ♥ in caduta?) e non può più evitare di concedere due ♥ e una ♦. Fra andare e venire sarebbero stati 16 IMP, che sommati a quelli di sopra avrebbero significato un 23-7 sempre pesante per la classifica ma senz'altro meno devastante per il morale.

Qualcuno prova a sdrammatizzare, e sostiene che un bel bagno di umiltà (quando non si affoga, n.d.r.) è meglio che sia arrivato subito, a mitigare i facili entusiasmi derivanti dall'en plein messo a segno nell'inaffidabile test di esordio contro i giovanissimi gallesi. Ok, ma adesso che il discorso sia sensato va dimostrato sul campo: hic Rhodus, hic salta.