



Editor: Mark Horton.

Co-editors: Jos Jacobs;
Patrick Jourdain;
Micke Melander;
Brian Senior;
Ram Soffer;
P.O. Sundelin.

Layout editor: Monika Kummel.

Photographer: Ron Tacchi.



Issue No. 7

Tuesday 19th June 2012

COME RAIN OR COME SHINE

England held on to the top spot in the *Women's teams*, but their lead has been reduced. **Turkey** has taken over second place from **France**. **Poland** is fourth, followed by **Israel** and the **Netherlands**.

In *Group A of the Open series*, **Italy** have taken over the lead, hotly pursued by **Israel**, **Sweden**, **Bulgaria** and **Turkey**. **Germany** is sixth, but no one can afford to relax.

In *Group B*, **Monaco** scored a massive 74 VP to be way ahead of **England**, who saw the field close in on them. **Russia**, **Romania**, **Netherlands** and **Poland**, occupy the next four places.

In the *Senior Teams*, **Denmark** has moved clear and they are chased by **Germany**, **France**, **Sweden**, **Bulgaria** and **Scotland**.

With two rounds to go in the Open, all eyes will be on the teams hovering around ninth place. Nerves will play a part - who will be able to hold on to theirs and secure an all important spot in the race for the title? Watch this space!



The Jannersten store on the first floor

10.00

Ireland - Hungary	BBO 1*
Lithuania - Norway	BBO 2
Israel - Ukraine	BBO 3
Switzerland - Romania	BBO 4
Denmark - Poland	BBO 5

13.30

BBO will focus on matches involving teams around 9th place.

They will be announced after the morning match.

16.40

Ireland - Germany (S)	BBO 1*
Sweden - France (S)	BBO 2
Israel - Scotland (S)	BBO 3
Italy - England (S)	BBO 4
Turkey - Bulgaria (S)	BBO 5

*BBO 1 = Vugraph

OPEN TEAMS RANKING

GROUP A

GROUP B

after 15 rounds

1 ITALY	272
2 ISRAEL	267
3 SWEDEN	266
4 BULGARIA	263
TURKEY	263
6 GERMANY	254.5
7 HUNGARY	246
8 IRELAND	242
9 GREECE	233
10 UKRAINE	224
11 LITHUANIA	222
12 NORWAY	223.5
13 LATVIA	214
14 BELGIUM	186
15 SPAIN	161
16 SCOTLAND	142
17 PORTUGAL	137

1 MONACO	309
2 ENGLAND	262
3 RUSSIA	260
4 ROMANIA	254
5 NETHERLANDS	244
6 POLAND	240
7 SWITZERLAND	235
8 FRANCE	226
9 WALES	224
10 DENMARK	222
ICELAND	222
12 ESTONIA	215
13 AUSTRIA	209
14 LUXEMBOURG	205
15 CROATIA	196
16 FINLAND	189
17 CYPRUS	118

WOMEN'S TEAMS RANKING

after 13 rounds

1 ENGLAND	245
2 TURKEY	241
3 FRANCE	233
4 POLAND	225.5
5 ISRAEL	219.5
6 NETHERLANDS	218
7 SWEDEN	216
8 SCOTLAND	205
9 GERMANY	203.5
10 AUSTRIA	199

11 NORWAY	197
12 ITALY	189
13 BELGIUM	187
14 BULGARIA	179.5
15 GREECE	167
16 DENMARK	165
17 SPAIN	146
18 ESTONIA	141
19 IRELAND	128

Results are subject to official confirmation

OPEN TEAMS PROGRAM

GROUP A

ROUND 16 10.00

1	GERMANY	SWEDEN
2	IRELAND	HUNGARY
3	BELGIUM	SCOTLAND
4	SPAIN	ITALY
5	LATVIA	GREECE
6	LITHUANIA	NORWAY
7	TURKEY	BULGARIA
8	ISRAEL	UKRAINE
9	PORTUGAL	BYE

GROUP B

ROUND 16 10.00

11	RUSSIA	ICELAND
12	ENGLAND	ESTONIA
13	SWITZERLAND	ROMANIA
14	CROATIA	NETHERLANDS
15	AUSTRIA	WALES
16	LUXEMBOURG	MONACO
17	DENMARK	POLAND
18	FRANCE	CYPRUS
19	FINLAND	BYE

ROUND 17 13.30

1	PORTUGAL	HUNGARY
2	GERMANY	SCOTLAND
3	IRELAND	ITALY
4	BELGIUM	GREECE
5	SPAIN	NORWAY
6	LATVIA	BULGARIA
7	LITHUANIA	UKRAINE
8	TURKEY	ISRAEL
9	SWEDEN	BYE

ROUND 17 13.30

11	FINLAND	ESTONIA
12	RUSSIA	ROMANIA
13	ENGLAND	NETHERLANDS
14	SWITZERLAND	WALES
15	CROATIA	MONACO
16	AUSTRIA	POLAND
17	LUXEMBOURG	CYPRUS
18	DENMARK	FRANCE
19	ICELAND	BYE

SENIORS TEAMS RANKING

after 6 rounds

1	DENMARK	124
2	GERMANY	111
3	FRANCE	105
	SWEDEN	105
5	BULGARIA	102
6	SCOTLAND	101
7	ISRAEL	99
8	BELGIUM	97
9	ENGLAND	94
10	NORWAY	93

11	ITALY	90
12	NETHERLANDS	89
13	POLAND	85
14	IRELAND	79
15	TURKEY	74
16	WALES	72
17	ESTONIA	68
	SPAIN	68
19	FINLAND	53

SENIORS PROGRAM

ROUND 7 10.00

31	SWEDEN	WALES
32	IRELAND	POLAND
33	ISRAEL	DENMARK
34	ESTONIA	BELGIUM
35	ITALY	FRANCE
36	SPAIN	GERMANY
37	TURKEY	SCOTLAND
38	BULGARIA	FINLAND
39	NORWAY	ENGLAND
40	NETHERLANDS	BYE

ROUND 8 13.30

31	NETHERLANDS	POLAND
32	SWEDEN	DENMARK
33	IRELAND	BELGIUM
34	ISRAEL	FRANCE
35	ESTONIA	GERMANY
36	ITALY	SCOTLAND
37	SPAIN	FINLAND
38	TURKEY	ENGLAND
39	BULGARIA	NORWAY
40	WALES	BYE

ROUND 9 16.40

31	WALES	DENMARK
32	NETHERLANDS	BELGIUM
33	SWEDEN	FRANCE
34	IRELAND	GERMANY
35	ISRAEL	SCOTLAND
36	ESTONIA	FINLAND
37	ITALY	ENGLAND
38	SPAIN	NORWAY
39	TURKEY	BULGARIA
40	POLAND	BYE

WOMEN'S PROGRAM

ROUND 14 10.00

21	GERMANY	NETHERLANDS
22	NORWAY	BELGIUM
23	BULGARIA	SWEDEN
24	GREECE	DENMARK
25	AUSTRIA	ENGLAND
26	TURKEY	POLAND
27	ESTONIA	FRANCE
28	ITALY	ISRAEL
29	SCOTLAND	SPAIN
30	IRELAND	BYE

ROUND 15 13.30

21	IRELAND	BELGIUM
22	GERMANY	SWEDEN
23	NORWAY	DENMARK
24	BULGARIA	ENGLAND
25	GREECE	POLAND
26	AUSTRIA	FRANCE
27	TURKEY	ISRAEL
28	ESTONIA	SPAIN
29	ITALY	SCOTLAND
30	NETHERLANDS	BYE

RETURNS TO THE AIRPORT

Hospitality arranges Return Airport Bus Transfers

Hospitality needs to know your return time.
Please Advise Hospitality in good time if you wish to
avail of this service.

Hospitality is on the 1st Floor of Convention Centre.
Cost 10 euro.

51st International Pula bridge festival



September 8th—15th
Hotel Histria, Pula, Croatia

- 100 teams
- 250 pairs
- Players from 35 countries
- Accommodation from 10 euro/day
- Check for direct low-budget flights to Pula

- Sept. 8th - IMP pairs
- Sept. 9th - BAM teams
- Sept. 10th - mixed pairs
- Sept. 11th & 12th - Open teams
- Sept. 13th & 14th - Open pairs

- Entries 15 euro/player/session
- Prizes over 30.000 euro



Info & booking:

Tihana Brkljacic
tihana@pilar.hr
+385 99 666 88 77

www.crobridge.com/pula/eng

OPEN TEAMS RESULTS

GROUP A

ROUND 13

Match		IMPs	VPs
1	SPAIN IRELAND	36 - 10	20 - 10
2	LATVIA GERMANY	35 - 37	15 - 15
3	LITHUANIA PORTUGAL	61 - 21	23 - 7
4	TURKEY SWEDEN	46 - 35	17 - 13
5	ISRAEL HUNGARY	42 - 13	21 - 9
6	UKRAINE SCOTLAND	45 - 18	21 - 9
7	BULGARIA ITALY	33 - 34	15 - 15
8	NORWAY GREECE	54 - 40	18 - 12
9	BELGIUM BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 14

Match		IMPs	VPs
1	BELGIUM GERMANY	60 - 62	15 - 15
2	SPAIN PORTUGAL	31 - 81	5 - 25
3	LATVIA SWEDEN	39 - 93	4 - 25
4	LITHUANIA HUNGARY	44 - 59	12 - 18
5	TURKEY SCOTLAND	61 - 39	20 - 10
6	ISRAEL ITALY	33 - 71	7 - 23
7	UKRAINE GREECE	37 - 38	15 - 15
8	BULGARIA NORWAY	57 - 95	7 - 23
9	IRELAND BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 15

Match		IMPs	VPs
1	IRELAND PORTUGAL	64 - 4	25 - 3
2	BELGIUM SWEDEN	50 - 38	17 - 13
3	SPAIN HUNGARY	29 - 81	5 - 25
4	LATVIA SCOTLAND	64 - 20	24 - 6
5	LITHUANIA ITALY	51 - 45	16 - 14
6	TURKEY GREECE	33 - 79	6 - 24
7	ISRAEL NORWAY	70 - 31	23 - 7
8	UKRAINE BULGARIA	42 - 57	12 - 18
9	GERMANY BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

GROUP B

ROUND 13

Match		IMPs	VPs
11	CROATIA ENGLAND	25 - 42	11 - 19
12	AUSTRIA RUSSIA	14 - 62	5 - 25
13	LUX. FINLAND	89 - 14	25 - 1
14	DENMARK ICELAND	40 - 60	11 - 19
15	FRANCE ESTONIA	39 - 30	17 - 13
16	CYPRUS ROMANIA	14 - 62	5 - 25
17	POLAND NETHERLANDS	50 - 13	23 - 7
18	MONACO WALES	94 - 7	25 - 0
19	SWI. BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 14

Match		IMPs	VPs
11	SWI. RUSSIA	22 - 61	7 - 23
12	CROATIA FINLAND	84 - 61	20 - 10
13	AUSTRIA ICELAND	77 - 39	23 - 7
14	LUX. ESTONIA	45 - 71	10 - 20
15	DENMARK ROMANIA	32 - 54	10 - 20
16	FRANCE NETHERLANDS	32 - 62	9 - 21
17	CYPRUS WALES	66 - 57	17 - 13
18	POLAND MONACO	8 - 89	0 - 25
19	ENGLAND BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 15

Match		IMPs	VPs
11	ENGLAND FINLAND	40 - 43	14 - 16
12	SWI. ICELAND	51 - 44	16 - 14
13	CROATIA ESTONIA	74 - 47	21 - 9
14	AUSTRIA ROMANIA	29 - 45	12 - 18
15	LUX. NETHERLANDS	22 - 52	9 - 21
16	DENMARK WALES	36 - 39	14 - 16
17	FRANCE MONACO	12 - 55	6 - 24
18	CYPRUS POLAND	20 - 81	3 - 25
19	RUSSIA BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

SENIORS RESULTS

ROUND 4

Match		IMPs	VPs
31 ESTONIA	IRELAND	22 - 53	8 - 21
32 ITALY	SWEDEN	30 - 43	12 - 18
33 SPAIN	NETHERLANDS	29 - 33	14 - 16
34 TURKEY	WALES	16 - 28	12 - 18
35 BULGARIA	POLAND	57 - 12	23 - 5
36 NORWAY	DENMARK	17 - 33	11 - 19
37 ENGLAND	BELGIUM	47 - 31	19 - 11
38 FINLAND	FRANCE	5 - 53	4 - 25
39 SCOTLAND	GERMANY	14 - 18	14 - 16
40 ISRAEL	BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 5

Match		IMPs	VPs
31 ISRAEL	SWEDEN	34 - 61	9 - 21
32 ESTONIA	NETHERLANDS	43 - 31	18 - 12
33 ITALY	WALES	75 - 29	25 - 5
34 SPAIN	POLAND	6 - 98	0 - 25
35 TURKEY	DENMARK	20 - 72	4 - 25
36 BULGARIA	BELGIUM	74 - 25	25 - 4
37 NORWAY	FRANCE	53 - 70	11 - 19
38 ENGLAND	GERMANY	32 - 60	8 - 22
39 FINLAND	SCOTLAND	24 - 66	5 - 25
40 IRELAND	BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 6

Match		IMPs	VPs
31 IRELAND	NETHERLANDS	11 - 42	8 - 22
32 ISRAEL	WALES	23 - 15	17 - 13
33 ESTONIA	POLAND	9 - 86	0 - 25
34 ITALY	DENMARK	21 - 42	10 - 20
35 SPAIN	BELGIUM	15 - 48	7 - 23
36 TURKEY	FRANCE	36 - 65	8 - 22
37 BULGARIA	GERMANY	22 - 57	7 - 23
38 NORWAY	SCOTLAND	33 - 10	20 - 10
39 ENGLAND	FINLAND	37 - 72	7 - 23
40 SWEDEN	BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

WOMEN'S RESULTS

ROUND 11

Match		IMPs	VPs
31 ESTONIA	IRELAND	22 - 53	8 - 21
32 ITALY	SWEDEN	30 - 43	12 - 18
33 SPAIN	NETHERLANDS	29 - 33	14 - 16
34 TURKEY	WALES	16 - 28	12 - 18
35 BULGARIA	POLAND	57 - 12	23 - 5
36 NORWAY	DENMARK	17 - 33	11 - 19
37 ENGLAND	BELGIUM	47 - 31	19 - 11
38 FINLAND	FRANCE	5 - 53	4 - 25
39 SCOTLAND	GERMANY	14 - 18	14 - 16
40 ISRAEL	BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 12

Match		IMPs	VPs
21 BULGARIA	GERMANY	31 - 94	3 - 25
22 GREECE	IRELAND	48 - 32	18 - 12
23 AUSTRIA	NETHERLANDS	72 - 58	18 - 12
24 TURKEY	BELGIUM	66 - 37	21 - 9
25 ESTONIA	SWEDEN	19 - 82	3 - 25
26 ITALY	DENMARK	59 - 39	19 - 11
27 SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	43 - 49	14 - 16
28 SPAIN	POLAND	34 - 48	12 - 18
29 ISRAEL	FRANCE	85 - 39	24 - 6
30 NORWAY	BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

ROUND 13

Match		IMPs	VPs
21 NORWAY	IRELAND	45 - 25	19 - 11
22 BULGARIA	NETHERLANDS	16 - 58	6 - 24
23 GREECE	BELGIUM	39 - 57	11 - 19
24 AUSTRIA	SWEDEN	26 - 50	10 - 20
25 TURKEY	DENMARK	80 - 36	24 - 6
26 ESTONIA	ENGLAND	23 - 38	12 - 18
27 ITALY	POLAND	14 - 42	9 - 21
28 SCOTLAND	FRANCE	36 - 64	9 - 21
29 SPAIN	ISRAEL	27 - 41	12 - 18
30 GERMANY	BYE	0 - 0	18 - 0

In the Spotlight

Find out a little bit more about your fellow bridge players



Liz McGowan

How did you take up bridge?

I come from a bridge playing family - as the youngest I was called upon to make up a fourth player since before I remember.

Biggest influence?

The late great John Armstrong.

Bridge Club?

Carlton Bridge Centre/Melville Bridge Club Edinburgh.

First Bridge Book

Why You Lose at Bridge - S J Simon.

Favourite Music?

Bach, Mozart, all the Classics.

Favourite drink?

Red Wine.

All time favourite player?

Hugh Kelsey.

Favourite TV Show?

Watching Cricket.

Best achievement in Bridge?

Women's European Champion 1997 & 1999.

Least favourite opponent?

The late great Maria Erhart always played really brilliantly against me.

Biggest failing at the table?

Impatience, intolerance of self and others.

Most important attribute in a partner?

Tolerance and calm.

Your favourite tournament?

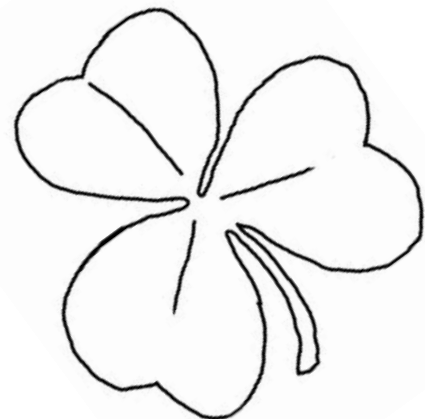
European Junior Events.

Other interests?

Music, reading, my very new grand-daughter.

Open Pairs

Daily at 14:30 1st floor at the end of the cafeteria
Entry fee 10 Euros
24 - 28 boards
No preregistration
Crystal glass prizes for the winners



Duplimate Discounts

The Duplimate dealing machines used at these championships will be sold at the end of the event with a 20% discount. Visit the Jannersten Bookshop on the first floor.

Hospitality Corner

Championship limited Edition Galway Chrystal Glasses:

The CBAI Shop on the 1st Floor has a limited number of these especially commissioned crystal glasses from Galway. Don't miss your chance to purchase your souvenir championship glass. 15 euro each.

Closing & Medal Ceremony:

Yes - we are already thinking about this. It is at 5 p.m. this coming Saturday, June 23rd.

Wine and Savouries will be served, but only after the closing ceremony is over. Players are then free to spend the evening as they wish.

Women's Day off from Play Wednesday:

When you read this you may have already registered for some of the options but just in case you have not done so here are some of your options.

Kildare Village Outlet with Champagne Reception and Special discounts, a short visit to the National Stud. Bus Free.

Newbridge Silverware and Icon Museum. Bus Free if 20 or more.

Pat Liddy Walking Tour at 11am from Dublin Bus Office 59, O' Connell St. or at 2.30 p.m. from College Green. Pat's tour will also bring you Trinity College, its world famous library and the Book of Kells.

Dualway Tours - to Wicklow and Glendalough and many more places. See Dualway Brochure.

You can join Dualway Tours and/or the Pat Liddy Walking Tour by going into City Centre on the Red Open Bus 9.20 a.m. or the Luas nearby the Hotel.

The luck of the draw?

Barry Rigal

At the end of round 12, with five matches to go, there were seven teams on the bubble. Hungary Ireland and Greece were the right side of the line, Ukraine Norway Latvia and Lithuania were on the outside looking in.

Each of these teams had some unlikely supporters because of the existing results. Equally, some erstwhile allies were hoping not to see their friends survive the cut.

Italy's biggest loss had been to Greece, (having Latvia survive would be worth 9VPs to them). Israel would be 19 VPs better off if either Latvia or Lithuania displaced Ireland! Sweden would lose 15VPs if Norway overtook Greece, while Hungary would GAIN 17VPs in the same circumstances!

In group B the top two teams looked safe but almost everyone else (Netherlands Wales Russia Switzerland France Poland and Romania) had the edge over Denmark and Iceland.

England wanted Denmark not to surpass Romania –that would cost them 14 VPs, if Iceland overtook Romania it would cost Wales 18VPs. From Poland's perspective Iceland's qualifying instead of France would cost 12 VPs. Romania would be pulling for Iceland to overtake France. That would be worth 13 VPs to them.

Videos and live talkshows on the internet

BridgeTopics.com publishes daily videos and live talkshows with players and bridge personalities here at the EC in Dublin. Here is the link:

www.bridgetopics.com/2012-european-teams-championships



Live talkshow with Giorgio Duboin and Maria Teresa Lavazza

Amongst other, the latter will talk about and explain her retirement as npc Italian open team.

Date and time: Wednesday June 20th, local time 5 to 6pm.

A Junior in Senior Teams

by Ib Lundby

Seniors / Round 1

Once upon a time, when the $\diamond K$ was only a jack, Peter Schaltz was only a junior – but my favorite partner. During the play I did my very best to teach him about the game, but mostly in vain. Among other tips I told him not to lead a suit against a suit contract if both declarer and dummy were void in that suit.



Peter Schaltz, Denmark

”That’s only for idiots and experts!”, I explained.

Well, Peter wouldn’t listen – I guess that by now he already considered himself to be an expert! And he still does – have a look at this deal from Denmark’s match against Poland in the Senior Teams:

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

<p>\spadesuit Q 10 8 7 6 3 \heartsuit — \diamond 10 5 3 2 \clubsuit 9 7 4</p>		<p>\spadesuit 4 \heartsuit A K 7 6 \diamond K 8 7 \clubsuit A Q J 5 2</p>
<p>\spadesuit A J 5 2 \heartsuit 10 5 4 2 \diamond 9 6 \clubsuit K 8 6</p>		<p>\spadesuit K 9 \heartsuit Q J 9 8 3 \diamond A Q J 4 \clubsuit 10 3</p>

In the Closed Room the Poles went one down in $4\heartsuit$, but Peter smelled blood in the Open:

West	North	East	South
Møller	Lasocki	Schaltz	Russyan
$2\spadesuit$	$3\heartsuit$	Pass	$4\heartsuit$
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

West must lead a black card to be sure of defeat, and Møller didn’t fail as he presented the $\clubsuit 9$. Low from dummy and jack from Peter, who cashed the ace as well. Maybe South was confused about West’s club length, as he ruffed the club continuation with the $\heartsuit 9$ (better to discard a spade).

Declarer continued with the $\heartsuit J$, which held the trick, and the $\heartsuit Q$ to Peters king - and ...

100 Years Young

Barry Rigal

Board 6

East Dealer
Both Vul.

\spadesuit Q 9 5 4
\heartsuit A 5 3
\diamond A 4
\clubsuit K 7 5 4
\spadesuit A 6
\heartsuit K J 7
\diamond Q 10 8
\clubsuit Q 9 6 3 2

OFFICIAL BIDDING:

West	North	East	South
$1\diamond$	Dbl	$2\heartsuit^*$	3NT
All Pass			
*Weak			

Play Instructions: 3NT by South. West to lead $\diamond 6$.

Solution on page 22

<p>\spadesuit Q 10 8 7 \heartsuit — \diamond 10 5 3 2 \clubsuit —</p>		<p>\spadesuit 4 \heartsuit A 7 \diamond K 8 7 \clubsuit Q 5</p>
<p>\spadesuit A J 5 2 \heartsuit 10 5 \diamond 9 6 \clubsuit —</p>		<p>\spadesuit K 9 \heartsuit 8 3 \diamond A Q J 4 \clubsuit —</p>

With his ex-partner’s advice in mind about experts and idiots, Peter now played a club, which declarer ruffed in dummy after discarding a diamond (better to discard a spade). After a diamond finesse South tried to cash the $\spadesuit K$ and play another spade, but Peter ruffed – two down and 500.

Expert or idiot, Peter? Judge for yourself, but in the diagram East should perhaps have played his partners suit instead of the club. That would always lead to two down, no matter what South did.

The Captain's Table

by Enda Murphy

David ('Banzai') Jackson has been captain of the present Ireland team since 2005, overseeing a period of unprecedented success for the Irish Open team. They were placed fifth in the 2005 Olympiad. Then came Silver in the 2006 European (our best ever result), leading to a first ever Bermuda Bowl place. They reached the quarter-final of the Transnational teams at Shanghai 2007. There have also been four Camrose and two Lederer trophies.

'Banzai' is a consultant statistician and research fellow at Trinity College Dublin. He's an avid student of the psychology of gaming, and is a serious investor in the outcome of sporting events!



David 'Banzai' Jackson, Captain of the Irish Open Team

"We're a unit of seven, not six players plus a captain. We have three very strong pairs, though with differing styles. Actually, I think the equal strength of our pairs may be something of a disadvantage in round-robin tournaments like this one. A team with a sponsor can play the sponsor against perceived weaker teams, since those results won't count if those teams don't qualify. We field equally strong teams against all-comers".

What does he mean by 'different styles'? "Mesbur/Fitzgibbon are our senior pair in terms of age and experience. They may be described as deliberate and somewhat conservative – certainly they tend to take a less rosy view than the other two pairs! Hanlon/McGann are perhaps our best known pair – they've been on the Buffett Cup team a few times, and Tom is our only professional. When on their game, they can really pile on the IMPs. Tom, by the way, is our resident entertainer and karaoke expert! Garvey/Carroll are the youngest pair; both have very young families and of course that has implications for the time they give to their bridge. But I expect them to feature on the Irish team for many years to come".

Is it a handicap to be playing against top teams who are all professional? The answer comes with a grin and a hearty laugh; "Inevitably it must be – but I sometimes wonder if bridge professionalism is an active career choice or whether it signifies a dearth of alternatives!"

What is the essential role of the captain? "In our set-up, I take an active approach – in charge, exercising control. But I'm not a coach – that is a different job. My domain is to ensure our players come to the table ready to play to the fullest extent of their abilities. Other teams do it differently – for example, some of the top professional teams have very set preferences about rotation and so on. In that case the captain's role is less significant. Mind you, knowledge of opponents' preferences for open or closed, sitting N/S or E/W and morning or afternoon appearances can be of some small benefit." The reader will draw the obvious inference – no detail is too small, and every potential edge is prized by this captain.

What about routines during matches? "Yes, this is very important. Twenty boards over almost three hours is a serious test of concentration. You simply can't afford to plough through them, you have to have routines. Our team will always re-hydrate and snack on energy foods. You also need to take breaks in order to re-focus; standing up and stretching, walking around, whatever. The most important thing is to realise that you need to do it. Many people don't".

As we talk, Ireland stand mid-table, on the back of an average start. "We are better than a side that struggles to qualify for the next stage, but that is where we are right now. We need to push on (prophetic words – later this same day a disappointing loss to Bulgaria is followed by a stellar 85-5 win (25-1 VPs) against then leaders Israel). We've a routine for dealing with bad boards – argument or discussion at table is pointless. So we have a mythical place for them – we call it John Carroll's garage! We park bad boards there – though after the first three days here it's getting crowded!"

A final word goes to organisers and supporters. "The organisation here is excellent and so is the venue. As the home team, we appreciate the support and I can assure you it makes a difference. In the Open Room, there is supposed to be a maximum four spectators per table, but the officials' calculators appear to jam at Ireland's table!" And with that, 'Banzai' is off to see to his charges.

2010 marked his first bridge book. 'Better Balanced Bidding', co-authored with Ron Klinger, highlights weaknesses in the 4-3-2-1 point count method for balanced hands. The 'Banzai' method counts 5-4-3-2-1 from ace to ten, and is presented with typical rigour and conviction. With a foreword by his great friend Eric Kokish, the book is available in the gift shop, priced at €10.

I've enjoyed a certain degree of access to the team since I wrote about the silver medal at the 2006 Euros. This is the best, and the best organised, Irish team ever. Their achievements would not have been possible without the constant driving presence of their captain. The 'magnificent seven' ride on!

Dubliners

by Mark Horton

England v Netherlands Seniors Round 2

Dubliners is a collection of 15 short stories by James Joyce, first published in 1914. They were meant to be a naturalistic depiction of Irish middle class life in and around Dublin in the early years of the 20th century.

The stories were written when Irish nationalism was at its peak, and a search for a national identity and purpose was raging; at a crossroads of history and culture, Ireland was jolted by various converging ideas and influences. They centre on Joyce's idea of an epiphany: a moment where a character experiences self-understanding or illumination. Many of the characters in *Dubliners* later appear in minor roles in Joyce's novel *Ulysses*. The initial stories in the collection are narrated by child protagonists, and as the stories continue, they deal with the lives and concerns of progressively older people. This is in line with Joyce's tripartite division of the collection into childhood, adolescence, and maturity.

Bridge imitates Joyce as the players are divided by age, starting with Juniors and eventually reaching maturity as Seniors. In recent years England and the Netherlands have both achieved excellent results at Senior level, but they are both still seeking a European title - could this be the year?

Counterparts

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Niemeijer	Hackett	Verhees Sr.	Waterlow
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦*
All Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

2♦ Game forcing

East led the eight of spades and declarer put up dummy's ace and dropped the queen from his hand. A low diamond

saw West go in with the king and switch to the four of hearts which declarer ducked to East's ten. When East played back the king of hearts declarer could win and play back a heart, setting up two tricks in the suit and ensuring the contract, +400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Price	Janssens	Simpson	Vrieze
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦*
All Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

Here East led the five of spades and declarer won with dummy's jack and played a diamond. West took the king and returned a spade, a far more effective defence. Declarer won with the king, unblocked the queen of diamonds, played a spade to the ace and cashed the ace of diamonds. When West showed out declarer was short of a trick, -50 and 10 IMPs for England.

A Little Cloud

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Niemeijer	Hackett	Verhees Sr.	Waterlow
Pass	DbI	3♠	Pass
All Pass		Pass	4♥

West led the ace of spades and continued the suit, forcing dummy to ruff. Declarer played the queen of hearts and West won with the king and returned the five of clubs. East took the ace and continued with the four of clubs (forcing dummy again is an excellent alternative). Declarer won with the king and played a heart to the ace, East discarding

a spade. With his ammunition running out declarer played three rounds of diamonds and West ruffed, cashed the jack of hearts and played a club. Declarer could score his trump but that was all, four down, -400.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Price	Janssens	Simpson	Vrieze
Pass	5♦	4♠	Pass
5♠	Dbl	Pass	Pass
		All Pass	

Over East's full blooded preempt North solved his problem by bidding his long suit (it is surprising how many times this turns out well). As it happens Five Diamonds would have failed by a trick, but West took out insurance.

South led the three of clubs and declarer won with the queen and advanced the queen of spades, playing à la Rabbi and going up with the ace when South followed with the two.

At this point declarer can escape for one down by cashing the ace of clubs and exiting with a diamond - North can take three red winners, but must then do something that allows declarer to dispose of his losing club.

In practice declarer drew trumps and played a heart to the king and ace and was two down, -300. 12 IMPs to the Netherlands.

A Painful Case

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Niemeijer	Hackett	Verhees Sr.	Waterlow
1♥	2♦	Dbl	Pass
2♥	2♠	Pass	3♦*
Pass	Pass	3♥	All Pass

North had a systemic way of showing spades and diamonds by jumping to 3♣, but with such a disparity between the strength of his suits preferred to take the low road, which looks eminently sensible.

He cashed the king of diamonds and then the ace, South

following with the nine and five, and played a third round. Declarer ruffed in dummy and discarded a club from his hand - fatally as it happens.

He unblocked the queen of hearts, came to hand with a spade and cashed the ace of hearts, getting the bad news. he played a club and North took the ace and carefully played a spade for South to ruff. Declarer could win the club exit in dummy and pitch a spade on the king of clubs, but he had to ruff the next spade and give South a trump trick, one down, -100.

If declarer pitches a spade, rather than a club, he can unblock as before, come to hand with a spade and after cashing a top heart play a club. North plays a spade for South to ruff, but now after a club exit declarer wins in dummy, ruffs a spade and goes back to dummy with a club to trump coup South.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Price	Janssens	Simpson	Vrieze
1♥	3♣	Dbl	3♦
Pass	5♦	Dbl	All Pass

This time North used his side's gadget and then attempted to gild the lily by jumping to game. West led the ace of hearts and switched to the jack of diamonds. Declarer won and played a spade, East going in with the queen to play a second trump. Declarer could ruff a spade but still had to lose two tricks in the suit, two down, -500 and 12 IMPs to England.

Two Gallents

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Niemeijer	Hackett	Verhees Sr.	Waterlow
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	All Pass	

N/S play that 1♦-1♠-INT would rarely contain a singleton spade, but if you don't do it on this hand it's hard to imagine when you ever would.

I asked a colleague what he would rebid on the South hand. He mentioned numerous bids (none of which he considered to be ideal). What he did not envisage was the decision South took at the table.

East led the five of hearts and West won with the ace and switched to the king of spades. Declarer took dummy's ace, ruffed a spade, played a club to the king and ruffed another spade. Now declarer does best to play three rounds of trumps but after the jack of hearts was covered by the queen and king and West ruffed and surprisingly switched to a trump (either black suit will now defeat the contract). After three rounds of trumps declarer played a club. East won and had to play a heart, so declarer was bound to score the additional trick he needed, +90.

Still, in theory, 3NT can be defeated, so a modest plus score might have proved to be an IMP winner.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Price	Janssens	Simpson	Vrieze
Pass	1♦	1♥	1♠
Pass	INT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

As is so often the case the difference between theory and practice proved to be considerable.

East led the two of diamonds and declarer won with the king, discarding a spade from dummy, and ran the jack of hearts. West won with the ace and returned the four of diamonds. Declarer took the ace and played the queen of clubs. East won and switched to the four of spades. Declarer ducked, won the next spade, came to hand with a club to cash the queen of diamonds and claimed nine tricks, +600 and 11 IMPs.

I can see no compelling reason for East to find a spade lead, can you?

However, Ireland's Thomas Hanlon produced this thoughtful defence against Israel. As East he was on lead to 3NT after having overcalled 1♥ over 1♦, facing a silent partner (1♦ - (1♥) - 1♠ - INT - 3NT). It looks natural to lead a heart, but his partner's silence persuaded him that this would be an unsuccessful decision.

Instead he led the club ace, and Hugh McGann's suit preference nine persuaded him to shift to spades. Declarer could do no better than duck twice, and win the third spade. He cashed off two clubs and three diamonds then led a heart towards the king, with nine tricks coming if the heart ace was where it should be. Alas for him Hugh McGann had that card and on winning it he could take two diamonds and a spade for down three!

The statistics on this deal make curious reading: in Group B, the Seniors and Women the combined records show 3NT attempted 38 times and making 33 times, down five times. In Group A 3NT was attempted only nine times, and defeated five times, making only four times!

An Encounter

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Niemeijer	Hackett	Verhees Sr.	Waterlow
Pass	Pass	1♥	1♠
3NT	All Pass	Dbl	Pass

I confess I am mystified by West's actions. East did very well to reopen, but if West was not going to play for penalties why pass in the first place?

Declarer ducked the queen of diamonds, won the club switch in dummy and (as Reese would doubtless have written) ran the nine of spades with a fair degree of confidence. When that held, the contract was assured - indeed, with open cards you can make 6NT. Declarer was content with nine tricks, +600.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Price	Janssens	Simpson	Vrieze
All Pass		1♥	1♠

West was doubtless going to pass a reopening double - on this layout 1100 is easy to collect - but with length in spades there was no compelling reason for East to do any-



Loek Verhees Sr., Netherlands

thing. +250 meant a loss of 8 IMPs.

After the Race

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

<p>♠ J 8 5 ♥ A Q J 8 4 ♦ K 10 8 ♣ K 8</p>	<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;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ Q 7 2 ♥ 5 ♦ J 7 5 3 2 ♣ 9 7 6 3</p>	<p>♠ A K 6 4 ♥ K 9 7 6 ♦ A Q 4 ♣ 4 2</p>
		<p>♠ 10 9 3 ♥ 10 3 2 ♦ 9 6 ♣ A Q J 10 5</p>	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Niemeijer</i>	<i>Hackett</i>	<i>Verhees Sr.</i>	<i>Waterlow</i>
INT	Pass	2♣*	Dbl
2♥	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♣*	Pass	5♦*	Pass
5NT*	Pass	6♥	All Pass

West's INT was ostensibly 15-17, but the meaning of East's 4NT is unclear - was it intended as quantitative? West treated it as Blackwood, showed one key card and then (I assume) the queen of trumps and two kings. Six Hearts was a poor spot and finished one down, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Price</i>	<i>Janssens</i>	<i>Simpson</i>	<i>Vrieze</i>
INT	Pass	2♣*	Dbl
2♥	Pass	3♠*	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

INT was 14-17 and 3♠ was a slam try which West politely declined. That was eleven tricks and 11 IMPs to England, who had deservedly won 58-33 IMPs, 21-9 VP.

In case you have not realised, the headings for each deal are taken from Dubliners. In some cases the association is admittedly somewhat tenuous. I had been hoping to use the story title - Ivy Day in the Committee Room - but it will have to wait its turn.



Avoiding the Top of the House

by Patrick Jourdain

Your reporter has already told the tale of a deal where the Jones family from Wales reached a successful 4-3 spade fit in preference to the popular but failing 3NT.

On Round 11 of the Open (Women Round 9, Seniors Round 2) they were at it again, this time choosing a minor-suit fit:

Board 12. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

<p>♠ K 3 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ Q 10 8 3 2 ♣ A K 8</p>	<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;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ Q J 6 5 2 ♥ A 9 7 6 ♦ A J ♣ 10 7</p>	<p>♠ A ♥ J 10 5 2 ♦ K 9 7 6 4 ♣ 5 4 2</p>
		<p>♠ 10 9 8 7 4 ♥ Q 4 ♦ 5 ♣ Q J 9 6 3</p>	

West	North	East	South
<i>Gary J</i>		<i>Dafydd J</i>	
1♦	1♠	Dbl	3♠
Dbl	Pass	5♦	All Pass

As West, Gary Jones (dummy's father) produced an aggressive double of 3♠, which resulted in his declaring Five Diamonds. The popular contract of 3NT was due to fail on a spade lead as the defence could win the ace of diamonds and clear the spades, leaving declarer with only eight winners. Could Wales succeed in 5♦?

North led the ♠Q. Declarer won the ace, cashed the top clubs and the second spade ditching a club and then ruffed a club, eliminating his last black card. Now declarer exited with a trump to the queen and ace. He was hoping North had the bare ace, but no, North was able to exit safely with the jack of trumps to dummy's king.

Next came the jack of hearts, covered by the queen, king and ace. Now the elimination play proved its worth. North had to exit with a low heart and declarer ran this to his eight to make the game; 12 IMPs to Wales.

For the technicians; note that if North began life with ♥A9x and South with ♥Qxx, both must duck the first heart; if North wins the trick he will be endplayed. If both duck, declarer must lose two hearts.


A cynical spectator noticed that Wales forte appeared to be avoiding failing 3NT contracts when they had double guards in the opponents' danger suit. He looked forward, he said, to their successfully avoiding a 3NT contract with THREE guards in the opponents' suit.

Going Down a Lot Can Be Fun

by Ram Soffer

In bridge we are supposed to make what we bid, or at least come close. Going down many tricks is usually a depressing experience, but sometimes it can be fun, as two Israeli declarers found out when comparing scores on Saturday's afternoon round. Our first exhibit comes from the Israel-Netherlands Ladies' match.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Simons	Poplilov	Pasman 1♥	Levit-Porat 1♠
All Pass!			

In my opinion, the merits of "trapping" are over-emphasized in bridge literature. Actually trapping at the one-level is usually not a very sound idea at unfavourable vulnerability. West sees that his side can probably make a vulnerable game. To make a profit from trapping she needs to beat 1♠ at least four down doubled, and several things can go wrong, like her partner failing to re-open.


Indeed, I think most experts will agree with Pasman's pass. East will not be well-positioned if she doubles and West responds, for example, 2♣.

Ruti Levit-Porat had to play 1♠ undoubled with a little help from her dummy. The defence can start with 7 tricks (including ruffs) in the side suits, and then a heart or spade lead from East will ensure 4 trump tricks for West. I don't know if Ruti enjoyed all of these plays at the table, but minus 250 compared very favourably with plus 660 from her teammates. The Israeli West bid immediately 3NT over 1♠ for a gain of 9 IMPs.

Could a re-opening double by East have converted +250 into +1100? Not really, as Matilda Poplilov (North) was ready to escape to 2♦ - a much safer contract. In that case E/W would still have to bid their 3NT just to get even.



Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

A standard 4♠ contract by E/W making six due to a favourable lie of the cards? Look at what happened at the Seniors match between Israel and Turkey!

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
All Pass!			
	<i>David Birman</i>		<i>Daniela Birman</i>

Pre-emptive openings tend to be more flexible in 3rd seat. David Birman's multi 2♦ with five good hearts was nothing special, but at his next turn he sensed that the Turkish East-West had waited for too long with their good hands, capable of making a spade game. How did he know that? His partner's 2♠ response indicated heart support and spade shortage. In addition, she was a passed hand.

However, had he chosen the "normal" bid of 3♥, either East or West might well have "woken up", and the regulation 4♠ contract would have been reached.

Instead, he put a deadly 'Pass' card on the table, apparently showing a spade suit. Now East had no option but to pass.

The final contract was not the prettiest, but Daniela managed to escape for six down with the aid of a defensive error. In fact, a diamond lead followed by a spade switch at trick three could have left declarer with no tricks at all.

Again, minus 300 compared favourably with plus 710 from the other room. Israel gained 9 useful IMPs. Their final margin of victory was just 4 IMPs.

This type of 'passive' psyche is well known in expert circles. In the Open series match between Romania and the Netherlands, Rotaru and Ghigheci brought it off against de Wijs and Muller to win a similar number of IMPs. When writing *The Mysterious Multi*, Jan van Cleeff and I decided we should not mention this possibility lest it become too well known! Editor

Leader Of The Pack

by Micke Melander

Monaco vs Russia, Round 10, Open series

After 180 boards had been played in these championships Fantoni/Nunes had the fantastic score of +1.59 IMPs per played board (they had played 120 of them). That's a remarkably high score and it is certainly one of the reasons why Monaco is "leader of the pack" in Group B. Monaco were at that point 19 VPs in front of second placed England, who also had the third pair in the Butler ranking with Forrester/Gold on +0.80 IMPs per board. Second, for the record, was the Estonian pair Karpov/Laanemae with +0.90. However those positions would change when we followed the battle between Monaco and Russia in round ten of the open series since Fantoni/Nunes had some major set-backs as we shall see.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

<p>♠ K 3 ♥ 8 7 5 2 ♦ 10 7 6 3 ♣ J 8 7</p>	<p>♠ A J 2 ♥ J 4 3 ♦ K Q J ♣ K 9 4 2</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 10px auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> <p>♠ 9 4 ♥ A K Q 10 9 ♦ A 8 2 ♣ 6 5 3</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 8 7 6 5 ♥ 6 ♦ 9 5 4 ♣ A Q 10</p>	
---	--	--	--

Open room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Khiuppenen</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Dubin</i>
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	2NT	2♠	Pass
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♣
		All Pass	

Gromov had nine top tricks and an easy ride in his contract. A spade was led by Fantoni, which went to the four, king and ace. Eight red winners followed, leaving Gromov in the dummy when Fantoni was down to queen-ten-third in spades and the ace of clubs. Gromov called for a low club

which ran to Fantoni's ace, who now only could cash his queen of spades and exit in the suit, for eleven tricks to Russia.

At the other table, Helgemo became declarer in Four Hearts. That was a far more complicated contract to play, since there only were nine winners, hearts were breaking 4-1, and the clubs were wrongly placed. Khiuppenen started with the king of spades, won by Helgemo in dummy. Four rounds of trump followed on which dummy parted with a club on the fourth round, while East threw two spades and the nine of diamonds on the last one.

This left the following:

<p>♠ 3 ♥ — ♦ 10 ♣ J 8 7</p>	<p>♠ J 2 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ K 9 4</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 10px auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> <p>♠ 9 ♥ 9 ♦ — ♣ 6 5 3</p>	<p>♠ Q 10 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ A Q 10</p>	
---	---	--	--

Helgemo now threw East in by running the nine of spades to the ten. Kholomeev then cashed his queen of spades where Helgemo simply discarded a club. With no exit cards left for East, Helgemo simply had to get a club and a trump trick to score his contract. Nicely saved by Helgemo, given that they didn't manage to get to the best contract on the board.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

<p>♠ 5 2 ♥ A K 8 ♦ K J 9 6 ♣ A 10 9 5</p>	<p>♠ K 10 9 7 3 ♥ 9 7 2 ♦ Q 8 ♣ K Q 3</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 10px auto; background-color: #008000; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div> <p>♠ A Q 8 6 ♥ J 10 ♦ 7 4 ♣ J 8 7 6 2</p>	<p>♠ J 4 ♥ Q 6 5 4 3 ♦ A 10 5 3 2 ♣ 4</p>	
---	---	---	--

Open room:

West	North	East	South
Khiuppenen	Helness	Kholomeev	Helgemo
	Pass	Pass	Pass
INT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	All Pass

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
Nunes	Gromov	Fantoni	Dubinin
	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♠	Dbl	3♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Many tables missed game on board five. Fantoni/Nunes never had such thoughts and maybe the interference helped them reach the heights. 6 IMPs to Monaco when Nunes captured 11 tricks after two rounds of spades were played.

So far so good, Monaco was in the lead after five boards with 19-5. But there was still a lot of action due to happen and many more IMPs to be distributed.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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



Tor Helness, Monaco



Fulvio Fantoni, Monaco

Open room:

West	North	East	South
Khiuppenen	Helness	Kholomeev	Helgemo
		1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♦*	Pass
7♥	All Pass		

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
Nunes	Gromov	Fantoni	Dubinin
		Pass	Pass
1♥	1♠	2♠*	Pass
3♠*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♥	Pass
5♠	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Khiuppenen/Kholomeev showed that artificial is not always the right way to succeed at the table. They managed to reach seven hearts in four bids while Fantoni/Nunes took seven rounds to miss the grand slam that was lay-down via a couple of diamond ruffs in dummy.

Regarding the Fantoni/Nunes bidding, Two Spades was invitational or a slam try, Three Spades showed a void, then 3NT revealed that the initial bid was indeed a slam try and not invitational. The four bids in each of the minors were cue bids. Four Spades was a waiting bid whereupon 4NT showed an even number of keycards (in other words zero). Five Clubs and Spades asked for more information and 5♥ showed no extras in diamonds. 5NT showed the ace of spades. Nunes now placed the contract in the small slam because he couldn't count thirteen sure winners.

- My partner should have bid Three Diamonds instead of Three Spades, Fantoni revealed afterwards. That would have made a huge difference since I would have been able to count the tricks when he showed 6-4.

In the match between Netherlands – Iceland the Icelandic pair gambled on penalizing their Dutch opponents in Two Spades, collecting 800 while their team mates only reached a small slam. Still 12 IMPs to Netherlands when it was the wrong board to try to collect a number. Ten tables missed bidding the grand slam out of thirty-two, so maybe it wasn't the easiest grand slam to bid, but one wonders...

13 IMPs to Russia and certainly not the kind of results you want to put on your score sheet when it comes to reading the Butler scores, even though that doesn't matter at all in the competition in itself. And it was going to get worse...

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

<p>♠ Q 10 8 7 6 3 ♥ — ♦ 10 5 3 2 ♣ 9 7 4</p>	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80px; height: 80px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N <hr style="width: 100%;"/> W <hr style="width: 100%;"/> E <hr style="width: 100%;"/> S </div>	<p>♠ 4 ♥ A K 7 6 ♦ K 8 7 ♣ A Q J 5 2</p>	<p>♠ K 9 ♥ Q J 9 8 3 ♦ A Q J 4 ♣ 10 3</p>
--	--	--	---

Open room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Khiuppenen</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
Pass	2♥	3♣	3♥
All Pass			

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
Pass	2♥	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Dbl
Rdbl	Pass	4♦	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Helgemo and Helness put on the handbrake at the last moment on the next board. In an attempt to defeat the contract the Russian pair let Helgemo score an overtrick for 170. At the same time there was a serious blood-bath at the other table.

Fantoni/Nunes were caught in Four Diamonds after escaping out of 3NT with an SOS re-double. Four Clubs would for sure have been a cheaper solution than Four Diamonds on the 4-3 fit with most of the important cards wrongly placed for declarer. Fantoni got the queen of hearts led, which ran to the ace, dummy throwing a club. Fantoni then wanted to open communications to be able to cross-ruff, so played a spade towards dummy. Gromov as North mercilessly won and immediately returned a trump,

which went to Dubinin's jack. The ace of trumps followed and a third round, removing all the cross-ruff chances for declarer. Fantoni then continued with ace and queen of clubs going five off in the end for 1400 in the Irish Sea. 170 didn't do much to help reducing the loss: 15 IMPs to Russia. Fantoni could have escaped for three down in the seven card ending by exiting with the queen or jack of clubs.

There were two very long breaks in play on this board, when Fantoni stopped to carefully plan his play. Eventually the BBO operator got so thirsty that he had to leave the table and walk away for a glass of water. When he returned some 4-5 minutes later not a single card had been played. The very good news for the operator was that if it had been some of the other players in this championships in this delicate contract he could have come back for lunch before we would have seen their next move.

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vul.

<p>♠ K 8 5 4 ♥ A 6 ♦ 6 3 ♣ A K J 10 7</p>	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80px; height: 80px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N <hr style="width: 100%;"/> W <hr style="width: 100%;"/> E <hr style="width: 100%;"/> S </div>	<p>♠ 10 ♥ K Q 8 4 3 2 ♦ K 10 8 ♣ Q 8 3</p>	<p>♠ Q 3 ♥ 10 ♦ A Q J 7 5 2 ♣ 9 6 4 2</p>
---	--	--	---

Open room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Khiuppenen</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
1♣	1♥	2♣	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
1♣	2♥	3♦	4♥
Pass	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	All Pass		

Fantoni made a brilliant "sacrifice" on this board. It was in fact so good that if Five Clubs had made, most often Four Hearts would have gone one down, though when Four Hearts made, Five Clubs would only have been one down. Five clubs was unbeatable with the actual lay-out. 8 IMPs to Monaco and the standing in the match was now 34-33. But it was far from the last of action that was to be seen in this match.

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

	♠ J 10 9 6 4 3		
	♥ —		
	♦ 10 8 3		
	♣ Q J 3 2		
♠ K 8 7	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;">N W E S</div>	♠ A 5	
♥ 10 7 5 3		♥ 9 6 4 2	
♦ Q 6 4 2		♦ J 9 5	
♣ 8 6		♣ K 9 7 4	
		♠ Q 2	
		♥ A K Q J 8	
		♦ A K 7	
		♣ A 10 5	

Open room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Khiuppenen</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
		Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♦
Pass	4♥	Pass	6NT
All Pass			

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

Helgemo thought he had heard enough after knowing partner had the black suits and had made a cue-bid in hearts, simply jumping to six no-trump. However the problem was that they were missing out on the ace and king of their longest combined suit. The contract was sure to go down and when the Russian didn't give any favors it finally went three down.

At the other table Dubinin/Gromov got into trouble when they had a bidding misunderstanding. One Club was strong 16+, One Diamond 0-7, One Heart natural or forcing, One Spade second negative but this time down to 0-4. After 2NT, which was forcing to game, they got lost, for Dubinin Three Spades showed the minors and for Gromov it was natural. Four Hearts was pick a game either to pass the contract or correct to either minor. When Gromov corrected to Four Spades, not knowing what was going on, with partner believing that it was a cue-bid. Dubinin again asked Gromov to correct to the preferred minor and that's the story of how they eventually got to Five Clubs instead of the more natural contract in spades. Still 3 IMPs to Russia when Five Clubs only went one off.

Board 18. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

	♠ J 9 8 6 3		
	♥ 9 7 5		
	♦ J 9 4 3		
	♣ 9		
♠ A K Q 10	<div style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;">N W E S</div>	♠ 5 2	
♥ K 10 4		♥ J 8 6	
♦ A 10 7 5		♦ K Q 2	
♣ J 6		♣ A K Q 5 3	
		♠ 7 4	
		♥ A Q 3 2	
		♦ 8 6	
		♣ 10 8 7 4 2	

Open room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Khiuppenen</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
		INT	Pass
2♣*	Pass	2♦*	Pass
3♣*	Pass	3♦*	Pass
3♥*	Pass	3♠*	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
		1♣*	Pass
INT*	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦*	Pass	3♣	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

In the open room Khiuppenen relayed and got the information that his partner had a balanced hand with 15-17 HCP and 5 clubs with 3-3-2 in any order. Again the Russian pair quickly jumped to their slam without revealing too much information. That didn't help much when Kholomeev as East got a spade led and then played three rounds of clubs pitching a heart from dummy. That small heart was essential to be able to bring in the two needed heart tricks. We are still many wondering about the correct line on this board, and haven't come to any real solution. According to Deep Finesse there are many ways of making the contract, provided you don't pitch your small heart from dummy. Another line is to test two clubs, two spades and two diamonds. If you then believe nothing is behaving you may play a heart to the ten and can still make the contract by simply discarding your small club from dummy on the third spade winner, giving up the pressure in that suit. This line is similar to the one Marion Michielsen took for the Netherlands women team when she made her contract.

In the closed room, the Fantoni/Nunes bidding was similar. One club showed at least two, playing a natural diamond and five card majors. INT showed at least 10 HCPs, whereupon Two Clubs showed 15+, Two Diamonds relayed for more information and Three Clubs was natural. Now Nunes had heard enough and jumped to 6NT.

However at this table they managed to get the contract declared by the other hand. Gromov followed the old principle and led his longest and strongest, in other words a low spade, which ran to Nunes ten, clearly a much more favorable card for declarer.

Nunes now played two more rounds of spades, dummy and South pitching a heart on the second. South was actually squeezed at this point but wasn't probably aware of that fact. The king and queen of diamonds followed, all following suit, next came a club to the jack and the queen of spades, dummy and South again discarding hearts. Leaving the following position:

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

♠ —	♠ —	♠ —	♠ —
♥ A Q	♥ A Q	♥ —	♥ —
♦ —	♦ —	♦ —	♦ —
♣ 10 8 7 4	♣ 10 8 7 4	♣ —	♣ —

We are now at the point to discover why South was actually squeezed already at the third trick when spades were played, having to keep his clubs. Declarer may simply cash one club, discard his diamond from hand and play the jack of hearts from dummy.

However Nunes played for diamonds 3-3, cashed his clubs and exited from dummy with the two of diamonds, going down one when things weren't as he thought. Credit must go to Dubinin who didn't discard a diamond, which would have given declarer the possibility to have an easy way to get count of that suit as well. So a push in one of the most interesting boards so far in this Championship.

In the match between Portugal and Greece the Portuguese player in the South seat led a very aggressive ace of hearts and followed it up with a small heart! Not believing what was going on declarer misplaced most of the cards and went down as well.



Andrey Gromov, Russia

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

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

Open room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Khiuppenen</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
1♥	Dbl	Rdbl	1♣
4♦	Pass	4♠	2♠
6♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

Closed room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Gromov</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Dubinin</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♠	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♦	Pass
7♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Without no interference Fantoni/Nunes again had a long auction to get to Seven Hearts. Two Clubs relayed and was basically forcing to game. Two Spades showed four diamonds and Three Hearts showed 6-4+ in the red suits. Three Spades was a cue-bid and set heart as trumps. Five Clubs was exclusion blackwood and Five Spades showed two aces without the queen of trumps. 5NT asked for more information and Six Diamonds showed something in diamonds. Nunes now thought he had heard enough and jumped to the grand slam. Unfortunately for them and several other pairs the king of diamonds was missing and besides that it was wrongly placed. Khiuppenen/Kholomeev had again a kangaroo-like auction, featuring a lot of jumps, and ended up in Six Diamonds, just made. 16 IMPs to Russia in a match that finally ended 14-16 (54-60) in the favor of the Russian team.

This round put Fantoni/Nunes down to +1.30 on the Butler ranking... but the pair quickly recovered in the next match having some fifty plus IMPs, so as to remain leaders of the pack...

Tor And His Hammer

by Ib Lundby

Open / Round 10

According to the Norse mythology the stormy weather and thunder is caused by Thor and his hammer Mjölmir, and I am sure that Tor Helness' parents had this in mind when he was given his name.



"Thor's Battle with the Ettins", painting by Mårten Eskil Winge, 1872

At the bridge tables in Dublin so far Tor has proved that every day is Thursday (Thor's day), though the deal I will show you is from Saturday's round 10, the match between Monaco and Russia:

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Khiuppenen	Helness	Kholomeev	Helgemo
	INT	Pass	2♥
Dbl	2♠	3♥	Dbl
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

100 Years Young

Solution 6

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

Taking the diamond lead you will surely play a club to the king. Since West is short in hearts, the odds are that he started with three clubs and four spades. If so, he can be subjected to an early squeeze in three suits by playing ace and a heart finesse. (Do NOT try ace and a spade towards the queen or west will win and clear diamonds.) If West parts with a diamond you can set about establishing clubs, while a spade pitch yields three spade tricks to you.

The lead from East was a low heart to the ace, and the jack was covered with the queen and king.

The ♠K went to the ace, and another spade from dummy was taken by the ♠Q. Now East played a diamond to the queen and ace, whereafter declarer cashed the ♠8 and ruffed his last heart.

With six cards left Tor swung his hammer:

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

The ♣4 disappeared on the ♠10, and East had to surrender. A classic trump squeeze.

In the Open Series 4♠ was only bid twice, but Tor alone managed to take 10 tricks. Only a diamond lead and another diamond when East gets his trump trick will defeat this game.

Senior Slams

by Brian Senior

The Round 3 match in the Seniors between Germany and France featured three slam deals in succession. Or, at least, three successive deals which someone thought were slam deals, which is not always quite the same thing.

Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

<p>♠ J 10 7 ♥ 7 5 4 2 ♦ 10 ♣ K Q J 9 5</p>	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ 8 3 ♥ J 10 9 6 3 ♦ J 9 8 ♣ 7 3 2</p>	<p>♠ K Q 9 2 ♥ A K Q 8 ♦ A Q 7 6 3 ♣ –</p>
<p>♠ A 6 5 4 ♥ – ♦ K 5 4 2 ♣ A 10 8 6 4</p>			

West	North	East	South
Grenthe	Wladow	Vanhoutte	Elinescu
–	–	–	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

West	North	East	South
Wenning	Poizat	Marsal	Lasserre
–	–	–	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♦
Pass	7♠	All Pass	

Michael Elinescu opened a Precision-style 2♣ then showed his spades in response to Entschö Wladow's inquiry. The Germans play an interesting convention here. Where opener has shown two suits, 4♣ is RKCB for the first suit and 4♦ RKCB for the second suit. One can see the benefits of using lower bids than 4NT to ask, of course. Here, 4♦ asked for key cards with spades as trumps and 4NT showed two but denied the trump queen. Seeing that his four top cards in the red suits would cover partner's red losers even if the ♦K was missing, Wladow now jumped to the grand slam.

Guy Lasserre opened with a French 1♣, three-plus cards, then showed his spades. When Philippe Poizat now used FSF, Lasserre had such good diamond support that, even holding a bare 11 HCP, he felt justified in jumping to 4♦. Poizat had heard enough and leaped to the grand slam.

Seven Diamonds is actually better than 7♠ but today was a good day with the trumps dividing 3-2 so neither declarer had any problem; flat at +1510.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

<p>♠ Q 9 7 6 3 2 ♥ 10 ♦ – ♣ A J 8 6 5 4</p>	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ A J ♥ K J 8 6 4 ♦ A K 8 ♣ K Q 3</p>	<p>♠ 10 8 ♥ 9 3 2 ♦ Q 9 7 5 4 3 2 ♣ 9</p>
<p>♠ K 5 4 ♥ A Q 7 5 ♦ J 10 6 ♣ 10 7 2</p>			

West	North	East	South
Grenthe	Wladow	Vanhoutte	Elinescu
Pass	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
Wenning	Poizat	Marsal	Lasserre
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♣	Pass	6♣	All Pass


Philippe Vanhoutte opened 2NT then denied three-card spade support, so Patrick Grenthe simply leaped to the club slam. Wladow led the three of hearts and Grenthe played low. Elinescu won the queen and switched to the jack of diamonds. Grenthe pitched a spade, drew the missing trumps in two rounds and took the spade finesse; down one for –100.

There was a winning line. With the fall of the nine of hearts on the third round, declarer can establish three heart winners via the ruffing finesse and has five red winners to pitch five spades from hand, thereby removing the need to take the spade finesse. Was it likely that Wladow had underled the heart ace on this auction? If not, testing the hearts first would have been a free shot. But this German pair are known to be not lacking in imagination so Grenthe was by no means on firm ground to play on hearts.

Reiner Marsal opened with a strong club and this had the effect of getting the club slam played the other way up. Perhaps it is possible to make an argument that South, who can see 10 HCP, cannot expect much help from his partner and, if so, there will be no second red winner for the defence, and a serious risk that a heart loser will disappear on declarer's top diamonds. That is exactly what happened when Lasserre led the jack of diamonds. The defence just got a spade trick; +1370 and 16 IMPs to Germany.

If South cashes the ace of hearts, declarer can still succeed double dummy. He has to lead the heart jack to ruff out the queen while pinning the nine, an unlikely play.

Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Grenthe</i>	<i>Wladow</i>	<i>Vanhoutte</i>	<i>Elinescu</i>
—	Pass	Pass	1♦
1♥	Dble	3♣	4♠
5♥	5♠	6♥	Dble
All Pass			

West	North	East	South
<i>Wenning</i>	<i>Poizat</i>	<i>Marsal</i>	<i>Lasserre</i>
—	Pass	Pass	1♦
2♥	Dble	5♥	6♦
All Pass			

Neither North opened the nine-count and neither East was willing to pre-empt on the 6-4 hand in second seat, even at favourable vulnerability, so it was left to South to open 1♦. Ulrich Wenning made a jump overcall and now Marsal put it to his left-hand-opponent with a raise to 5♥ over Poizat's negative double. With so much playing strength, Lasserre guessed to bid the diamond slam, hardly a ridiculous decision but, on this occasion a losing one. Wenning cashed the ace of hearts then switched to his club and the contract was one down for -100.

Grenthe made only a simple overcall and Vanhoutte responded with a fit-jump, showing clubs and heart support. Elinescu had more room to work in and was content to settle for game, choosing the known 4-4 spade fit. Grenthe saved in 5♥ and Vanhoutte in turn saved in 6♥ over Wladow's 5♠. Elinescu stopped the music with a double and Wladow led a diamond to the queen and ace. He won the ace on Grenthe's club play and played the queen of spades then, when that held the trick, switched back to diamonds. The contract was down two for -300 and 9 IMPs to Germany.

The Germans ran out winners by 59-15 IMPs, 25-5 VPs.


The One That Got Away

by Patrick Jourdain

There is always some new potential in bridge awaiting discovery. The one below was doing the rounds but your intrepid journalist could not find a player who had actually achieved it. If you did, please tell the Bulletin Room or the author.

The deal was Board 4 of Open Round 12, Women Round 10, and Senior Round 3:

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Six Clubs by West occurred at a number of tables. A spade lead is best (though declarer can still succeed by winning the spade ace and taking the discard at once). But after West's bidding, a heart lead was much more likely.

We found a table in the Women's event where, against Six Clubs by West, the ♥2 was led, 3rd and 5th. Declarer played low from dummy and South won the queen. A trump was returned.

To avoid the spade finesse declarer has to dispose of five cards in the suit. Two can go on the diamonds, so three must disappear on the hearts. Is this possible?

South is marked with the ace. If North has five you can only set up two hearts by felling South's bare ace. So you need North to have precisely three hearts. You use a trump entry to lead the king of hearts, covered by South, and later set up three winning hearts when the nine falls. The spade finesse is not needed.

Sad to tell, declarer still went off, but the analysts were busy. Suppose South had won the first heart with the ACE. That sets up the king at once but now declarer will surely place North with the queen and, at the crucial moment, will try to fell that by ruffing a low heart. When that fails there are at most two heart winners to dispose of spades and declarer has to rely on the spade finesse. One down!