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It's USA II vs. France and China vs. USA I

United States II, the defending Bermuda Bowl champions, will take on France in the 160-board Bermuda Bowl final today. In the Venice Cup, United States I will oppose China. The Americans are trying to regain the Cup they won in 1993. They lost to Germany in 1995. China will try to improve on their runner-up status achieved in the World Team Olympiad in Rhodes last year.

United States II is exactly the same team that won in Beijing two years ago – Bob Hamman, Bobby Wolff, Nick Nickell, Dick Freeman, Jeff Meckstroth and Eric Rodwell. They are captained by Walt Walvick and coached by Kit Woolsey. They solidly trounced USA I in the semifinal, 276-157, a remarkable turnabout. When these teams played in the U.S. Trials, USA I, captained by Hugh Ross, wiped out USA II. USA I also won their head-to-head match here in the round-robin. But it was all USA II yesterday.

The match between France and Norway was closer, but it was clear very early that France was going to be the winner. The final score was 220-157, a solid victory indicating that France is ready for the Americans again. In previous final encounters, France defeated the Americans in Valkenburg in 1980 and in Salsomaggiore in 1992. Playing for France are Paul Chemla, Michel Perron, Christian Mari, Alain Lévy, Hervé Mouiel and Frank Multon, with Jean-Louis Stoppa as npc.

By far the best match was the one that featured the two American Venice Cup hopefuls. USA I, captained by Sue Picus, went into the final 32 boards up by 12 – and that's how far ahead they were going into the very last board. United States II, captained by Sue Sachs, had an outside chance to overcome that deficit, but they fell 5 IMPs short, losing a thriller, 173-168. Playing for USA I are Jill Meyers, Randi Montin, Tobi Sokolow, Mildred Breed, Marinesa Letizia and Lisa Berkowitz.

China followed up its powerful performance against Great Britain with an equally impressive showing against round-robin champion France, 241-220. The match actually wasn't that close – France recorded a major gain on the very last board. China will try to improve on their silver medal finish in last year's Women's Team Olympiad in Rhodes. Playing for China are Sun Ming, Lu Yan, Zhang Yalan, Gu Ling, Zhang Yu and Wang Wen Fei, with Hu Ji Hong as non-playing captain.

Qualifying change for Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup

At its meetings in Hammamet, Tunisia, the Executive Council changed the Format for the Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup. The effect of the amendment is that:

"Any country represented in the next Rosenblum teams (Lille 1998) or by two pairs in the World Open Pairs, will recover its right to compete in the next Bermuda Bowl. Similarly, a country represented in the next McConnell teams, or by two pairs in the World Women's Pairs, will recover its right to compete in the Venice Cup."

Victory banquet

The following teams from the Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup are asked to collect IMMEDIATELY the invitations for the Victory Banquet for their teams:

Australia, Argentina, Brazil
Colombia, Chinese Taipei, Chile
New Zealand – (Venice Cup)

The deadline for collecting these invitations will be today (Thursday) at 12.30 because it is essential that we know the number of persons attending as space is limited.

Please take care of your invitation because you will not be allowed to enter the dining room without producing it to the staff at the door.

Prize giving

The prize giving ceremony will take place at 20.00 precisely on Saturday in the Forum Room on the first floor of the Sol Azur (the open room for the Bermuda Bowl and the Venice Cup). Following the ceremony, dinner will take place in the restaurant located on the third floor.

Bermuda Bowl - Results

Semifinals

Table	Match	1st Session Boards 1-16	2nd Session Boards 17-32	3rd Session Boards 33-48	4th Session Boards 49-64	5th Session Boards 65-80	6th Session Boards 81-96	Total IMPs
1.	USA II - USA I	50 - 13	55 - 39	51 - 30	16 - 31	26 - 8	78 - 36	276 - 157
2.	Norway - France	18 - 52	16 - 40	65 - 34	23 - 36	17 - 32	18 - 26	157 - 220

Venice Cup - Results

Semifinals

Table	Match	1st Session Boards 1-16	2nd Session Boards 17-32	3rd Session Boards 33-48	4th Session Boards 49-64	5th Session Boards 65-80	6th Session Boards 81-96	Total IMPs
3.	USA I - USA II	29 - 42	16 - 43	24 - 25	54 - 17	31 - 15	19 - 26	173 - 168
4.	China - France	53 - 13	40 - 50	52 - 16	30 - 23	31 - 58	35 - 60	241 - 220

VUGRAPH

Bermuda Bowl - final 11h00

France - USA II

Venice Cup - final 14h00

China - USA I

final 17h00

to be decided

final 21h30

to be decided

World Transnational Open Teams Schedule

Thursday

11.00-12.30	Round 13
Break	
14.00-15.30	Round 14
15.50-17.20	Round 15
17.40-19.10	Round 16

Friday

11.00-12.30	Round 17
11.00-13.20	Semifinal, first half
12.50-14.20	Round 18
14.00-16.20	Semifinal, second half
Break	
21.30-23.50	Final, first segment

Saturday

11.00-13.20	Final, second segment
14.00-16.20	Final, third segment

Hammamet observations VIII

by Terry Radjef

In 1830 the French began their conquest of Algeria, the neighbour to the west. To influence the beys, they became the main creditors of Tunisia. Slowly but surely, they took over control, then the management of the country's infrastructure.

Taking advantage of one of many foreign incursions across the border, the French came to the rescue. But then they forced the bey to sign the Bardo Treaty in 1881. The treaty authorised France to occupy the country in order "to protect it from any further incursions."

The French, just like the Romans 2000 years earlier, proceeded with the spectacular development of the road system, the ports of Bizerte, Tunis and Sfax, the railroads to transport the phosphate, and several industries which opened the country to the modern world.

On the other hand, salaries were extremely low, unemployment very high, and many farmers were kicked off their land. The frustrations of the Tunisians led to the creation of a movement for independence led in 1934 by a young lawyer, Habib Bourguiba. He campaigned using a pragmatic platform which became increasingly more popular. However, the Tunisians remained faithful to the French during World War II, many enlisting in the Allied forces. Some may remember the Tunisian campaign of 1942-1943.

At the end of the war, Habib Bourguiba was forced into exile in Egypt. The independence process, begun in 1954, resulted in a sovereign Tunisia on 25 July, 1957, even though the French troops didn't leave until October 1963.

(To be continued)



Bermuda Bowl China profiles

WANG XIAOJING teaches mathematics at the University in Nanjing. He likes all kinds of sports – he's a true football fan. He has represented China in international bridge since 1993 and was 5th in the 1995 Bermuda Bowl.

FU ZHONG is an engineer in a systems engineering company in Beijing. He is Wang Xiaojing's partner; He played on Youth teams several years ago, and he was 5th in the 1995 Bermuda Bowl.

WANG WEIMIN lives in Shanghai. He played on the Youth team a few years ago. He placed 3rd in the Pacific Asia Congress 1996, 2nd Pacific Asia Championships 1997.

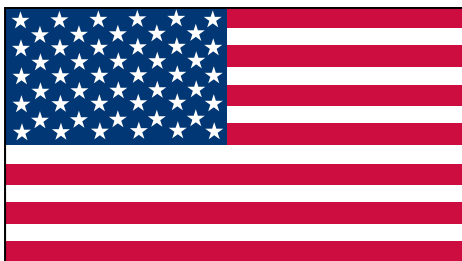
LI XIN lives in Sichuan Province in the southwest of China. He likes spicy food and music. He was 3rd in the Pacific Asia Congress 1996, 2nd in Pacific Asia Championships 1997.

SUN SHAO LIN is an engineer in computer engineering. He likes to read novels about Chinese Martial Art. He was 3rd in Pacific Asia Congress 1996, 2nd in Pacific Asia Championships 1997.

LIU CHUAN lives in Chengdu where the Marlboro China Cup took place earlier this year. He is Sun's partner. He placed 3rd in Pacific Asia Congress 1996, 2nd in Pacific Asia Championships 1997.

World Transnational Open Teams Results After 12 Rounds

1	JASSEM	POL	241
2	REKUNOV	RUS	221
3	AUKEN	DEN GER	218
4	GARDYNIK	POL	215
5	HANNA	CAN	214
6	CONVERY	ZAF GBR	206
7	SHARIF	TRA	204
8	BURGAY	ITA POL	203
9	ROUDINESCO	FRA	202
10	KOUZNETSOV	RUS	201
11	FORT	CSK	198
12	PINTO R	POR	197
13	SAHAL	FRA	196
14	HACKETT	GBR VEN	196
15	LAVAZZA	ITA	196
16	LEVENKO	EST	196
17	VANDERGAAST	NL GBR	195
18	NIEMINEN	FIN	195
19	JACKSON	IRE	195
20	GOODMAN	GBR	194
21	CHMURSKI	POL	193
22	CHODOROWSK	POL	192
23	MACNAIR	GBR	192
24	CERVI	ITA	191
25	DUMITRESCU	ROM	191
26	VLAJNIC	YOU	190
27	EKEBLAD	USA	189
28	FORRESTER	GBR	189
29	KER	NZE	188
30	GAL	HUN	186
31	MILNER	USA CAN	185
32	MAYBACH	GER	184
33	Mrs ZOBU	TUR	184
34	NISING	NOR	181
35	BARONI	ITA	180
36	BLAKSET	DEN	180
37	PINTO E	POR BRA	180
38	HUMBURG	GER	180
39	RIOS	CHL	178
40	OTVOSI	POL	177
41	Mrs BURN	GBR	176
42	BALICKI	POL	176
43	MORSE	USA CAN	175
44	DAEHR	GER	174
45	TELTSCHER	GBR USA	173
46	JEDIDI	TUN	173
47	MACI	ITA	173
48	MOSCHINO	ITA	172
49	BAROUDY	LBN FRA	172
50	SEGRS	BEL	172
51	ANAND	IND	170
52	STRANDBERG	EST	168
53	MALAGUTI	ITA	168
54	SINGAPURI	IND	168
55	D'ORSI	BRA USA	167
56	WESSELING	NTH GBR	167
57	Mrs REID	JAM GBR	167
58	EILERTSEN	NOR	166
59	LAKHDHAR	USIT TUN	164
60	CADI TAZI	MAR	163
61	BELHASSEN	TUN	160
62	GUILLET	FRA	154
63	GARZETTI	CHL	153
64	PEDAK	EST	151
65	NIKEL	RUS	150
66	WILLIAMS	USGB FRA	149
67	BIZER	RUS BRA	149
68	SFAR	TUN	149
69	SILABHUSIDI	THA	149
70	GRAY	ZAF USA	147
71	HAMEYET	MAR	145
72	ZARROUK	TUN	143
73	DIX	MAL	139
74	RAUNTO	FIN	131



NICK NICKELL is president of Kelso & Company, a New York City investment banking firm. He limits his bridge to ACBL national tournaments and, when eligible, to ACBL team trials and world championships. He met his current partner, Dick Freeman, while attending the University of North Carolina in the late 1960s. They began playing seriously about ten years ago and now have the 1995 Bermuda Bowl and seven ACBL national championships to their credit. Nick also won the ACBL's prestigious Blue Ribbon Pairs, partnered by Bob Hamman. Nick is easy-going, loves a good laugh and is rarely seen without a smile on his face. When not at the table, he can sometimes be seen flipping coins against a wall (rejoicing in glee when he gets a leaner) or engaging in a serious game of liar's poker. At home is his wife, Carol, and their 11-month-old son, Joey. Nick also wins the world championship when it comes to bragging about Joey.

DICK FREEMAN of Atlanta, Georgia, is a senior vice-president of Oppenheimer and Co., a world-wide financial concern. For those of you who have not kept abreast of developments in stock exchanges (what a drop early this week!) during the past ten days, Dick currently has a very unpopular occupation. He learned bridge at the University of Chicago, from which he graduated at the tender age of fifteen. He moved to Washington D.C., where he furthered his bridge education under the tutelage of the great Al Roth. Like Nick, he limits his bridge playing to ACBL NABCs and world championships. He is married to Louise and has two children and two grandchildren. His favorite win of all time was the 1963 ACBL Mixed Teams with Louise and two of his mentors from college, Manny Hochfeld and Gloria Turner. According to legend, he is the world's fastest human matchpointer. Today's computers can undoubtedly matchpoint faster. Ten years ago, the smart money would have been on Dick.

WALT WALVICK, an attorney from McLean, Virginia, is trying his hand as non-playing captain for the first time. In his role, he has the unenviable task of attempting to fill the shoes of the late bridge immortal, Edgar Kaplan, who captained the team to victory in the 1995 Bermuda Bowl. He plays bridge only occasionally. He won the Swiss Plate in Miami in 1988, finished third in the 1992 Mixed Pairs with his wife Kathie in Geneva and has won two ACBL national championships. His greatest joy in life is his family. His wife Kathie has a third in another world championship, his stepson, Mike Cappelletti Jr., is a successful young bridge professional in the United States, and his stepdaughter, Sky, is an aspiring song writer and vocalist living in New York City. A strong clue about the other passion in his life can be gleaned from the fact that his laptop is rarely out of his sight.

Bermuda Bowl USA II profiles

BOBBY WOLFF is a semi-retired bridge writer and bridge administrator. His current column, *The Aces on Bridge*, appears in about 150 newspapers world-wide. He is a past president of both the WBF and ACBL. Like his regular partner Bob Hamman, he is one of the legends of bridge. He is the holder of ten world championships. In ten Bermuda Bowl appearances, he has an amazing record of seven wins and three seconds to the Italian Blue team. In his leisure time, Bobby has been known to dabble in sports betting and enjoys watching Financial Advisor and Enthusiast. He has been on Dick Freeman's case all week about the declining value of his portfolio.

JEFF MECKSTROTH, a bridge professional, is "Meck" of Meckwell, one of the most successful partnerships in the world during the last decade. His four world titles include the 1981 and 1995 Bermuda Bowls, the 1988 Olympiad and the 1986 Open Pairs. He has won approximately 30 ACBL national championships. He is married with 12 and 14-year-old sons and lives in Tampa, Florida. In his limited free time away from the tables, he loves playing golf, fishing with his boys, reading books, watching movies and sports. Jeff's favorite tournaments are at sites that include casinos where he sometimes can be found playing blackjack. Viva Hammamet.

ERIC RODWELL, also a bridge professional, is the "well" of Meckwell. He claims one more major title than Jeff, the 1992 Pan American Pairs. Always in demand, he and Jeff will leave Hammamet on Sunday in time to arrive at a regional tournament in the United States that begins Monday night. He has been happily married since 1995 to Donna, who has rapidly established herself as one of the top negotiators in dealings with local merchants. Eric and Donna live in Chicago, Illinois, in a happy family that includes two children each from prior marriages. Eric enjoys piano, sports, reading, movies and his family. The only disappointment about this wonderful tournament is the lack of an accessible piano, which has deprived players all over the world of regaling to Eric play in the wee hours of the morning.

BOB HAMMAN is the 59-year-old president of Dallas, Texas, based SCA Promotions, Inc., a company that insures contingent sporting events such as a golfer scoring a hole-in-one. What more is there to say about Bob? Fiercely competitive, he has been the highest ranked player in the world since 1985, is a nine-time world champion and has won countless ACBL national championships. The other members of the Hamman household, his wife Petra and son Christopher, are expert bridge players in their own right, Petra having won a major ACBL national championship. One could rightly accuse Bob of being a workaholic. According to Petra, the short time they spent together in Paris before this tournament was Bob's first vacation in recorded history.

Transnational Team Line-ups

ANAND	IND		KALPANA, SUBHASH, ANIL, ANAL, SANTANU
AUKEN	DEN/GER		AUKEN, SCHEFFER, ANDERSEN, MOLLER
BALICKI	POL		ZMUDZINSKI, KOWALSKI, ROMANSKI, SZYMANOWSKI, ZAKRZEWSKI
BARONI	ITA	L	De BASIO, PISCITELLI, CAGGESE, FRANSOS, SACCAVINI
BAROUDY	LBN/FRA	MS	AWAD, FAYAD, EIDI, AWAD
BELHASSEN	TUN		JALILA, SLIM, AISSA, MESTIRI
BIZER	RUS/BRA		PROKHOROV, GOUDKOV, VOROBEI
BLAKSET	DEN		HECHT, JOHANSEN, CHRISTIANSEN, BRUUN, BLAKSET, WERGE
BURGAY	ITA/POL		De FALCO, MARIANI, LESNIEWSKI, MARTENS
CADITAZI	MAR		BENSOUIDA, BELKOUCH, ORAIBI
CERVI	ITA	M	VIVALDI, CIVIDIN, ZENARI, PAOLUZI, ROSSANO
CHMURSKI	POL		PUCZYNSKI, OLANSKI, GOLEBIOWSKI
CHODOROWSKI	POL		CHODOROWSKI, KOLTON, ZAJKIEWICZ
CONVERY	ZAF/GBR		GOWER, SCHAPIRO, GORDON, COPE
D'ORSI	BRA/USA/NZ	MS	NUDELMAN, ANDERSON, GERARD, WIGNALL, FRANCIS
DAEHR	GER		JUNG, MULLER, NEHMERT, DAEHR
DIX	MAL	MS	BORG, CONSIGLIO, ATTARDBONDI, ATTARDBONDI, CONSIGLIO
DUMITRESCU	ROM		CUCUIU, POPESCU, CEACARU, DOGARU, CATONE
EILERTSEN	NOR		ISINGRUD, GRIME, OLSEN, HAGA, JOHANSEN
EKEBLAD	USA		EKEBLAD, PASSELL, SEAMON, COKIN
FORRESTER	GBR		SENIOR, MONACHAN, STEEL, KING
FORT	CSK		VOLHEJN, FILIPVELECKY, LAUER, VORACEK
GAL	HUN		WINKLER, LAKATOS, HOMONNAY, SZALAY, GULYAS
GARDYNIK	POL		PRZYBORA, KWIECIEN, PSZCZOLA
GARZETTI	CHL		BIGLER, WEISS, WUNDERLI
GOODMAN	GBR		POWNALL, KAY, DHONDY, PENCHARZ, SHARPLES
GRAY	ZAF/USA		NICK, POPPLESTONE, WESTON, SCHODER
GUILLET	FRA	M	GUILLET, GERMAIN, CHAUVIRE
HACKETT	GBR/VEN		MAVROMICHALIS, HACKETT, HACKETT, VERNON, MENDOZA
HAMEYET	MAR		RHALLAM, MARRAKCHI, KABBAJ, LALAMI
HANNA	CAN		FRASER, ROCHE, GREEN, THURSTON, DELOGU
HUMBURG	GER	S	GROMOELLER, MATSSON, SCHNEIDER
JACKSON	IRE		WALSH, KEAVENEY, TIMLIN
JASSEM	POL		TUSZYNSKI, KOWALCZYK, WITEK
JEDIDI	TUN		BELYFA, HASSINE, BACCOUR, ZMERLI, TOUIL
KER	NZE		GRANT, KER, DRAVITZKI, JEDRYCHOWSKI, MIK
KOUZNETSOV	RUS		DOUBININE, CHOUDNEV, PAVLOV
LAKHDHARU	USIT/TUN		RADJEF, BROWN, JELLOULI, TRENTALAHCE, KULENUVIC
LAVAZZA	ITA		DIMAIO, PIETRI, RINALDI, PULGA
LEVENKO	EST		TRISHKIN, JUGANDI, KOIVUPUU
MACI	ITA		LONGINOTTI, RESTA, SALVI
MACNAIR	GBR		REES, LINDON, LINDON
MALAGUTI	ITA		CAMERANO, ODDONE, DONATELLI, VIETTI, TORIELLI
MAYBACH	GER		BUCHLEV, ENGEL, KIRMSE
MILNER	USA/CAN		WEICHSEL, LEVIN, SONTAG, JACOBUS, GITELMAN
MORSE	USA/CAN		MORSE, RETEK, RETEK, COOK, ROGERS
MOSCHINO	ITA		GARBOSI, ABATE, CARUGATI, UGGERI
BURN	GBR	L	PENFOLD, GODFREY, KERR, KING
REID	JAM/GBR	L	WIKLUND, FOWLES, BULLIS
ZOBU	TUR		EKSIOGLU, EKSIOGLU, YILMAZ
NIEMINEN	FIN		KULMALA, LINDEN, MAKINEN, IMMONEN, MANNI
NIKEL	RUS		DOUNAENKO, KHOKHLOV, TOKAREV
NISING	NOR		KRISTENSEN, SKOTNES, LUTKEN
OTVOSI	POL		LASOCKI, ZAREMBA, BOREWICZ
PEDAK	EST		MARIPUU, LEY, LELLEP, LOND, KOBOLT
PINTOE	POR/BRA		PINTO, CUNHA, LIMA, CERQUINHO, MELO
PINTOR	POR		CERQUINHO, FERREIRA, SILVA, BARBOSA, TORRES
RAUNTO	FIN		KIPPILA, ELOKORPI, PESONEN
REKUNOV	RUS		KAZANTSEV, KHOLOMEEV, KHIOUPPENEN
RIOS	CHL		ANDERSSON, ZAHIR, TACIVE, CLARO
ROUDINESCO	FRA	S	DELMOULY, ADAD, AUJALEU, SCHNEIDER
SAHAL	FRA		GEITNER, COUNIL, LEGRAS
SEGERS	BEL	M	HARDEMAN, LAMOTE, LAMOTE
SFAR	TUN	M	KLIBI, BACCAR, GUELLATY, REBAI, KLIBI
SHARIF	TRA		FAIGENBAUM, CHIDIAC, CRONIER, PAWLIK, SPELL
SILABHUSIDI	THA		SURIYA, SOPHONPANI, NIMITYONGSKUL, NIMITYONGS, VALLAPA
SINGAPURI	IND		KARMARKAR, SHIVADSAM, THADINI, KLIBI, BEAUMONT
STRANDBERG	EST		LINNAMAGI, JUHKAMI, LINDMAA, KUUSK
TELTSCHER	GBR/USA		PRIDAY, TRUSCOTT, TRUSCOTT, SACHS, SACHS
VANDERGAAST	NL/GBR		VANDERGAAST, CALLAGHAN, MALYSA, VANDERKAM
VLAJNIC	YOU		RADISIC, STOJANOVIC, ZIPOVSKI, KIKIC, KALCIC
WESSELING	NTH/GBR		DUCHWORTH, DEBOER, SNELLER
WILLIAMSU	SGB/FRA		STUCKER, PRIDAY, TELTSCHER, QUERAN, GUYOT
ZARROUK	TUN	S	CHELLY, CHEKIR, GHEDIRA, AYECH, KHALED

S = Senior • M = Mixed • L = Ladies

This is as wild as it gets

by Sandra Landy

You deal as South at Love All.

♠ –
♥ A Q 6 2
♦ A Q J 10 8 7 6 5
♣ J

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♦
4♠	Pass	6♣	6♦
6♠	Pass	7♣	?

Do you bid? If so what? If you decide to pass, what do you lead?

This is as wild as it gets.

This hand from the World Transnational Open Teams was dealt at the table in the match Mrs Burn (GB) v Rios (Chile). If it had turned up amongst the swiny boards in the semifinals, everybody would have said the computer had gone mad.

♠ 76	♥ –
♦ J10987543	♠ 2
♦ 92	♥ –
♣ 3	♦ 4
♠ AKQJ1098543	♣ AKQ109876542
♥ K	
♦ K3	
♣ –	

♠ –
♥ AQ62
♦ AQJ108765
♣ J

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♥	Pass	4♣
4♠	Pass	6♣	6♦
6♠	Pass	7♣	7♦
Dbl	All pass		

Su Burn wisely bid 7♦, going only one down when West had no club to lead. If you pass you have to work out that with all these eight-card suits around, the ace of hearts won't stand up but the ace of diamonds might! In the other room the auction was swifter and it was North who had to find the lead to six spades doubled.

West	North	East	South
5♠	Pass	6♣	1♦
6♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl
All Pass			Dbl

Only an original trump from North beats the contract. Not easy to find after two doubles from partner. A diamond is won by the ace but South hasn't a trump to lead and West gets to ruff her heart loser for +1210.

Press Conference

A special press conference for bridge journalists will be held on Friday at 14.30 in the Royal Azur. All IBPA members and press are invited.

Venice Cup

Quarterfinal (set 6)

USA I vs Italy

by Tony Gordon

Going into the final 16 boards, USA I held a narrow 9-IMP lead over Italy. However, on what turned out to be a fairly dull set of boards, Italy did not seriously threaten to extend their unexpected participation in the event as far as the semifinals.

Board 81. Love All. Dealer North.

♠ A K Q 10 8
 ♥ K Q 7
 ♦ 5
 ♣ A J 3 2

♠ 9 3
 ♥ J 2
 ♦ A K 8 6 4 3
 ♣ K 9 7

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

♠ J 7 5 2
 ♥ 6 5 4 3
 ♦ Q 2
 ♣ 8 6 4

W N
 E S

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Gianardi	Breed	Rovera
2♦	1♣	Pass	Pass
3NT	Dbl	2NT	3♣
	Dbl	4♦	All Pass

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
De Lucchi	Letizia	Rosetta	Berkowitz
2♦	1♣	Pass	1♦
3♦	Dbl	2NT	Pass
	All Pass		

In the Open Room, the Americans competed over the doomed 3♣ and went one down in 4♦ for +50 to Italy. In the Closed Room, Marinesa Letizia had to start with a strong club on the North hand and then had to decide whether to double or show her spades on the second round. She elected to double and found herself faced with a similar problem on the next round. This time she decided to go quietly. 3♦ made easily for +110 and 4 IMPs to Italy, reducing the deficit to 5 IMPs. However, the next three swings went to USA I.

Board 82. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

♠ Q 2
 ♥ 10
 ♦ A Q 7 5
 ♣ A Q J 5 4 3

♠ 9 7 6 5
 ♥ J 8 4 3
 ♦ K 9 8 3
 ♣ 9

♠ A K 4 3
 ♥ K 9 7 6 5 2
 ♦ 6
 ♣ 10 2

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

W N
 E S

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Gianardi	Breed	Rovera
2♥	3♣	1♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	3♥	3NT
All Pass		Pass	Dbl

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
De Lucchi	Letizia	Rosetta	Berkowitz
2♦	3♣	1♥	Pass
All Pass		Pass	3NT

In the Open Room, the Italians quickly reached the cold 3NT, but the Americans sacrificed for two down and +300 to Italy.

In the Closed Room, Francesca De Lucchi's 2♦ in response to Annalisa Rosetta's 1♥ was either natural or weak with heart support or 9-11 with 2 or 3-card heart support. It would appear that this ambiguity made it difficult for the Italians to judge whether or not to compete further and they sold out to 3NT. Lisa Berkowitz made 11 tricks on a heart lead for +660 and 8 IMPs to USA I.

A 2-IMP gain on Board 85 stretched the Americans' lead to 15 IMPs and 5 more came on board 87 when Italy went one down in both rooms. Two boards later Italy recovered some badly needed IMPs.

Board 89. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

♠ J 10 5 2
 ♥ A 9 6 3
 ♦ A 4
 ♣ K 8 6

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

♠ A K 8 6
 ♥ J 5 4
 ♦ K Q 3
 ♣ 10 7 2

♠ Q 7
 ♥ K Q 8 2
 ♦ 9 2
 ♣ Q 9 5 4 3

W N
 E S

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Gianardi	Breed	Rovera
Dbl	1♣	Pass	1♥
All Pass	2♥	3♦	3♥

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
De Lucchi	Letizia	Rosetta	Berkowitz
	INT	All Pass	

In the Open Room, the 1♣ opening allowed the Italians to find their heart fit and the Americans to find their diamond fit. Tobi Sokolow led the ♦K against 3♥ and Laura Rovera won the ace, crossed to hand with a trump and led a club to the king and ace. This would seem to lead to one down, but the records show that the contract made so the defence must have lost one of their tricks; +140 to Italy.

In the Closed Room, the INT opening won the auction for USA I and they seemed to be booked for two down after a diamond lead to the queen and ace. However, Rosetta ducked the club lead that followed and Letizia cashed out for one down. -50 meant 5 IMPs to Italy.

Board 91. Love All. Dealer South.

♠ K 6
 ♥ -
 ♦ K Q 10 9 8 6 2
 ♣ 10 9 7 4

♠ 10 4
 ♥ 9 7 5
 ♦ A J 5 4 3
 ♣ A K J

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

♠ 7
 ♥ A K Q J 8 3 2
 ♦ 7
 ♣ Q 6 3 2

W N
 E S

In the Closed Room, Berkowitz opened 4♣ showing a good 4♥ opening and De Lucchi overcalled 4♠. Letizia chose to double this, but De Lucchi had ten top tricks and came to an eleventh by squeezing Berkowitz in hearts and clubs. Repeated club leads would have broken up the end position, but Letizia naturally led a diamond. +690 to Italy.

In the Open Room, Rovera opened 4♥ and Sokolow overcalled 4♠. Mildred Breed cuebid 5♣ but quickly signed off in 5♠ after a 5♦ cuebid from Sokolow. Sokolow found the same squeeze as De Lucchi to bring home her contract, but that was another 6 IMPs to Italy and the deficit was back down to 9 IMPs.

However, Board 93 virtually killed off Italy's hopes.

Board 93. Game All. Dealer North.

♠ J 9 3
 ♥ 8
 ♦ A K 10 7 5 4 3 2
 ♣ 4

♠ Q 10 8 6 4 2
 ♥ K Q 9 5
 ♦ Q 8
 ♣ 2

♠ A K
 ♥ A J 10 4 2
 ♦ J 6
 ♣ 10 8 6 3

♠ 7 5
 ♥ 7 6 3
 ♦ 9
 ♣ A K Q J 9 7 5

W N
 E S

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Gianardi	Breed	Rovera
4♥	3♦	3♥	Pass
	All Pass		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
De Lucchi	Letizia	Rosetta	Berkowitz
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♣
	4♦	All Pass	

In the Open Room, the 3♦ opening proved no deterrent to the Americans and they quickly reached 4♥. Breed lost the obvious three tricks for +620 to USA I.

In the Closed Room, Letizia's 3NT was a four-level preempt in an unspecified minor. This time, the opponents were silenced and she was left to play in 4♦. Rosetta cashed ♠AK and ♥A and then paused for breath. She needed to play a club now to defeat the contract, but when she continued with a second heart declarer was home. +130 and 13 IMPs to USA I increased the lead to 22 IMPs with only three boards left.

Two IMPs for overtricks on Board 94 and a double partscore swing on Board 95 finally closed the door on the Italians. Their 7-IMP gain on the last board when USA I stayed out of game merely reduced the overall deficit to 24 IMPs. The Americans had won the set 37-22 and the match 214-190 and could look forward to facing their compatriots in the semifinal.

Comment from Chemla

After observing China's Venice Cup team in action against his countrymen, Paul Chemla observed, "God, I'm glad those Chinese ladies don't play in the Bermuda Bowl!"

Bermuda Bowl

Semifinal (set 4)

USA I vs USA II

The fourth session of the semi-final saw the players confronted by a very quiet set of boards. The few significant swings were generated in the bidding.

Board 50. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stansby	Hamman	Martel	Wolff
2♦	4♠	1♦	Dbl
		All Pass	

Bobby Wolff's decision to double the opening bid paid off when Bob Hamman had an easy jump to game. East led the ace of clubs and switched to a trump, taken in dummy by the king. Declarer played the queen of diamonds and when it was covered by the king he let that card win. West played a second spade but declarer won in dummy, played a diamond to the ace and ruffed a diamond. Its clear that declarer now has the contract made, but the play record now ceases and the result was posted as one down. Perhaps there had been a revoke?

It was only the following day that we were able to discover the truth – Bobby Wolff had entered the wrong result! So, +620.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Rosenberg	Meckstroth	Mahmood
INT	2♠	1♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	3♠	All Pass	3♥

Zia preferred to pass at his first turn and he subsequently doubled for penalties. His three heart bid was clearly some sort of game try, but with such a weak hand for his initial overcall it was difficult for Rosenberg to bid more than 3♠. Perhaps Zia should have taken the bull by the horns and simply bid game himself. In any event, it was 10 IMPs away.

USA II outbid their opponents again a few boards later.

Board 57. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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



Photograph courtesy of Kodak's new digital camera

Nick Nickell (USA II)

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stansby	Hamman	Martel	Wolff
Dbl	2♣	Pass	2♦
All Pass	Pass	Pass	3♣

Once Stansby elected to double Wolff's relay bid it was always likely that East/West would miss their heart fit. Three clubs could be defeated in several ways and after the opening lead of the ten of diamonds there was no chance of a defensive mistake. -50.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Rosenberg	Meckstroth	Mahmood
2♣	1♣	Pass	1♠
	Pass	4♥	All Pass

There was no problem at the other table as Rodwell was able to show his red two suiter. Declarer lost only to the two aces, +650 and 12 IMPs.

Board 59. Love All. Dealer South.

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



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stansby	Hamman	Martel	Wolff
Pass	INT	Dbl	1♥
Pass	3♥	All Pass	2♥

This is the sort of game you want to be in when it makes, but on a bad day you might even go down when the heart finesse is inside. +170

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Rosenberg	Meckstroth	Mahmood
Pass	1♠	INT	1♥
2NT	Dbl	3♣	2♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	3♥

No problem here in reaching game. West led the eight of diamonds so Zia went up with the ace and played the jack of hearts. East covered, so he played a few trumps and then went to dummy to play the ten of diamonds. +420 recovered 6 IMPs.

Board 63. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Stansby	Hamman	Martel	Wolff
Pass	1♦	2♣	3♦
3♥	4♦	All Pass	

Make what you will of the North/South bidding. Once again the play was dull, declarer losing two spades, two hearts and a club; -200.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Rosenberg	Meckstroth	Mahmood
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

As the vugraph commentators predicted, Rodwell opened the bidding. Meckstroth's response was game forcing and (we think!) the rebid of 2NT promised a minimum and any 5-3-3-2. Another relay established 3-5-2-3, so with 3NT not looking appealing, Meckstroth decided to try for the ten trick game.

Rosenberg led his singleton club and after long thought declarer won in dummy and played the king of hearts. When that was ducked he played the nine of hearts. North won and cashed the ace of diamonds. Zia encouraged with the nine and Rosenberg played a second diamond, putting his partner in to get his club ruff.

Well defended and another half dozen IMPs. USA II had won this low scoring session 31-16 and led 172-113 overall.



Venice Cup

Semifinal (set 4)

USA I vs USA II

At the halfway point in the battle of the American Ladies' teams, USA2 had a useful but not yet decisive lead of 41 IMPs, 110-69. USA1 needed to pull back some points in the last set of the day to help them sleep well. The first swing of the set duly went in favour of the trailing team.

Board 50. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

♠ Q 9 8 7 6 4
♥ K 9 3
♦ A 8 4
♣ 4

♠ 10
♥ A 10 8 4
♦ J 9 6 3
♣ A K 6 3

♠ A K 2
♥ Q J 5
♦ Q 2
♣ J 10 7 5 2

North
Sokolow

South
Breed

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sanborn	Sokolow	Levitina	Breed
Pass	2♦	1♦	Dbf
Pass	4♠	Pass	3♣
		All Pass	

Irina Levitina, for USA2, opened 1♦, Precision, and Mildred Breed doubled. North, Tobi Sokolow, cuebid then jumped to 4♠. She was able to ruff a diamond in the dummy so just lost one trick in each side suit; +620. In the Open Room, Randi Montin, for USA1, also opened 1♦, playing standard methods. Beth Palmer did not make the takeout double and Jill Meyers responded INT. Nobody had anything to say over that so USA2 had missed their vulnerable game. Juanita Chambers led a spade and the defence cashed six of those then switched to hearts. As Palmer had kept a club guard, Meyers could take only four tricks; -150 but 10 IMPs to USA1, who needed them.

Board 52. Game All. Dealer West.

♠ Q 9
♥ K Q 10 7
♦ A K
♣ A 6 4 3 2

♠ A 8 5 4
♥ A 6 3 2
♦ 10 7 5 2
♣ 5

♠ 10 7
♥ J 9 5 4
♦ J 9 8 3
♣ Q J 10

North
Sokolow

South
Breed

In the Closed Room, Sokolow opened 1♣ in second seat and was left to play there, making nine tricks for +110. West had five spades and it was a slight surprise that she did not overcall in the pass-out seat but she had club length and partner had to also have some clubs or be quite weak for her pass over 1♣.

Chambers also opened 1♣ but this was Precision. She rebid INT with her awkward hand over the 1♦ negative and played there. Montin led a low heart and Chambers won the queen and played back the ♥K. This was ducked and now Chambers tried a low club from hand. Meyers won the ♠K and switched to a spade to the ace. Montin returned a spade and Meyers won the king and led a low one to Montin's eight, allowing her to cash the ♥A before leading a fourth spade; one down for -100 and 5 IMPs to USA1.

Chambers could have made her contract by contin-

uing to play on hearts to get to dummy then taking the club finesse.

Board 53. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

♠ K 9 7 2
♥ -
♦ Q 7 4 3
♣ K 8 5 4 2

♠ 4 3
♥ 7 5 4 3
♦ 10 8 6 2
♣ A 10 9

♠ Q J 10 6 5
♥ Q J 6 2
♦ 5
♣ Q 6 3

North
Sokolow

South
Breed

North	South
Sokolow	Breed
Pass	1♥
1♠	3♦
4♦	5♦
Pass	

Breed opened 1♥ then jump-shifted in diamonds. When Sokolow raised those, Breed had no convenient cuebid as both 4♥ and 4♠ would have sounded natural. With no club control she just bid 5♦ and played there, making exactly; +600.

North	South
Chambers	Palmer
Pass	1♣
2♣	2♥
2♠	2NT
3♦	6♦
Pass	

Palmer opened a strong club and Chambers made a natural positive response. Chambers got to show all three of her suits and now Palmer took a long time before shooting the slam. Montin led a spade and Chambers won the ace and continued with a club to the king and a second club for the jack and ace. Meyers continued spades and Chambers won the king. She ruffed a club high, then played ♥K and ♥9 to the queen. A third diamond to the jack was followed by three rounds of hearts, declarer ruffing the third round. As Montin had pitched a heart on the diamonds, when Chambers now played a winning club and Meyers ruffed, she had to give the last trick to dummy's established heart; one down for -100 and 12 IMPs to USA1.

Board 54. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

♠ A 9 2
♥ Q 9 7 3 2
♦ K 8 2
♣ K J

♠ 10 7 5 4
♥ K J 10 8 4
♦ 9
♣ Q 9 5

♠ Q
♥ A 6
♦ 7 6 5 4 3
♣ A 10 8 3 2

North
Sokolow

South
Breed

Both North/South pairs began 1♠ - 2♥ - 2♠. Now Chambers jumped to 4♠ while Sokolow preferred a forcing 3♠, which Breed raised to game.

The opening lead was critical. Against Breed, Sanborn led the ♠A then switched to ace and another heart. The

friendly trump position meant that Breed had no further problems; +450.

Meyers led a diamond against Palmer. Declarer won in hand and played a club towards the king-jack. Meyers played low but Palmer guessed right, playing the king. Palmer played a second club and Meyers won the ace. She gave Montin a diamond ruff, won the heart return and gave a second ruff for one down; -50 and another 11 IMPs to USA1. Having gained 37 IMPs in six boards, USA1 had almost levelled the match.

Board 55. Game All. Dealer South.

♠ Q 6 3
♥ 9 8
♦ A J 10 6 5 3
♣ A 7

♠ A J 4
♥ K Q 10 6
♦ K 9 7 4
♣ K 4

♠ K 10 9 7 5 2
♥ J 7 5 4 3
♦ Q
♣ 10

♠ 8
♥ A 2
♦ 8 2
♣ Q J 9 8 6 5 3 2

North
Sokolow

South
Breed

USA2 earned themselves a little breathing space on this one. Both Souths opened 3♣ and, after two passes, both Easts doubled for takeout. Kerri Sanborn and Jill Meyers both responded 4♠ to the double and played there. Sokolow led ♠A, ♦A, then a heart; Chambers led ♠A, ♦A then a second diamond. It was all down to declarer's view in the trump suit and Sanborn viewed correctly while Meyers did not; +620 for USA2 but -100 for USA1 - 12 IMPs to USA2.

Board 57. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

♠ 9 4 3
♥ A 8
♦ 6 2
♣ K Q J 7 5 3

♠ A 8 6 5
♥ Q J 7 4
♦ 10 9
♣ 10 9 2

♠ K 2
♥ K 10 5 3 2
♦ A Q J 8 4
♣ 6

♠ Q J 10 7
♥ 9 6
♦ K 7 5 3
♣ A 8 4

North
Sokolow

South
Breed

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Meyers	Chambers	Montin	Palmer
3♥	2♣	Pass	3♣
	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Chambers opened a Precision 2♣ and Palmer made a constructive raise to 3♣. Meyers bid her hearts and Montin raised to game. North/South had already done their bidding on the deal and were prepared to take their chances on defence. But there was no defence. 4♥ made an overtrick for +650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sanborn	Sokolow	Levitina	Breed
Dbf	1♣	Pass	1♠
4♥	Rdbl	2♥	3♣
	5♣	All Pass	

Sokolow opened at the one-level and Breed bid her spades. Now Sanborn was able to get both her suits into the game via a takeout double. Breed redoubled, showing three spades, and Levitina bid her hearts. Breed

showed her club support and when Sanborn jumped to 4♥ Sokolow could see that her side would not have much defence to that contract so saved in 5♣. But it wasn't completely clear to East/West that 5♣ was bid as a save as they had bid 4♥ more on shape than high cards. 5♣ slipped by undoubled, enabling USA1 to make a healthy profit on the board. Levitina led the ♦10 and continued with the ♦9, overtaken by the jack. Sanborn returned the ♦2 but Sokolow could ditch a heart on that while Levitina ruffed. A low spade switch would have led to four off but Levitina tried a heart in response to her partner's suit preference lead and now the contract was only three down; -150 and 11 IMPs to USA1.

There were no more major swings in the set, but a couple of minor ones came along at the end.

Board 63. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

The board was played the wrong way round in the Open Room, making Montin West. She opened a mini-no trump in second seat and Meyers just blasted 3NT. The opening diamond lead beat that easily enough; two

down for -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sanborn	Sokolow	Levitina	Breed
Pass	1♦	2♣	2♦
2♥	3♦	4♣	4♦
5♣	All Pass		

Here it was Sokolow, in third seat, who got to open. Levitina overcalled 2♣ and the competitive auction finally ended in 5♣. This is a better contract than 3NT, as there are eleven tricks available if the defence don't establish their spade trick immediately. But Breed led a diamond to Sokolow's ace and back came the necessary low spade. Declarer could draw trumps and knock out the heart but she was one down and the swing was only 2 IMPs to USA2.

Board 64. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Meyers	Chambers	Montin	Palmer
1♠	2♣	Dbl	3♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
3♠	All Pass		

Despite having seven running spades, Meyers took a slightly cautious line in the auction and waited for the second double before repeating her spades. Chambers led a low club which Meyers ran round to her queen. She drew trumps and had ten tricks; +170.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Sanborn	Sokolow	Levitina	Breed
1♠	2♣	2♥	3♣
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
Pass	5♣	Dbl	All Pass

Here Levitina bid 2♥ rather than making a negative double. That encouraged Sanborn to bid 3♣ freely and the game was reached. On the auction, there was no reason for Sokolow to avoid the disastrous club lead to 4♣ so she probably did well to go on to 5♣. She got the trumps right so was just one down; -100 but 2 IMPs to USA1.

At the end of a great set for USA1, they had pulled back to trail by only 3 IMPs with 32 boards still to play. The overnight score: USA1 123 USA2 126. There would be all to play for the next day with a place in the Venice Cup final at stake.

Venice Cup

Semifinal (set 5)

USA I vs USA II

This was the one close match out of the four semifinals overnight, with USA2 leading by just 3 IMPs. As it turned out, it was to remain tight right down to the wire.

Board 66. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

Both East/West pairs handled this awkward deal well.

West	East
Breed	Sokolow
2♣	1♥
2♠	2♥
4♣	3♥
5♣	4♠
	Pass

Tobi Sokolow suggested the 4-3 spade fit on the way to 5♣ but Mildred Breed rightly didn't fancy that and corrected to the top spot.

West	East
Deas	Palmer
2♣	1♥
2♠	2♥
4♣	3♥
Pass	5♣

Beth Palmer didn't bother offering 4♠ as a possible contract, preferring to take the pressure off her partner. Both declarers made eleven tricks; +400 for a push.

Board 67. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

Board 70. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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



Jill Meyers (USA I)

In the Closed Room, Montin/Meyers bid 1♦ - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♠. Nobody saw fit to intervene at any stage so Montin played there on a trump lead. There were two losers in each side suit; one down for -50.

Open Room

West Sokolow	North Sanborn	East Breed	South Levitina
		Pass	1♦
Dbf	1♥	3♣	All Pass

The board was placed on the table incorrectly in the Open Room. Sokolow dredged up a takeout double, which resulted in her partner declaring 3♣. That contract looks quite easy. You expect to lose two diamonds and a club but should have all the information you need by the time you come to the spade guess. But Irina Levitina led the ♦A, collecting the queen from Kerri Sanborn, and switched to a devilish ♥10. Considering the bidding, Breed paid Levitina a big compliment by thinking for quite a while before rising with the ♥A. Many of us would have assumed the heart to be a singleton and risen immediately. Having generated a heart loser, Breed needed to pick up the trumps. She did just that, leading to the ace and returning the jack to pin North's ten. Breed wasn't about to get the spades wrong after that; +110 and 2 IMPs to USA1.

Board 71. Game All. Dealer South.

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

Closed Room

West Deas	North Meyers	East Palmer	South Montin
1♠	2♣	3♠	Pass
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Montin made a huge decision for her side when she converted to 4♥, perhaps just assuming that Meyers, who had to be very short in spades, had to have some heart tolerance. A spade lead didn't cause Montin any problems. She took the ace and king, then ruffed a spade, ruffed a club and ruffed her last spade. With the ♦J onside, the defence was powerless; +620.

In the Open Room, Sanborn opened 1♥ and Breed passed. Levitina jumped to 3♣, natural and invitational, and Sanborn left her there. Levitina had to lose three trumps and two red aces; -100 and 12 IMPs to USA1.

Board 73. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

Both Souths played in 3NT after West had overcalled

in spades and North had shown a weakish hand with long diamonds. West led spades and both declarers ducked until the third round. They then got the diamonds right but had nothing better than the heart finesse for their ninth trick; one down for a dull push.

But suppose that declarer wins the second spade and cashes five diamond tricks. What is West to discard? If she keeps two hearts and a club, she cannot keep sufficient spades to beat the contract. Declarer now comes to the ♣A and throws her in with a spade to lead into the heart tenace at trick twelve. Of course, declarer has to read the ending correctly, but she has a real chance.

Board 75. Love All. Dealer South.

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

Both Souths played 3NT. Deas played ace, king and a third heart; +460.

In the Open Room, Sanborn had opened 1NT, Breed overcalled 2♦ to show both majors, and Levitina had shown a heart stopper. Breed led the ♥J! Sanborn didn't like the look of that at all. Though she didn't know it, the hand was only a matter of overtricks, but ducking would have given Breed bragging rights for a while. Hearts could hardly be 6-2, the only time that ducking would gain, so Sanborn eventually put up the queen and looked mightily relieved when it held; +520 and 2 IMPs to USA2.

Board 76. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

Closed Room

West Deas	North Meyers	East Palmer	South Montin
2♣	Pass	2♠	3♦
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

The Precision 2♣ opening got the auction up to the 2♠ level before Montin had a chance to bid. With 2♠ non-forcing, is this a kind of pre-balancing situation? If so, Meyers did well to go 3NT. I suspect, however, that she assumed a sound hand for the vulnerable overcall. Even a spade lead doesn't threaten the contract as the cards lie, but the 2♣ opening actually attracted a club lead, putting declarer under no pressure at all. Meyers made ten tricks; +630.

Open Room

West Breed	North Levitina	East Sokolow	South Sanborn
Pass	Pass	2♦	2NT
3♥	Dbf	3♠	Pass
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			



Lisa Berkowitz (USA I)

Breed did not see an opening bid in the West cards so it was left to Sokolow to open with a multi 2♦. Breed caused problems for her opponents when she bid 3♥ to compete in partner's major. Levitina doubled and that convinced Sanborn that she had better hearts. Worried about her spade holding, Sanborn converted 3NT to 4♥. Breed led the ♠K and Sanborn ducked. Alas, Sanborn's 2NT overall made it very easy for Breed to work out who had the club shortage and she wasted no time in switching to two rounds of clubs, Sokolow ruffing. Sanborn was one down for -100 and 12 IMPs to USA1.

Board 79. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

West Deas	East Palmer
1♣	1NT
3♣	4♣
4♦	4♥
4NT	7NT
Pass	

1♣ was strong and 1NT a balanced positive. Their convention card doesn't go far enough to explain 3♣ but it looks like both minors and duly attracted a club raise from Palmer. Sorry we can't translate the auction but the teams were quite busy yesterday, in case you hadn't noticed.

West Breed	East Sokolow
1♦	2♣
3♥	4♣
4♦	4♥
4NT	7♦
Pass	

We are a bit better placed this time. 3♥ was a splinter bid and 4♣ asked for key cards. 4♦ showed three key cards for clubs, 4♥ asked about the ♣Q and 4NT showed that card but an inability to show anything extra. Sokolow decided to gamble on the ♦Q and was duly rewarded when Breed held it; +1440 but 2 IMPs to USA2.

With 16 boards to play, USA1 had moved into the lead by 154-142.

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Further information can be obtained from:

Bill Pencharz, President EBL.
Phone: 44-0-171-242-3001. Fax: 44-0-171-242-3002.
Anneliese Schmidt-Bott, Deutscher Bridge-Verband.
Phone and Fax: 49-0-241-17-18-48.

Frustrated defender

Sheelu Thadani of India's Venice Cup team gave her opponents fits on this deal.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

West	North	East	South
Pass	4♥	4NT	Pass
5♣	All Pass		Pass

East, Pramila Shivasani, had a tough problem over the preempt. She couldn't double, which of course would be primarily for takeout – only two spades. So she had to bid 4NT for the minors even though she had only four diamonds. But Thadani had five clubs, so India found a good home.

Thadani won the opening ♠K lead and shot back a spade. North now tried the ♥K. She took this and led the ♣Q. When North played low, she rose with the ace and threw South in with the king. South was forced to lead a spade or a diamond. She led a spade and Thadani got rid of the losing heart in dummy as she ruffed in hand. She took a diamond finesse and went down only one. At the other table, the same contract was doubled and was set three tricks – a 10 IMP gain for India.

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

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

	N	
W		E
	S	

Deutsch congratulates USA II

Seymour Deutsch of the defeated USA I Bermuda Bowl team, wanted to take a moment to congratulate his opponents. He said that the USA II team had played so well that he doubted if his squad could ever have won the match. He was proud to be part of his team – even in defeat – and he was pleased with the way they had kept trying, right up to the end.

Venice Cup

Semifinal (set 6)

USA I vs USA II

France still had a remote chance against China in the Venice Cup as the last 16 boards of the semifinal were played. But the major interest was in the Venice Cup match between the American teams. USA I captained by Sue Picus, led USA II, captained by Sue Sachs, by only 12 IMPs, 154-142. The Bermuda Bowl finalists were a foregone conclusion – USA II, the defending champions, against France, winners of last year's World Team Olympiad.

The final 16 started slowly. Board 81 was a push when USA I went down one in 1♠ and USA II also went down, though they were in 2♣. Both teams made 4♣ with an overtrick on the next deal. Only 1 IMP changed hands on Board 83, but the play in the Open Room was highly interesting.

Board 83. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

♠ –
♥ Q 10 9 4 2
♦ A J 6 4
♣ K Q J 9

♠ AK 9
♥ J 8 5 3
♦ Q 9 7 2
♣ 6 3

♠ Q J 8 3 2
♥ A 6
♦ 10 8
♣ A 8 5 2

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Levitina	Breed	Sanborn
Pass	2♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	2♣
All Pass			3NT

Mildred Breed led the ♦2 to the king and ace and Irina Levitina crossed to the ♥A. When she continued with a second heart, Tobi Sokolow won and continued diamonds. Breed took the queen and cleared the suit, setting up the 7. At first it might appear declarer now is going down a trick – she's lost two tricks and East still has a good diamond and two top spades. But Levitina had an answer for that. When she ran her clubs, this was the position with one club left to cash:

♠ –
♥ Q 10 9
♦ 4
♣ J

♠ AK
♥ J 8
♦ 7
♣ –

♠ Q J 8 3 2
♥ –
♦ –
♣ –

What does East pitch on that last club? A heart is impossible. A diamond is impossible. A spade is a possibility, but then Irina would lead the diamond. East would be forced to lead away from her hearts after winning the diamond and the ♠A. So Irina made her contract – for a 1-IMP loss! South played 3NT in the Closed Room, and the opening diamond lead was won by the 10. After the ♥A and another heart to the king, West shifted to a spade, and now Randi Montin had gained the necessary tempo.

USA I gained another IMP on Board 84 on an overtrick in a diamond partial, and Board 85 was a push –



Irina Levitina (USA II)

both teams were pushed to the five level by a spade preempt, and both were doubled and set two tricks. Board 86 also was a push – a very unusual push.

Board 86. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

♠ 8 3 2
♥ A J
♦ A K 9 8 5
♣ A Q 4

♠ 9 7 5
♥ 9 7 5
♦ J 10 6 4 2
♣ 9

♠ 6
♥ K Q 10 8 4 3 2
♦ 7
♣ K J 8 3

♠ A K Q 10 4
♥ 6
♦ Q 3
♣ 10 7 6 5 2

West	North	East	South
Palmer	Meyers	Deas	Montin
4♥	4NT	Pass	1♠
Pass	6♣	Pass	5♣
		All Pass	

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Palmer	Meyers	Deas	Montin
4♥	4NT	Pass	1♠
Pass	6♣	Pass	5♣
		All Pass	

Certainly a reasonable contract. Beth Palmer led her diamond singleton to declarer's queen. Montin cashed two top trumps and discovered that Lynn Deas had four. She switched to clubs, finessing the queen, then led a trump to pick up East's remaining spades. Next came a club to the ace, followed by the ♥A. The bad diamond split doomed the contract, down one.

Actually 6♣ can be made, but it's a somewhat unusual play. Instead of leading a low club to finesse in clubs, try the 10. West covers and you note the fall of the 9 as you win the queen. Later you can push the 7 through West. In order to do this you need an extra entry to hand as West may refuse to cover the ♠7, so you must win the opening lead in dummy!

The auction in the Open Room was radically different.

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Levitina	Breed	Sanborn
4♥	5♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	6♦!	Pass	5♣
		All Pass	

Pity Kerri Sanborn. She had to try to figure out what 6♦ meant. Did it show a very good diamond hand? Was it a grand slam try? The bid was somewhat ambiguous. After some thought, Sanborn decided it was diamonds

and she passed. Strangely enough, even with the atrocious diamond break, this contract went down only one for a push. The heart opening lead went to the ace, and a heart was ruffed. After cashing the trump queen, Levitina took the successful club finesse. She discovered she was going down when she cashed the trump ace, but she shifted to spades. After discovering the break, she led a club to the ace and East ruffed. But Irina had only one more loser – another trump.

Board 87. Game All. Dealer South.

♠ K J 10 9 8 7
♥ Q 8 4
♦ 8
♣ A 4 2

♠ 5
♥ K J 10 6 2
♦ K 7 5 4 3
♣ J 7

♠ A 3
♥ 9 7
♦ Q J 9 6
♣ Q 10 9 8 5

♠ Q 6 4 2
♥ A 5 3
♦ A 10 2
♣ K 6 3

USA II closed the gap to 2 IMPs with a 12-IMP gain here. At both tables the contract was 4♣, and East led a heart at both tables. Jill Meyers went up with the ace and led a trump. Deas took this, led a heart to partner's king and ruffed the heart return. Declarer still had to lose a club for down one.

However, Levitina ducked to West's king, and now there was no way for the defence to score a ruff. Making four.

Board 88. Love All. Dealer West.

♠ 7 6
♥ K 4 3
♦ A 3
♣ A Q J 10 5 4

♠ A K J 9 8 5
♥ A J
♦ 9 4
♣ K 8 3

♠ 10 3
♥ Q 9 6
♦ K Q J 7 6 5
♣ 7 2

♠ Q 4 2
♥ 10 8 7 5 2
♦ 10 8 2
♣ 9 6

USA II took over the lead here by setting contracts at both tables.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Palmer	Meyers	Deas	Montin
1♣	2♣	2♦	2♥
2♣	3♣	3♦	Pass
Pass	3♥	All Pass	

Montin was two off here – minus 100.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Levitina	Breed	Sanborn
1♠	2♣	Dbf	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♣	All Pass

This is far from an impossible contract, but Levitina found the killing opening lead – the ♥A. When she led a second diamond, dummy's fine diamonds were no longer a factor. Sokolow guessed the spade position, but

she had to go down one trick. 4 IMPs to USA II, now leading 158-156. The margin increased to five on the next deal as a result of three overtricks in a notrump game. But USA I regained the lead on Board 90.

Board 90. Game All. Dealer East.

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

Closed Room

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

Plus 650.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
1♦	2♠	Pass	Pass
5♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
		6♥	All Pass

Breed won the opening spade lead, cashed two top hearts, then overtook the jack with the ace. The ♦10 was allowed to hold, but the jack was covered by the king and taken with the ace. At this point declarer must exit with a spade to set up a minor suit squeeze against South. And Breed did exactly that! Levitina switched to a club to the jack and ace, but Breed ruffed the last spade and cashed her last trump. South had to concede. 13 IMPs to USA I, now leading by 169-161.

Both teams played in a heart partial on Board 91, USA I gaining an IMP on an overtrick. They gained another IMP on Board 92 on an overtrick in 3NT. Then something went wrong at both tables.

Board 93. Game All. Dealer North.

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

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Palmer	Meyers	Deas	Montin
	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

Open Room

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

Both Easts opened with strong bids, and both Wests showed good values. Yet neither team reached the lay-down slam. Just a push. USA I still led by 10 IMPs.

Board 94. Love All. Dealer East.

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

A diamond slam is there for the taking for North/South, but how do you get there? It's only natural for South to open 5♦. How is North to know that she has just the right stuff for the slam? Both Norths passed and both Souths made all 13 tricks.

On the next-to-last board, both teams stopped in 2♣, but USA I made two overtricks to increase their lead to 12, 173-161, with one board to go. Nobody was leaving the vugraph theatre because the word was already out that there could be action.

Board 96. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Sokolow	Levitina	Breed	Sanborn
2NT	3♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Sokolow's bid showed at least 5-5 in the minors. The defence quickly cashed two spades and Levitina ruffed the third. She led the ♣Q to the king, and Sokolow shot back the ♦10. Levitina thought this over. She knew East had only one diamond - what if it was the queen? Finally she took the 4-1 odds and finessed the jack. Since West had already shown up with three spades, Levitina knew East had all four hearts, so she finessed the 10 and made her contract.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Palmer	Meyers	Deas	Montin
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♥
4♠	5♥	All Pass	

Meyers took only eight tricks - down three, so USA II gained 7 IMPs - but they needed 12! So the Venice Cup finalist will be USA I, 173-168. It was noted that if Meyers had been doubled and had gone down three, the match would have ended in a tie. But chances are Meyers would have taken a better line of play to go down only two tricks.

No matter. It was a thrilling match - a great one to win, a tough one to lose. But it is far from over for USA I - China is waiting in the wings.



Bermuda Bowl Norway profiles

TOR HELNESS, 40, is married with two children. He is a stockbroker from Oslo. He has been the backbone of Norwegian teams for 20 years. He was a European Junior champion. Later, with Geir Helgemo, he was second in the 1993 Bermuda Bowl and twice won the Cap Gemini with the same partner.

GEIR HELGEMO, 27, is a full-time bridge professional from Trondheim. He is the reigning World individual champion. He won the Junior Europeans in 1990 and the first World Junior Pairs with Boye Brogeland. In 1992 he had two silvers, one in the World Junior Teams and one in the Bermuda Bowl. He plays with English star Tony Forrester in most of the big American events, and he writes a bridge column in Norway's biggest newspaper.

GLENN GROETHEIM, 38, married with two children, is an engineer from Trondheim. He invented the complex Relay system, called the Viking Club, used by his partnership. He also was second in the 1993 Bermuda Bowl and is a former European Junior champion. Bridge journalist Barry Rigal is currently doing an English translation of his system, and Baron Barclay Bridge Supplies has contracted to edit the book in spring 1998. You may order the book during your stay here in Hammamet.

TERJE AA, 37, married with two children, lives in Trondheim and works in a post office. He was on the silver team in the 1993 Bermuda Bowl and won the bronze medal in the European Championships in Menton and again this year in Montecatini. He has also achieved many national titles.

BOYE BROGELAND at age 24 he is the junior member of the team. He is an economics student in Bergen. He won the first World Junior Pairs with Helgemo. He also won in Cardiff in 1996, which earned him a trip to Hamilton, Canada, this summer, where he won a silver medal in the World Junior Teams.

ERIK SAELENSMINDE, 33, nicknamed Silla, is a student in Bergen. He and partner Brogeland have the best recent record in Norway, winning the league. Finishing third in Montecatini brought him and the team to Hammamet.

EINAR ASBJOERN BRENNE, 50, of Trondheim is the non-playing captain. He led the same team to a bronze medal in this year's European Championships in Montecatini which earned them a place in the Bermuda Bowl.

Venice Cup

Semifinal (set 6)

China vs France

China took a 46 IMP lead into the last set of their semi-final against France, and their position looked even more secure when the first swing of the set went in their favour.

Board 82. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

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

For China, Zhang Yalan and Gu Ling bid quickly to the safe game contract: 1♦ - 1♠ - 2♠ - 4♠. Bessis and Saul, for France, were more aggressive. The first three bids were the same but now Bessis bid 2NT, an artificial enquiry, and Catherine Saul jumped to 4♠. Bessis potted 6♠ over that but, when she got the trumps wrong, had to go two down, as Sun Ming was able to draw a third round of trumps when declarer ducked a club; -100 and 11 IMPs to China.

Board 83. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

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

Both Norths played in 3NT. Saul led a diamond to the king and ace. Sun Ming played a heart to the ace and a second heart. Bessis won the king and switched to a club. Sun won and played queen and another heart. Saul won the ♥J and cashed her top tricks; one down for -50.

The lead was the same in the other room and Benedicte Cronier also played two rounds of hearts. Here, Gu Ling returned a diamond when in with the ♥K. Despite establishing the fourth diamond, the defence was helpless when Cronier cashed her clubs. Zhang Yalan pitched her diamond winner to keep the top spades and heart guard and suddenly the ♦7 was declarer's ninth trick; +400 and 10 IMPs to France, who badly needed them.

Board 86. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

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

It looked as though China had a bad result in the Open Room. Lu opened 1♠ in second seat and Veronique Bessis overcalled 4♥. Sun Ming just closed her eyes and bid 6♠, gambling that Lu's trump holding would be adequate. It was, but 6♠ still had to fail due to the bad breaks in the minors. Lu was one down; -50.

But France got even higher in the Closed Room.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu Ling	Cronier	Zhang Yalan	Willard
		Pass	1♠
3♥	4♦	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♦
Pass	6♣	Pass	7♠
All Pass			

Quite why South should think that all her clubs would go away is unclear. Cronier had taken control and settled for the small slam so it seems undisciplined of Willard to go on to seven. Of course, the state of the match has an effect on everything, but perhaps partner has already allowed for that? The grand slam was two down and Willard would have been relieved to discover that she had only cost her side 2 IMPs.

Board 87. Game All. Dealer South.

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

♠ Q 6 4 2		
♥ A 5 3		
♦ A 10 2		
♣ K 6 3		

Both Norths declared 4♠ after West had overcalled in hearts over South's one-of-a-minor opening. Gu Ling had only overcalled 1♥ and when Zhang Yalan led the ♥9 Cronier ducked this to Gu's king. Back came another heart but Gu had no entry to give her partner a ruff when Zhang won the ♠A.

Bessis had made a weak jump overcall of 2♥ so it was natural for Sun to rise with dummy's ace on the heart lead. Saul won the first spade and led her second heart to partner's king to get her ruff; one down for -100 and 12 IMPs to France.

Board 88. Love All. Dealer West.

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

♠ Q 4 2		
♥ 10 8 7 5 2		
♦ 10 8 2		
♣ 9 6		

Again both tables played 4♠, this time by West. Sun led a heart against Bessis. The ♥J won and Bessis played a diamond. Sun took her ace and played a diamond back. Bessis played a third diamond, pitching a club, and Sun ruffed. Sun exited with a trump, picking up the queen.

Declarer had no way of avoiding two club losers so was down one; -50.

In the other room, Cronier led the ace of clubs, followed by the queen. Gu won the ♣K and played a diamond and Cronier took her ace to play a third club. Gu ruffed with the ten and Willard over-ruffed with the queen and switched to a heart. Gu took the ace, drew trumps and had a diamond left to get to dummy; +420 and 10 IMPs to China.

Board 89. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

♠ 10 8		
♥ K 2		
♦ A K 2		
♣ A K Q J 10 8		

Lu/Sun bid: Pass - 1♣ - 1♥ - 2♣ - 2NT - 3NT, where 1♣ was strong. The lead was a low diamond and Sun rose with the ace and cashed her top tricks; +460.

Cronier/Willard were more aggressive, as the match situation required. They bid: Pass - 2♣ - 2♥ - 3♣ - 3♠ - 6NT. Here the lead was a club. Willard rattled off six club tricks, coming down to four hearts and three diamonds in the dummy. That obliged Zhang Yalan to also keep four hearts and three diamonds. Willard cashed a top diamond then played four rounds of hearts. The strip squeeze and throw-in left Zhang to lead away from the ♦Q to give declarer her twelfth trick; nicely done. Plus 990 was worth 11 IMPs to France, who trailed by 30 IMPs with seven IMPs to play.

Board 92. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

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

♠ 2		
♥ K 10 8 6 2		
♦ A 9 8 6		
♣ 9 8 3		

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	Cronier	Zhang Yalan	Willard
1♦	2♠	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	All Pass

The Precision 1♦ opening limited Gu's hand so that Zhang had no reason to consider bidding on beyond 3NT. A low heart lead allowed her to make two over-tricks; +460.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Bessis	Sun	Saul	Lu
1♣	1♠	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣	Pass
5♣	All Pass		



Véronique Bessis (France)

Bessis' French 1♣ opening meant that her hand was not quite so limited as at the other table. Saul, who knew that there was a club fit, went on over 3NT with a club slam try. 5♣ was hopeless. Bessis went a second one down when she ducked the opening spade lead and got dummy's ace ruffed out; -100 and 11 IMPs to China.

Board 93. Game All. Dealer North.

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

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

Both East/West pairs reached slam.

West	East
Bessis	Saul
	2NT
3♥	3♣
4♦	4♥
4NT	5♠
6♣	Pass

4NT was RKCB and, it would seem, should have been with diamonds as trumps. Bessis, however, elected to play in spades; +1430.

West	North	East	South
Gu	Cronier	Zhang Yalan	Willard
	Pass	1♣	1♥
1♠	3♥	Pass	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♦	All Pass

The French interference over the strong club did not inconvenience the Chinese pair unduly. Gu got to show her two-suiter and Zhang cuebid then took control with RKCB for diamonds. 6♦ is just as good a contract as 6♣, but +1370 meant that China lost 2 IMPs.

Board 94. Love All. Dealer East.

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

N	
W	E
S	

♠ J 9 6
♥ -
♦ A Q J 9 7 6 5 4 2
♣ 10

The sort of wild deal that the trailing team needed but the swing was only 1 IMP to France. Both Souths opened 5♦ and both Norths had a look but then passed. Bessis cashed the ♠A then switched to a heart; Gu led a heart at trick one. That meant +440 for Willard but +420 for Lu. Slam needs only the ruffing heart finesse so is not a bad prospect for a trailing team but how was Cronier to know that?

Board 96. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

N	
W	E
S	

♠ J 8 2
♥ A 10 4
♦ 8 7 4
♣ J 9 6 2

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gu	Cronier	Zhang Yalan	Willard
Pass	1♥	1♠	2♥
2♠	3♦	Pass	3♥
3♠	4♥	4♠	Dbf
All Pass			

Willard led a diamond to the jack. Cronier tried to cash the ♦K but Zhang ruffed that, ruffed a heart, and ducked a club. Cronier won the ♣Q and gave dummy another heart ruff. Now Zhang drew trumps and played clubs from the top; one down for -100.

Zhang could have made it, of course, either by reading the club position or by playing for the ruffing diamond finesse. It seems strange that she did not go for the latter option, given the play to the first two tricks. By the time that the clubs failed to divide evenly it was too late to fall back on the diamonds because declarer had to find two discards from dummy when she was drawing trumps.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Bessis	Sun	Saul	Lu
Pass	1♥	1♠	Pass
2♥	3♥	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Lu led the ♥A, ruffed in dummy. Saul ducked a club at trick two, unblocking the eight from hand. Sun cashed the ♦K then switched to a trump. Saul won the queen, ruffed a heart and played the ♦Q to the ace and ruffed. Next she drew trumps and led the ♠10. Lu played low without a flicker but, after a little thought, Saul ran the ten and had the remainder; +650 and 13 IMPs to France. France had pulled closer in the final set but not enough. The final score was 241-220 in favour of China, who were in their first Venice Cup final.

Raising on one point

A raise on nothing but five trumps and a jack paid off for North/South here in a match from the Transnational Teams. North's 2♣ bid took up some extra bidding room, so East/West missed their heart partial – or game.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

N	
W	E
S	

♠ A K 10 2
♥ A 3 2
♦ 8 4
♣ A Q J 9

West	North	East	South
		1♣	Pass
2♣	2♥	2NT	Pass
3♣	All Pass		

North/South already were heading for a good result because their teammates bought the hand for 3♥, making four – plus 170. But South, Dorothy Francis, your Daily Bulletin proofreader, showed that she can play the game, too.

She won the heart opening lead and ruffed a heart. When she led a club to her jack, East, of course showed out, and West, determined not to make things easy, ducked. Dorothy had a general idea of the distribution at this point – she feared West would be able to get rid of a spade if she tried to ruff another heart at this point. So first she cashed the ♠A, a most necessary play. Only then did she ruff her last heart on which West played an encouraging diamond.

She got out with a diamond, and East rose with the ace. A spade lead would have given Dorothy some problems here, but East decided to obey partner's signal by continuing diamonds. West overtook the queen with the king and led the ♦J. With a clear picture of the distribution at this point, Dorothy did not ruff – instead she discarded a spade.

Now West was fixed. Down to all minor suit cards, he led a club, won in dummy with the 10. A spade to the 10 was ruffed by West, and Dorothy ruffed the diamond return in hand with her queen. She cashed the ace of trumps, dropping the now bare king, then took the ♠K for her ninth trick. That represented a gain of 7 IMPs.



Important

All participants, officials and visitors should confirm their departure dates and flight details to the Tunis Air desk situated in the lobby of the Sol Azur. Please confirm at least 24 hours prior to departure.



Appeal No. 7

Reported by Grattan Endicott (GB)

Appeal Committee:

Joan Gerard (USA); Ernesto d'Orsi (BRA); Naki Bruni (ITA); Dan Morse (USA); Barbara Nudelman (USA).

World Transnational Teams. Round 3.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

<p>♠ K Q J 10 9 2 ♥ K 10 6 ♦ 10 7 3 ♣ 2</p>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		<p>♠ A 8 3 ♥ 3 ♦ A Q 8 6 ♣ K 10 9 8 4</p>
	N										
W		E									
	S										
<p>♠ 7 ♥ J 9 7 5 ♦ K J 9 5 4 ♣ A 5 3</p>		<p>♠ 6 5 4 ♥ A Q 8 4 2 ♦ 2 ♣ Q J 7 6</p>									

West	North	East	South
Andersen	Hanna	Schafer	Fraser
		1♦	1♥
INT	3♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Dbl	All Pass

The Result:

4♠ by North. N/S +790

The Facts:

The Director was called to the table after the match had ended. This board had been the last board of the

match. East complained that there had been different explanations of the 3♠ bid. North to East had not alerted and had described the bid as natural and non-forcing. South explained to West that the bid was a limited fit-jump. East complained that failure to give him this latter explanation had caused him not to lead a heart to beat the contract. North pointed out that 3♠ cannot be a fit-jump as then it would be game-forcing, which makes no sense. They use fit-jumps in limit situations.

Tournament Director's Ruling:

The Director decided that there was no infraction and that the score should stand.

Appellant:

The Appellants were E/W.

The Players:

The East player said that he had expected, on the explanation North had given to him, to find six or seven hearts in dummy with little fit in the North hand and had thought he might be killing any holding in his partner's hand by leading the singleton. He felt that it was not material whether the 3♠ bid was a limit bid or not; he had been talked out of a natural heart lead and the damage was not related to the question of which was the correct explanation. He also questioned the Director's ruling against the non-offending side when the facts were not clearly established. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, the Director repeated that he had considered North had given the correct explanation, since this was the logic of the hand. He also noted the late stage at which he had been called.

North thought it somewhat humorous that the

Director's ruling should be questioned. He said it was quite obvious that his hand was worth a lot more in spades than in hearts. He did not think that the question was an opening lead problem; after a club lead and a spade switch the East player should duck, when there is no way to make the contract. He had failed to duck, the return of the small trump had held in dummy and the heart finesse was immediately taken, giving 10 tricks.

South commented that their fit-showing jumps showed four-card support. North added to this that the bid is a limit bid. When he wishes to force he can begin with a double.

The Committee:

The Committee immediately agreed that the difference of explanation, which was trivial, had not affected the hand. There was comment that the bidding sequence could well indicate little about the suit holdings except that North was determined to play in spades. East had simply defended badly. There was no damage and no possibility of damage and the explanation that the 3♠ bid could not be a limit bid had an obvious logic which the defenders could work out at the table. The Director had not been called when East saw the dummy.

Committee's Decision:

The score of N/S +790 should stand. The slight discrepancy in South's explanation had not contributed to any confusion and should not be penalised. There was discussion as to the possible retention of the deposit but it was decided to return it. The Committee did, however, think that it should express its commendation of the Director's procedure and decision which it did not consider open to question.

Venice Cup – Round-robin Cross-table

	FRANCE	U.S.A. I	U.S.A. II	CHINA	GREAT BRITAIN	CANADA	NETHERLANDS	ITALY	GERMANY	INDIA	AUSTRALIA	NEW ZEALAND	ARGENTINA	SOUTH AFRICA	CHINESE TAIPEI	COLOMBIA	BRAZIL	TUNISIA	VPs
FRANCE	■	8	18	20	15	12	17	14	24	16	25	13	17	19	23	22	20	15	298
U.S.A. I	22	■	9	12	13	20	16	14	22	21	19	9	18	22	20	10	23	22	291
U.S.A. II	12	21	■	20	8	14	21	16	16	18	10	14	10	21	25	25	22	16	289
CHINA	10	18	10	■	25	13	20	21	8	14	25	22	22	20	17	14	11	19	288
GREAT BRITAIN	15	17	22	4	■	17	13	23	19	20	17	14	14	19	24	13	14	22	287
CANADA	18	10	16	17	13	■	15	8	13	21	14	11	22	20	20	25	19	21	283
NETHERLANDS	13	14	9	10	17	15	■	25	25	14	9	16	16	15	15	17	25	17	272
ITALY	16	16	14	9	7	22	4	■	2	14	23	23	19	16	10	25	24	15	259.5
GERMANY	6	8	14	22	11	17	5	25	■	14	10	17	12	19	12	20	20	25	257
INDIA	14	9	12	16	10	9	16	16	16	■	15	16	25	18	13	10	14	25	254
AUSTRALIA	0	11	20	0	13	16	21	7	20	15	■	14	7	25	17	23	22	23	254
NEW ZEALAND	17	21	16	8	16	19	14	7	13	14	16	■	21	3	7	23	14	24	253
ARGENTINA	13	12	20	8	16	8	14	11	18	0	23	9	■	19	8	18	25	16	238
SOUTH AFRICA	11	8	9	10	11	10	15	14	11	12	5	25	11	■	12	21	18	21	224
CHINESE TAIPEI	7	10	5	13	6	10	15	20	18	17	13	23	22	18	■	8	1	11	217
COLOMBIA	8	20	5	16	17	1	13	0	10	20	7	7	12	9	22	■	15	24	206
BRAZIL	10	7	8	19	16	11	5	6	10	16	8	16	3	12	25	15	■	18	205
TUNISIA	15	8	14	11	8	9	13	15	0	3	7	6	14	9	19	6	12	■	169