



EUROPEAN WINTER TRANSNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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Thursday, 19 February 2026

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THE FINAL COUNTDOWN



OFF DUTY, ON FIRE: STAFF TOURNAMENT WINNERS

Last night, the playing hall was far from empty. With the day's competitions over, it was time for a very special event: the Staff Tournament!
Directors, organisers, and behind-the-scenes heroes sat down at the tablets for a fun and friendly evening.

- 🏆 Rahmi Iyilikci – Robert Schuster
- 🥈 Vicky Chediak – Eric Laurant
- 🥉 Kuba Kasprzak – Paweł Szymaszczyk

● EUROPEAN WINTER MIXED TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

The top 20 teams advanced to the Final A. Leading the Semifinal standings were LAKO (132.78 VPs), BERNAL (124.54) and DAISY CHAIN (117.11). The Final B will be played in BAM format.

● EUROPEAN WINTER MIXED PAIRS

The top 15 pairs from Semifinal A, along with 3 from Semifinal B, have qualified for Final A. The remaining pairs will play in Final B. Leading Semifinal A were: Ismail Kandemir – Sevil Nuhoglu, Darina Langer – Hakan Gokce, Olga Pavlushko – Anatoly Ivanov.



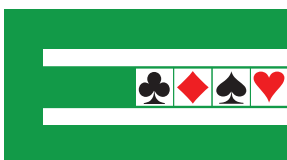
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

... to **Tom Townsend** (England)!


IN THIS BULLETIN YOU'LL FIND


- Schedule today
- Event Formats
- Interview with the EBL President Eric Laurant
- The case of the nameless bag
- Eat like Gold
- Highlights from all the events
- Results & Butler rankings


⚠️ **TODAY PLAY STARTS AT 9.00**





USEFUL LINKS


 [EVENT'S WEBSITE](#)


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Schedule today:

● EUROPEAN WINTER MIXED TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL A

09:00 – 10:05	Round 1
10:20 – 11:25	Round 2
11:40 – 12:45	Round 3
13:00 – 14:05	Round 4
14:45 – 15:50	Round 5
16:05 – 17:10	Round 6
17:25 – 18:30	Round 7

FINAL B (MIXED BAM)

09:00 – 11:25	Session 1
11:40 – 14:05	Session 2

● EUROPEAN WINTER MIXED PAIRS FINAL A

09:00 – 11:55	Session 1
12:10 – 14:30	Session 2
15:10 – 17:30	Session 3

FINAL B

09:00 – 11:25	Session 1
11:40 – 14:05	Session 2

Winners will receive their medals at the conclusion of play. As is customary at Transnational Championships, where several competitions run simultaneously, there is no formal award ceremony.



The staff tournament was also a chance to celebrate the staff members whose birthdays fell during the championship: Pawel Hulanicki, Pawel Szymaszczyk, Marc van Beijsterveldt, and Fotis Skoularikis. Happy birthday to all of them! 🎂

JUST ONE MORE SIGNED COPY OF ZIA MAHMOOD'S "BRIDGE: A LOVE STORY" IS AVAILABLE AT THE HOSPITALITY DESK.

ZIA HAS GENEROUSLY DECIDED TO DONATE 50% OF THE PROCEEDS TO THE EBL YOUTH FUND.

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The screenshot shows the BridgeTab app interface. At the top left, a green button displays '1' under 'Table no.' and 'Names'. To its right is the title 'Select board' and a green question mark button. Below the title, a row of buttons shows '1' with a green checkmark, 'E', '4' with a red heart, '=', and '-420'. On the left, three buttons labeled '1', '2', and '3' are stacked vertically. At the bottom, there are icons for battery, network, time, and a 'TD' button. A QR code with the text 'Try Android version now' is also present.

Annotations on the screenshot include:

- Button showing table no. round pair nos. names
- Button leading to explanation of the current screen
- Select board to report
- Buttons changing declarer, contract and result
- Battery indicator
- Network indicator. Click for details
- Time indicator. Click for details
- Call TD

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IN CONVERSATION WITH ERIC LAURANT

BRIDGE COMMUNITY WORLDWIDE & FRANCESCA CANALI

PART I

Tablets or cards? How clean is top-level bridge, really? And what's next for the EBL?

During the European Winter Transnational Championships in Prague, we invited our bulletin readers to put their questions directly to EBL President Eric Laurant. This is Part One.

Our readers went straight to the point: will you run again for the EBL Presidency?

Yes. I will stand for re-election at the General Assembly in June. I have the energy, still many projects to be completed and as always room for improvement. But everybody who has served on the board for at least one full term can be a candidate and it is also good to have a choice.



What are your main goals if re-elected?

Deepening the collaboration with the WBF is at the top of the list. By working more closely together, we can achieve far greater results on every front: recruiting new players, raising the quality of our championships, developing communication both within and beyond the bridge world, and keeping the game clean. Many of these needs are shared by both organisations, so it makes no sense to tackle them separately.

Europe is the largest zone in terms of bridge participation, which means we often have the resources to test new ideas first. When those projects succeed, they can serve as a model that benefits every zone. But this is not about Europe leading and others following. The whole world needs to move together to grow the number of players and offer a better experience to those who already play.

The new elected President of the World Bridge Federation Franck Riehm brings deep expertise in communication and marketing. I come from the competitive and operational side: championships, anti-cheating, technology... So, to me it looks logical to work together as we share the same vision.

How does the election of the EBL President work?

Rather than explaining, Eric drafts a diagram on the spot. You will find it reproduced on the next page.



Eric with the WBF President Franck Riehm



EBL ELECTIONS

Who elects the President

The General Assembly (direct vote by NBOs)

Each NBO has:

- At least one vote
- A maximum of 7 votes

NBO Members	NBO Votes
0 - 500	1
501 - 2,500	2
2,501 - 10,000	3
10,001 - 25,000	4
25,001 - 60,000	5
60,001+	6

+1 Vote

to NBOs which have participated in all of the EBL's main team events (Open, Women, Senior, Mixed and Youth) during the previous two years

Voting method

Secret ballot, absolute majority

Presidential term

4 years, max 3 consecutive terms

President eligibility

No specific age requirement stated

Executive body composition

President + 12 members

Who elects the Executive

The General Assembly (secret ballot), right after the election of the President

Electoral cycle

Every 4 years

Assembly / Congress

Every 2 years (even years)

Officers (Vice-Presidents, Treasurer...)

Elected by EC on the President's proposal

Many in the community have wondered: why didn't you run for WBF President in May?

The passing of my dear friend Jan Kamras, WBF President, even though it was unfortunately not unexpected, was a real shock. Jan and I had become very close friends, and losing him was painful on a very personal level. On top of that, we had projects together that were not yet mature, and his absence changed the picture considerably.

Plus, I had only been EBL President for just over two years, and I had promised the people who elected me a full four-year term. I take my promises seriously. At the same time, I was losing key members of my team: my First Vice President received a major political appointment in Norway, my Second Vice President was called to serve in the Israeli army after October 7th, our long-serving Secretary Catherine Vitry was retiring. Plus, our Honorary Secretary was also leaving for personal reasons. I felt I simply could not leave the EBL at that moment.

When Franck Riehm emerged as a candidate for the WBF Presidency, it made perfect sense. As I said, we complement each other well. That convinced me to stay where I was.

You mentioned technology as one of your areas of focus. That leads us to a question many readers asked: will we ever see EBL championships played on tablets instead of cards?

This is something we think about seriously and constantly. The advantages are clear: tablets would eliminate most of unauthorised information, dramatically reduce costs (no cards, no duplication), and allow us to broadcast every single match without dedicated operators. We are talking about tens of thousands of euros in yearly savings and a huge boost for bridge visibility. Imagine an event where you never need to open the screen and interact with your partner. This would be good for the competition, but bridge compared with, for instance, chess is more social and this aspect would disappear.

Even worse if played in separate rooms, because there would be no need anymore to be physically at the same table as your opponents and partner. That would be good to primarily cancel unauthorized information, but it would work only at the highest level.

Players always tell us that the table presence is an important part of the game. The pressure you put on opponents, the psychological dimension of having them sitting across from you, watching them think, seeing them sweat because they fear being squeezed or endplayed: that is all part of what makes bridge with cards special, and without cards some feel it is not the game they fell in love with.

And there is a practical reality we cannot ignore.



Our surveys tell us consistently that the clients and most professional players, who are essential to our tournaments, do not like tablets that much. Local players come to our events precisely because they can sit across from the world's best. That is something almost no other sport offers. If the professionals stop coming or they can't even see them anymore, we lose that attraction but also a lot of entry fees.

So it's a definitive no?

Not at all. We are exploring hybrid solutions. One idea is to ask teams at registration: if your opponents agree, would you be willing to play on tablets? If both teams opt in, they play digitally. The technology is there, it is just a button push. We could also test it for specific rounds or groups. But we will never impose this without consulting the community, and in particular the participants of our transnational championships.

This might also be a generational shift. Perhaps in five or ten years attitudes will be different. We take it seriously, we know the advantages, we know the risks, but we are not going to rush it.

One of our readers is curious to know: how did you start playing bridge?

I started in 1976, when I was sixteen. My parents were taking bridge lessons at home. We knew my father did not have many years left. But I saw how bridge brought my mother back to life. So I decided to sit behind my father at the table and learn, thinking that when the moment came, I could play with her and take her to bridge clubs.

And that is exactly what happened. We played together for a few years and even earned promotion to the second division in the Netherlands. Eventually, the competitive pressure became too much for her and she stopped playing with me, but by then she had made dozens of bridge friends. Her entire social life from about the early '80s until COVID revolved around bridge: two or three events a week, bridge holidays in Portugal, friends everywhere. Bridge truly saved her social life.



Eric at 16

To be continued...

SHERLOCK VICKY AND DR. FOTIS: THE CASE OF THE NAMELESS BAG

FRANCESCA CANALI

It started, as all the best mysteries do, with a seemingly unsolvable mystery: **a bag had been found.**

No name tag, no ID, no business card hidden in a side pocket. Just a lonely handbag, abandoned after a session, waiting patiently for someone to claim it.

And here comes **Vicky**, our Chief of Hospitality, a woman who takes **“no player left behind”** to an entirely new level.

For Vicky, an unclaimed bag is **not a minor inconvenience. It is a case to be solved.**

She searched the bag with the precision of a forensic investigator. Lipstick? Unhelpful. Tissues? Useless. But then, buried among the contents, she found it: a **scoresheet**. A clue!

Board	Deal	Vuln	Contract	By	Lead	Tricks	NS	EW	IMPs	
									We	They
1/17	N	-	5D							50
2/18	E	NS	3H							100
3/19	S	EW	2H						140	
4/20	W	All	3H						650	
5/21	N	EW	3H							100
6/22	E	EW	1NT						180	
7/23	S	All	2CL						90	
8/24	W	-	4SD						470	
9/25	N	EW	1NT						180	
10/26	E	All	4SD?						650	
11/27	S	-	3NT						460	
12/28	W	NS	1NT						90	
13/29	N	All								
14/30	E	-								
15/31	S	NS								
16/32	W	EW								



The excitement lasted approximately four seconds, because the scoresheet, naturally, had **no name on it**. Just numbers, contracts, and results. A dead end? **Not for our Vicky!**

She marched straight to Fotis, our IT Manager.

“Can you figure out who this belongs to?” she asked, placing the scoresheet on his desk like a detective presenting evidence to a forensic analyst.

Fotis looked at the sheet. Then he looked at Vicky. And then he made **that face**, the one he makes in the very rare cases he doesn't find something completely trivial.

Without a single word, Fotis turned to his computer and began typing. His fingers flew across the keyboard, summoning formulas and data. The rest of us could only watch in respectful silence.

Strings of incomprehensible queries filled his screen. It was like watching a concert pianist, except the instrument was a spreadsheet and the symphony was made of board numbers and match scores.

Minutes later, Fotis leaned back with his **Eureka face**.

There are three things that cannot be hidden: a cough, being in love, and the satisfaction that comes from solving a mystery with an ASP query.

He had identified the exact match the scoresheet came from.

But the case was not quite closed yet. There had been two women at that table: **South** and **West**. The scoresheet could belong to either one. Even Fotis, for all his digital wizardry, could not solve this by relying on programming alone.

Or could he?

Vicky and Fotis examined the sheet one more time. And that's when they spotted it. Next to one contract, 5♥ down one, someone had scribbled a small minus sign. Not an official marking, rather a personal note... The kind of annotation a player makes when they feel a board has gone badly for their side. A tiny, almost invisible, act of frustration.

Board	Deal	Vuln	Contract	By	Lead	Tricks	NS	EW	We	They
1/17	N	-	5D							50
2/18	E	NS	3H							100
3/19	S	EW	2H						140	
4/20	W	All	4H						650	
5/21	N		5H							100
6/22	E	EW	3H						180	

The deduction was elegant in its simplicity. If the owner of the scoresheet marked 5♥-1 as a loss, then let's have a look at the board. Opponents cannot make 4♠. Therefore, the scoresheet must belong to the declarer's side, the one who went down.

A quick check of the records confirmed which of the two women had been declarer on that board. Mystery solved.

She may have lost the contract, but thanks to Vicky and Fotis, **she got her bag back.**



3rd WBF Online WOMEN'S TEAMS

Online on RealBridge, 27 - 29 March, 2026



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EAT LIKE GOLD



@eatlikegold

David Gold is our guide to Prague's restaurant scene. His food blog [@eatlikegold](#) on Instagram is full of great recommendations. Here are two of his reviews so far:

ASIAN TEMPLE

📍 Bílkova 864, 110 00 Staré Město

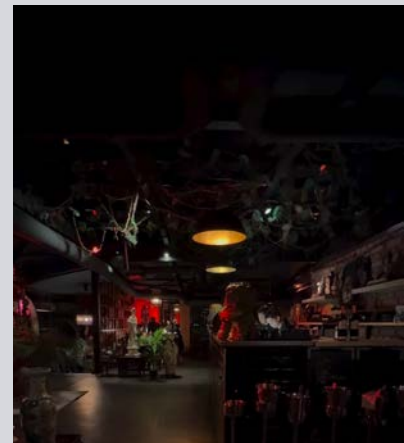
“ Asian temple has been serving Asian fusion to the people of Prague since 2015.

Beautifully designed it has a comfortable lounge as well as the main restaurant and an open kitchen too.

The Tom yum soup and beef ribs were very good. Nothing we had was bad and I really enjoyed the vibe. Would gladly go back.



this place does come highly recommended



but if I could only eat cuisine from one continent



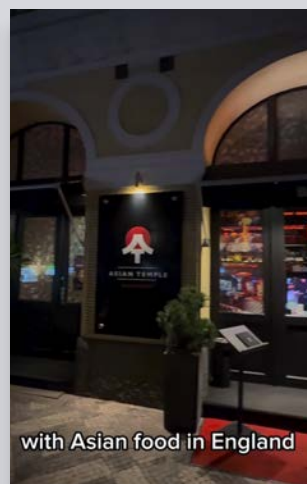
I'll talk you through some of the highlights



it is basically an overcooked duck



it would be Asia hands down



with Asian food in England



and this octopus carpaccio looked great



and I demolished

EUROPEAN WINTER OPEN TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

FINAL – SET 3

MARJO CHORUS

The Dutch pair Oscar Nijssen and Tim van de Paverd are still (narrowly) junior bridge players. Among a lot of other wins they won in 2023 gold in the World Youth Team Champions and in 2024 they became European Youth Team Champions. In the Netherlands they play in the "Master Class," the highest division of the competition. There also they will be playing (next weekend) the finals and maybe become Dutch Open Team Champions for the first time. In today's final they are facing a strong team (De Botton) hosting a great champion: Geir Helgemo whose career they undoubtedly hope to match. The first segment went to Knottenbelt: 37-2, the second segment to De Botton: 30-18, so we start the third segment with Knottenbelt leading-De Botton 55-32. Now the Dutch nearly-no-longer-juniors are facing Helgemo with a partner who will remain a junior for a long time to come, Nicolai Heiberg-Evenstad, who just turned eighteen.



Nicolai Heiberg-Evenstad

On the second deal first blood for de Botton:

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-E.</i>	<i>van de Paverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
—	—	1♠	Pass
1NT	Dble	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

The spade lead went to the king. Diamond king to the Ace and a small spade. Club to the queen and when East went up with ♣A to continue spades, the lie of the clubs meant ten tricks. De Botton +630.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
—	—	1♥	Pass
1NT	All Pass		

Nowadays it seldom happens that you are allowed to play 1NT with nineteen points in North. But it happened here. Norton found the good lead of ♣K and Charlsen went quietly four



off (-200). That was 10 IMP to de Botton.

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad van de Paverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	
Pass	1♥	1NT	2♥
Dble	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Van de Paverd chose to bid 1NT after Heiberg-Evenstad's 1♥. From there on it was impossible not to reach 3NT. And that was cold. East ducked the first spade, took the second spade with ♥J and played on diamonds.



Oscar Nijssen

In the Closed Room Malinowski bid 2♦ after North's 1♥ and the bidding ended in 3♦, going one off when he misread the hearts. A useful 12 IMPs to Knottenbelt.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad van de Paverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Van de Paverd laid down ♥A and after some thought continued with ♥K and a heart. Now Nijssen started to think. And thinking. And back came a spade! That gave North all the time he needed. He took the Ace, cashed the ♥J on which west had to choose which cards to discard (small diamond and small club). Then came the spades, the fourth for East who did the best he could by playing a small (!) diamond, hoping that would solve the defensive problems west had. But on the fifth spade West held on to the diamond King and shed another club so no problems for North as the ♣Q appeared very soon. De Botton +600.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Malinowski also began with the ♥A, West

throwing the ♥9. Maybe that inspired East to switch to... a small spade! It seemed North now had no trouble at all. But he misread the hand. Instead of taking the finesse in clubs, he convinced himself East held all the top hearts. However, it was West who won the ♥Q to continue diamonds. Two off meant 13 IMPs to de Botton.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad</i>	<i>van de Paverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
Pass	3♥	Dble	4♥
4♠	Pass	5♥*	Pass
5♠	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♥	Pass	7♠	All Pass

EW did very well to bid the grand. Because Nijssen often takes some time to think, van de Paverd, having bid 5♥, wrote on his pad: "Even if he will bid a slow 5♠, I will go on to at least 6♥". West was relieved to see ♣Q coming down and scored +1510.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Erichsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Malinowski</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
Pass	4♥	Dble	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♠	All Pass

Norton's 4♥ opening complicated life for EW and they bid only 6♠. 11 IMPs to Knottenbelt.

And then nothing substantial happened any more. The segment ended with the score at De Botton 34 Knottenbelt 25. Overall, the score read Knottenbelt 80 De Botton 66. It may be an exciting last segment.



12th German Bridge Trophy 2026



May, 22th to 25th, 2026
Maritim Hotel Magdeburg

For further information:
www.bridge-verband.de/trophy



"The Green Citadel" by Hundertwasser in Magdeburg (pixabay|Kriemer)

Foto Hintergrund: iStock / Vector

EUROPEAN WINTER OPEN TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP


FINAL – SET 4

MARK HORTON

Although de Botton had won the second and third sessions of the final they trailed Knottenbelt 66-80 at the start of the last one.

If you are familiar with the works of Rogers and Hammerstein you will know that the musical Carousel includes the song 'If I loved You' which contains the words, "I'd let my golden chances pass me by." It was anyone's guess as to who would have to be content with the epithet "every cloud has a silver lining."

Board 46. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad van de Pavverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	
—	—	Pass	1♥
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dble


North led the ♥8 and declarer won with the ♥K and drew trumps, South discarding the ♥2, ♦2 and ♥3, while a heart a diamond and a club went from dummy. When declarer continued with the ♣K South won and played the ♦K, collecting the ♦6 and ♦4. When South exited with the ♠7 declarer had an overtrick, +690.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
—	—	Pass	1♥
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

This time the defenders collected the three tricks they were entitled to, +420 but 7 IMPs to Knottenbelt.

Board 49. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad van de Pavverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	
—	Pass	1♣*	1♥
Dble*	Rdbl*	1♠*	2♥
2♠	3♦	3♥*	Pass
3♠	Pass	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass
1♣	2+♣		
Dble	5+♠		
1♠	3♠		

The BBO operator noted that the meaning of North's redouble 'had not been discussed.'

However, it seems clear that it must have indicated some reasonable values with a tolerance for hearts, and knowing there was also a diamond fit was enough for South to back his judgement.

West led the $\spadesuit 5$ and declarer took dummy's $\spadesuit A$, ran the $\heartsuit 10$, drew trumps and claimed 11 tricks for +990.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
—	Pass	1NT	2 \diamond^*
2 \heartsuit^*	3 \diamond	Pass	4 \diamond
Pass	5 \diamond	Dble	All Pass

- 2 \diamond One major
- 2 \heartsuit Spades

West led the $\clubsuit Q$ and when East followed with the $\clubsuit 10$ he made the essential switch to a spade, establishing a third defensive trick. That was -200 and a 15 IMP swing to de Botton, only 9 IMPs adrift at 81-90.

Board 50. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad</i>	<i>van de Paverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
—	—	Pass	1 \diamond
Dble	4 \diamond	Pass	5 \diamond
Dble	All Pass		

I wonder what Eric Kokish would have done with

West's cards. He was an advocate of overcalling with powerful hands. If West overcalls 1 \heartsuit would it affect East's decision when 5 \diamond is doubled?

West led the $\heartsuit K$ and the defenders collected all the tricks they were due for -500.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
—	—	Pass	1 \diamond
Dble	5 \diamond	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		

No swing.

I took a look at the results from the Mixed Teams semifinal A. In the match between Daisy Chain and 2 Many Gingers, Daniel Tylvad bid 5NT over Cedric Lorenzini's 5 \diamond and ended up defending 7 \diamond doubled for -1100 (losing IMPs against 6 \spadesuit at the other table).

In the match between Bunio and Ofer, Andrzej Bunikowski was able to open the South hand 2NT (a method described in The Mysterious Multi) and when West doubled North jumped to 6 \diamond . Undeterred, when that got back to him Ofer Haramati bid 6 \heartsuit , worth 8 IMPs when his teammates saved in 7 $\diamond x$.

Two pairs achieved a maximum:

West	North	East	South
<i>Andersone</i>	<i>Nehmert</i>	<i>Neimanis</i>	<i>Froehner</i>
—	—	Pass	1 \diamond
Dble	3 \diamond	Pass	Pass
4 \diamond^*	5 \diamond	5 \spadesuit	6 \diamond
6 \spadesuit	Pass	Pass	7 \diamond
7 \spadesuit	All Pass		

That was worth 17 IMPs against 5 $\diamond x$.

West	North	East	South
<i>Pietrzyk</i>	<i>Demirbilek</i>	<i>Szczepanski</i>	<i>Suzer</i>
—	—	Pass	1 \diamond
Dble	2NT	Pass	5 \diamond
6 \diamond^*	Pass	7 \spadesuit	All Pass

That scored up against 5 \heartsuit +2 to deliver a 17 IMP swing.



Board 51. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad van de Paverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♥	3♦	Pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

South led the ♥10 and declarer won with the ♥K and played a spade for the king and ace. As we will see in a moment, at this point North does best to return the ♦2. He cashed the ♥Q and ♥A before switching to the ♦2 and declarer had to go one down, -200.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♥	2♦	Pass
Pass	Dble	Pass	Pass
Rdbl	Pass	2♠	Dble
Pass	Pass	3♦	Dble
All Pass			

South led the ♥10 and declarer won with the ♥K, played a club to the ace, ruffed a club and continued with a spade for the king and ace. North switched to the ♦2 for the queen and king and South went back to hearts, North playing three rounds of the suit, declarer ruffing with the ♦10 as South discarded the ♣J and ♠6. South was sure to score two more trump tricks for three down, -500 and 7 IMPs to Knottenbelt. North's switch to a diamond was the only way

to ensure the extra undertrick, setting up the trump promotion.

With more time for consideration than the players have at their disposal, declarer can ensure eight tricks by playing the ♠Q at trick two. Say North wins and switched to a diamond for the queen and king. Now when South discards when East ruffs the fourth heart with the ♦10 declarer can use the black suit entries to shorten his trumps, reaching a three-card ending where he has ♦A107. He exits with the ♦10 or ♦7 to endplay South.

If North ducks the ♠Q declarer plays another spade, ducking in dummy.

Only an unlikely club lead puts the defenders on track for a certain two down.

One final thought; what would South have done if East had passed the redouble?

Board 52. Dealer West. None Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Nijssen</i>	<i>Heiberg-Evenstad van de Paverd</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>	
1♣*	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	3♥*	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

1♣2+♣

South led the ♦6 for the king and ace and declarer cashed the ♥AK discarding a diamond from dummy as South pitched the ♦3. North won the next heart as South discarded the ♣3 and switched to the ♠2. When declarer put in the ♠J he had four losers, -50.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Charlsen</i>	<i>Norton</i>	<i>Hoftaniska</i>	<i>Tommasini</i>
1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♥	All Pass

South led the ♠3 and North took the ♠A and switched to the ♦7. Declarer won, ruffed a spade, ruffed a diamond, cashed the top hearts played a club to dummy, ruffed a diamond and played two top clubs, discarding the ♠K and claiming, +420 and 10 IMPs to de Botton, taking the score to 97-91 in favour of Knottenbelt. Spectators were already wondering what would happen in the event of a tie, but the remaining four deals were unexciting, the teams trading an overtrick IMP each to make the final score 98-92 to the new champions, Knottenbelt.



Maggie Knottenbelt



20th Bridge Festival

RIGA INVITES 2026

It is a great pleasure to welcome all players to the 20th "Bridge Festival" Riga Invites 2026



<h3>PROGRAM</h3> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>12.08.2026</td> <td>18:00</td> <td>OlyBet Sports Bar Invitational pairs tournament</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13.08.2026</td> <td>11:00</td> <td>Open Teams tournament (1-3 rounds)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13.08.2026</td> <td>17:00</td> <td>Open Teams tournament (4-6 rounds)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14.08.2026</td> <td>11:00</td> <td>Open Teams tournament (7-9 rounds)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14.08.2026</td> <td>17:00</td> <td>Open Teams tournament (10-12 rounds)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14.08.2026</td> <td>17:00</td> <td>Get-Together & Banquet for all participants (pairs and teams) - OlyBet Sports Bar, Radisson.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15.08.2026</td> <td>10:00</td> <td>Open Teams tournament (semi-final)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15.08.2026</td> <td>11:00</td> <td>Open Pairs tournament, Qualification session 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15.08.2026</td> <td>12:30</td> <td>Open Teams tournament (final)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15.08.2026</td> <td>17:00</td> <td>Open Pairs tournament, Qualification session 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16.08.2026</td> <td>10:00</td> <td>Open Pairs tournament, Final A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16.08.2026</td> <td>11:00</td> <td>Open Pairs tournament, Final B</td> </tr> </table>	12.08.2026	18:00	OlyBet Sports Bar Invitational pairs tournament	13.08.2026	11:00	Open Teams tournament (1-3 rounds)	13.08.2026	17:00	Open Teams tournament (4-6 rounds)	14.08.2026	11:00	Open Teams tournament (7-9 rounds)	14.08.2026	17:00	Open Teams tournament (10-12 rounds)	14.08.2026	17:00	Get-Together & Banquet for all participants (pairs and teams) - OlyBet Sports Bar, Radisson.	15.08.2026	10:00	Open Teams tournament (semi-final)	15.08.2026	11:00	Open Pairs tournament, Qualification session 1	15.08.2026	12:30	Open Teams tournament (final)	15.08.2026	17:00	Open Pairs tournament, Qualification session 2	16.08.2026	10:00	Open Pairs tournament, Final A	16.08.2026	11:00	Open Pairs tournament, Final B	<h3>PRIZES</h3> <p>First 3 places in the Invitational tournament receive cups and souvenirs. First 3 places in the Teams tournament receive cups and cash prizes. In the Pairs tournament first 6 places in Final A and first 3 places in Final B receive cash prizes. Special prizes for best Latvian pair, best woman pair, best mixt pair and best junior pair.</p> <p>Prize fund - 10000 EUR Team tournament - 5000 EUR Pair A tournament - 4000 EUR Pair B tournament - 1000 EUR</p> <h3>ENTRY FEES</h3> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>300 EUR</td> <td>per Team</td> <td>for Teams tournament</td> </tr> <tr> <td>200 EUR</td> <td>per Pair</td> <td>for Pairs tournament</td> </tr> </table>	300 EUR	per Team	for Teams tournament	200 EUR	per Pair	for Pairs tournament
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12. - 16. August, 2026




EUROPEAN WINTER MIXED TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

SEMIFINAL, ROUND 6

MARC SMITH

Approaching the end of the semi-final stage, the leaders are Bernal (Italy, Colombia, USA, Türkiye)

are playing third-placed Goldberg (Sweden). In the other VuGraph match, it is second-placed Lako (Israel) against EMI (Poland).

As usual, we start with a bidding problem. Sitting West with only your side vulnerable, you hold...

♠ A K J 7 3
♥ 9
♦ K 3 2
♣ A K 9 6

Open Room

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass
?			

What do you bid?

The action began early, with one player in each match having to answer that question.

Board 16. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

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

Lako v EMI

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Marcinowski</i>	<i>O Herbst</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
1♣*	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Piotr Marcinowski started with a multi-way Polish Club and heard a positive 1♥ response. With Justyna Zmuda showing no interest in spades and, even more discouraging, rebidding her hearts, Marcinowski had no reason to venture beyond the safety of the nine-trick game.

Declarer won the club lead in hand with the king and played the ♥9 to the ten and queen. He was soon knocking out the ♥A and claiming eleven tricks. E/w +660.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Wrobel</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Kalisoras</i>
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

Playing a natural system, Koren Retter opened 1♠ and thus East first bid her hearts at the two-level. The result was that Retter found himself at the three-level holding significant extra values. Wary of signing off in 3NT with such a good hand, he chose to bid out his shape with 4♦. Lia Petelko retreated to hearts, which should have been okay, but it seems that West's 4NT was now Blackwood. The end result was 6NT-2: E/W


-200 and a gift 13 IMPs for EMI.

It seems that West should be able to make an invitational no-trump bid in this auction. Either a jump to 4NT over 3♥ should be natural, or 4NT in the diagrammed sequence should be. Regular partnerships might like to discuss to make sure they are of similar mind.

In the other match, the board produced just an overtrick IMP in 3NT. After the same start as the Closed Room auction above, İrem Özbay settled for a heavy 3NT at her third turn.

Board 20 was another deal that looked likely to be a dull flat board, and yet it created a double-digit swing in both matches.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.

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

Lako v EMI

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Marcinowski</i>	<i>O Herbst</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Zmuda guessed to lead a heart into declarer's tenace, with the result that Ophir Herbst was soon claiming eleven tricks. N/S +660.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Wrobel</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Kalisoras</i>
Pass	1♣*	Pass	2♣*
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

All the other three tables, it was South who declared 3NT. All three declarers received a spade lead to the ace and a second spade. With eight top tricks they just need to find one more trick from the suits that are not spades. Favourable layouts in both minors means that playing that suit produces immediate gratification for declarer.

For the Poles, Justyna Kalisoras tried a heart to the jack at trick three. East won with the ♥Q and continued spades. If declarer judges that the defenders' spades are breaking 4-4, she can afford to test one of the minors, with the chance of a 3-3 heart break in the bag. When declarer instead cashed the top hearts next and the suit failed to split, she could no longer take advantage of the minor suit position, as the defenders would have two tricks in each major to go with their one minor-suit trick. N/S -100 and 12 IMPs to Lako.

Bernal v Goldberg

Both South players declared 3NT, the defence opening with two rounds of spades. For the Swedes, Ulla-Britt Goldberg started by playing three rounds of clubs. When that suit behaved, declarer had her nine tricks. N/S +600.

In the replay, Claire Alpert followed exactly the same unsuccessful line of play as Kalisoras had in the other match. N/S -100 and 12 IMPs to Goldberg.

The match finished with a difficult bidding test for the N/S pairs, which ended up being a disaster for the aggressive Swedish style.





Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

Lako v EMI

West	North	East	South
<i>Marcinowski</i>	<i>O Herbst</i>	<i>Zmuda</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Wrobel</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Kalisoras</i>
—	—	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

The auction was identical in both rooms. Asulin made eight tricks for N/S +110. For the Poles, Kalisoras made ten tricks. N/S +170 and 2 IMPs to EMI.

Bernal v Goldberg

The same auction was repeated in the Closed Room of this match, and Goldberg also made eight tricks. N/S +110. In the replay, it was much

more difficult for Bernal's Italian/American pair to get to the same contract as everyone else, because Bengt-Erik Efraimsson opened 1♠ on the East cards. It is usually a plus for four-card major systems when you manage to pick off the opponents' suit, but there are exceptions to every rule.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>A Efraimsson</i>	<i>Versace</i>	<i>B-E Efraimsson</i>	<i>Alpert</i>
—	—	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Anna Efraimsson led the ♦Q, declarer winning in dummy and shedding a club from his hand. Now came a heart to the ten, West winning and continuing diamonds. Declarer ruffed, laid down the ♥A, then crossed to dummy with the ♣A to lead the ♠J. Declarer duly set up the spades with one ruff in dummy. The defenders made the ♥K and a club at the end, but that was their lot. A spectacular N/S +620 and 11 IMPs to Bernal.

Goldberg nipped Bernal 35-31, whilst Lako beat EMI 53-22. The Israelis move to the top of the leaderboard with two matches remaining. Goldberg remain in third place, fewer than 2 VPs behind Bernal.



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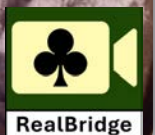
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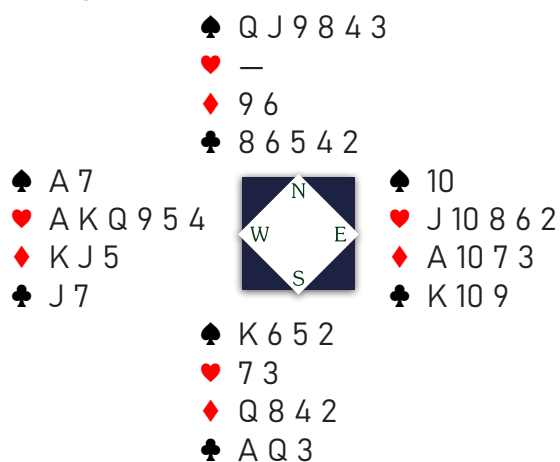
EUROPEAN WINTER MIXED PAIRS

TALL ORDER

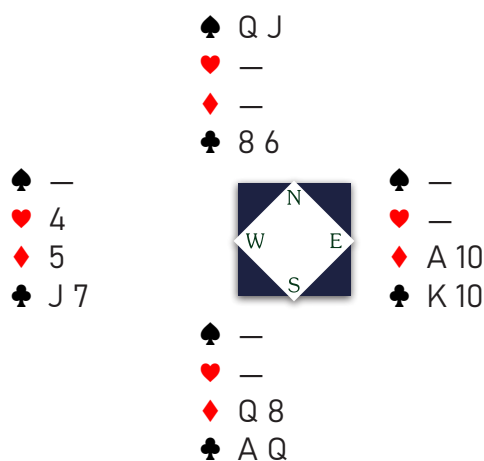
MARK HORTON

This deal from the Mixed Pairs was a play problem:

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.



drew the outstanding trump, cashed the ♠A, ruffed a spade and played a diamond to the jack. Having cashed the ♦K declarer played dummy's remaining hearts. This was the position when the last was cashed:



Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Kandemir</i>	<i>G Mihai</i>	<i>Nuhoglu</i>	<i>R Mihai</i>
—	Pass	Pass	1♦
Dble	1♠	3♥	Pass
3♠*	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♥	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♦*	Pass	6♥	All Pass

South led a heart and declarer won in dummy,

When the ♣10 went from dummy South had to part with the ♣Q and was thrown in to lead into the diamond tenace.

It was a rare 100%.

You will appreciate that it may not be possible to verify exactly what happened, but any journalist will tell you that the facts should never stand in the way of a good story.

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SILENCE IS GOLDEN

MARK HORTON

Light opening bids and wafer thin overcalls have become de rigeur, but as with any bid they may be revealing. Look at this deal from the Mixed Teams:

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vul.

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



Claire Alpert

Lako v Bernal

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Cima</i>	<i>O Herbst</i>	<i>Dessi</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
—	—	1♥	1♠
2♦	3♠*	4♦	Pass
4♠*	Pass	5♣*	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

North led the ♠4 and declarer won with the ♠A, played a heart to the ace and the ♦10 covered by the jack, queen and king. At this point, the screen pops up with +920. This far we have been unable to ask declarer what happened, but presumably he played South for the ♣Q at some point.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Alpert</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Versace</i>
—	—	1♥	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♣*	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT*	Pass
5♠*	Pass	6♦	All Pass

- 4♣ Control
- 4NT RKCB
- 5♠ 2 keycards + ♦Q

North led the ♥4 and declarer won in dummy and played the ♦3 to the queen. When it held she cashed the ♠A, ruffed a spade and played two rounds of hearts, ruffing with the ♦7. North overruffed and exited with a diamond, declarer winning with the ♦A. If the defenders signals were to be believed North appeared to be 4-2-3-4. That made North a favourite to hold the ♣Q, so declarer cashed the ♣K and played a club to the jack, planning to ruff a heart, but when the jack lost she was one down and 14 IMPs changed hands.

EUROPEAN WINTER MIXED TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

SEMIFINALS – SET 2


LAKO V DAISY CHAIN

DAVID BIRD

The Mixed Teams has reached the semi-final stage, and we will watch Daisy Chain (Israel) v Lako (France, Sweden and Switzerland). The action will be relayed to the world on Bridge Base Online.

I received an email from a kibitzer yesterday: "Surely it won't kill you to describe just one part-score deal? They are a valuable part of the game." Well, let's put his fatality theory to the test. If he's wrong, this report will contain only one deal. A somewhat less than thrilling one, no doubt.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Franceschetti</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Setton</i>
—	2♠	All Pass	

Lia Petelko led the ♥A and declarer lost three further tricks in trumps. +140.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Robert</i>	<i>Herbst</i>	<i>Tartarin</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
—	Pass	Pass	1♣
1♥	2♦	2NT*	3♦
3♥	3♠	Pass	4♦
All Pass			

West's 3♥ would have been too high, but N/S took the push to 4♦. Although playing in a different trump suit, declarer lost the same four tricks as in the Open Room. That was -50 and 5 IMP away.

Perhaps my correspondent is happy now, lingering over the details of the last deal. As for me, I am still alive but not feeling so good. The next deal may aid my recovery.

Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Robert</i>	<i>Herbst</i>	<i>Tartarin</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
—	—	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	pass	2♦
Pass	3♥	pass	4♥
All pass			

E/W were strangely silent, which made it difficult for them to reach their spade game. Anne-Laure Tartarin led the ♦4 against 4♥ and ruffed the ♦10 return. The king and ace of spades put the game one down. Declarer ruffed the next diamond with the queen and claimed the remainder. That was N/S -100.



Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Franceschetti</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Setton</i>
—	—	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	pass	2♦
Dble	2♥	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	pass
Pass	Dble	All Pass	

E/W hibernated for a while, but made up for it when the sun came out. Well bid!

Koen Retter won the ♦K lead with dummy's ace and drew trumps with the ace and queen. She needed to play either minor next, but chose to play a heart, opening a route back to her hand.

The defence were in with a chance now. If North plays low, South winning with the king, a second heart beats the contract. It removes an entry needed to reach the 13th club. According to the play record, Pierre Franceschetti rose unaccountably with the ♥A. He then needed to cross to his partner's hand with a heart spot-card. (If instead he chooses the ♥Q or ♥J, dummy's ♥10-8 will grow in power.) When he returned the ♦J, declarer was reprieved from his mistake. He ruffed in dummy and played a club to the 9 and queen. He then ruffed the ♥Q return, overtaken by South's king, cleared the club suit and claimed his +590. It was 10 IMPs to Lako.



Anne-Laure Tartarin

Lako led 19-0 after three boards, but then the tide turned.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

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

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

	♠ N	
♥ W	♠	♥ E
♦ S	♠	♦
♣	♠	♣

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Robert</i>	<i>Herbst</i>	<i>Tartarin</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
—	—	1♥	2NT*
Dble	3♣	Dble	All Pass

Adi Asulin entered with the sort of Unusual Notrump that was panned by Terence Reese – only 5-4 shape, no solidity in the suits, and a good measure of defence. Would she survive this undisciplined venture? Not today! Robert doubled, showing willingness to defend in at least one of the minors. North suppressed any sign of alarm and dutifully bid 3♣. East doubled, and N/S were now in big trouble. Let's congratulate West for his splendid initial double.

The defenders were in no mood to release their grip on this deal. Tartarin led the ♣A and the ♣Q, allowed to win. She then switched to the ♦6, West winning with the 9. He returned the ♦K to dummy's ace, declarer then playing a trump to East's jack. Tartarin cashed three heart tricks and forced declarer with the ♥2. Declarer made the ♣8 and the ♦A but was five down for a loss of 1100.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Franceschetti</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Setton</i>
—	—	1♥	Pass
2♦	2♠	3♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

Hilda Setton led the ♣2 to dummy's 10. Petelko

ended with a comfortable +650, no doubt disappointed to lose 10 IMPs.

Not long afterwards, a slam deal was placed on the table.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Robert</i>	<i>Herbst</i>	<i>Tartarin</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	5♦	Dble
Pass	Pass	Rdble	Pass
5NT	Pass	6♣	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

North led the ♦4 to dummy's ace. Robert crossed to the ♥A, ruffed a diamond, returned to the ♥K, and ruffed his last diamond. A club to the ace was followed by the ♠10, to the 2, king and ace. Without much hope declarer played the ♣K. Miracles do sometimes happen. The queen fell and +980 was there.

Closed Room


West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Franceschetti</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Setton</i>
1♥	Pass	3♦*	Dble
3♠*	Pass	4♦*	Dble
5♦	6♥	All Pass	

North led the ♦8 and play followed that in the other room for a while. When South won with the ♠A, he cut proceedings marginally shorter by returning the ♣Q.

OTHER TABLES

In the 46-table field, four declarers in 6♥ went down after a club lead. Presumably they tried dummy's jack on the first trick. Just one declarer went down on a diamond lead. Twenty declarers made +980, only one of them after a club lead. It was similar for those who stopped in 4♥: generally, 450 after a club lead and 480 otherwise.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vul.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Robert</i>	<i>Herbst</i>	<i>Tartarin</i>	<i>Asulin</i>
—	1♠	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
6♦	All Pass		

With the sequence forcing to game after West's 4♣ cue bid, East may have regarded 5♦ (rather than 4♦) as a sign-off. Since East's previous 3♦ was probably non-forcing, the raise to 6♦ seems too much. A spade lead confirmed this opinion. One down for -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Retter</i>	<i>Franceschetti</i>	<i>Petelko</i>	<i>Setton</i>
—	1♠	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦	Pass	5♦	All Pass

The Lako E/W pair stopped in 5♦, the best they could do after bypassing 3NT. I took a quick look at the double-dummy prediction. Ah, a club

MIXED PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP

SEMIFINALS

RESULTS AFTER SESSION 3

SEMIFINAL A

1	KANDEMIR Ismail	NUHOGLU Sevil	TUR - TUR	56.43
2	LANGER Darina	GOKCE Hakan	SUI - SUI	55.52
3	PAVLUSHKO Olga	IVANOV Anatoly	ESP - ESP	55.47
4	MROZ Blazej	BANAS Gabriela	POL - POL	54.89
5	LENZ Vera	VITTERS Ralph	GER - GER	54.78
6	MARINONI Pier Andrea	ROMANO Elisa	ITA - ITA	54.32
7	MIHAI Geta	MIHAI Radu	ROM - ROM	54.07
8	KRASA Mikulas	SLOVAKOVA Pavla	CZE - CZE	53.73
9	IMAMOGLU Levent	SEKER Olgu	TUR - TUR	53.22
10	SUNGET Senol	CIMEN Tan	TUR - TUR	52.97
11	McINTOSH Andrew	MORAN Sara	ENG - ENG	52.73
12	ERENGIL Yasemin	KAYA Emre	TUR - TUR	51.03
13	SMEDEREVAC Jovanka	ADELSBERGER Heimo	FRA - DEN	50.95
14	GORSKA Aleksandra	TUCZYNSKI Piotr	POL - POL	50.90
15	ZABICKA BAJON Katarzyna	DZIECIATKOWSKI Piotr	POL - POL	49.76
16	ZIETARA Jolanta	GREWLING Jozef	POL - POL	47.19
17	KNOTTENBELT Maggie	HANDLEY-PRITCHARD Ben	ENG - ENG	46.96
18	PISANI Rosanna	MARINO Leonardo	ITA - ITA	46.52
19	WAKSMAN Sophie	MILASZEWSKI Mirosław	FRA - POL	46.44
20	LYSEK Matyas	KONSTACKA Emma	CZE - CZE	45.46
21	GOLEBIEWSKI Stanislaw	TROJAN Zofia	POL - POL	44.10
22	BUCHLEV Nedju	DUEHRIG Elke	GER - GER	43.27
23	GOTARD Barbara	GOTARD Tomasz	GER - GER	38.94
24	AGA Ezgi Ece	DOGAN Fikret	GER - TUR	38.53

SEMIFINAL B

1	ZAIDENBERG GATT Sophie	GISIN Eitan	ISR - ISR	59.26
2	MANNO Andrea	TERSCH Federica	ITA - ITA	57.25
3	PEYRET Hakan	GUREL Zeynep Damla	TUR - TUR	55.62
4	VAN HOOIJDONK Marcel	NGUYEN Ahn	NED - NED	54.25
5	PYSZKOVA Valerie	DANEK Petr	CZE - CZE	53.72
6	PIGULSKI Adam	PUCYK Martyna	POL - POL	53.07
7	PROBST Sandra	MIJIC Ante	CRO - CRO	52.94
8	SORESINI Antonella	GUGLIELMI Enrico	ITA - ITA	52.68
9	GALUBINSKI Krzysztof	BORUTA Barbara	POL - POL	52.63
10	KIEPURA Marek	GRUSZECZKA Joanna	POL - POL	52.03
11	LASOTA Tomasz	PODGORCZYK Magdalena	POL - POL	50.95
12	GOLDBERG Jerry	SEAMAN Eleanor	USA - USA	50.55
13	NIKLAUS Maria	LORKOWSKI Jan	POL - POL	48.35
14	HALEFOGLU Oksan Veda	AYTEMUR Cengiz	TUR - TUR	47.47
15	ZAIDENBERG Nezer Jacob	MCDONALD Majella	BUL - IRL	45.75
16	JESENICNIK Aleksandra	ORAC Tolja	SLO - SLO	45.39
17	THORPE Stefan	ADELSBERGER Renate	NED - AUT	45.21
18	OLMER Adam	BABICKOVA Anna	CZE - CZE	38.50
19	DRUCH Jan	DAWIEC Anna	POL - POL	33.92

MIXED TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

SEMIFINAL

RESULTS AFTER ROUND 8

1	LAKO	132.78	24	VICUNA	89.90
2	BERNAL	124.54	25	ALICE	88.79
3	DAISY CHAIN	117.11	26	TUTTI FRUTTI	88.74
4	GOLDBERG	116.60	27	BC MUENCHEN	87.41
5	2 MANY GINGERS	114.93	28	FRENCH CONNECTION	87.28
6	ASHE	109.27	29	BUNIO	87.20
7	GROUP ONE TEAM	108.36	30	SV BRIDGE CLUB	86.77
8	LUNDBERG	105.41	31	OFER	86.11
9	DE BOTTON	103.75	32	BANANA	84.76
10	DAUGAVA	103.13	33	AKINOM	83.80
11	MILANBRIDGE.COM	101.96	34	GOLD BARS	83.66
12	ZHANG	101.21	35	ALLEZ	83.53
13	CARE	100.52	36	SORRY MISSCLICK	77.63
14	EMI	100.41	37	TURQUOISE	75.77
15	CROATIA	100.02	38	LUTZ	73.64
16	CREAZONE	99.56	39	NAMBAJUAN	73.53
17	WAPO	96.15	40	BEKKER	73.12
18	TEAM LLAMA	93.26	41	BLUE NOTE	72.76
19	GERMANY	93.17	42	SALLYS ACES	72.56
20	BAHNICI	92.62	43	NORDIC FOURS	70.61
21	COLORADO	91.67	44	NETTLETON	69.48
22	ELER	90.92	45	FRIENDS	55.36
23	DRONKA	90.31	46	REBID	51.06

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH BRIDGE SURVEY

BAMSA is running a survey to find out what children and young people think about bridge.

Whether you play all the time, or you just tried bridge once – your opinion matters.

What do you enjoy? What puts you off? What would make bridge better for people your age?

Take part today to influence what happens next with youth bridge and enter our prize draw for 2 x 50\$ Amazon vouchers!

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We're gathering perspectives from young players of all ages (8-31 years), countries and skill levels, and the findings will go directly to the people planning youth bridge programmes.

Your answers will help shape how bridge is taught and played in schools, clubs, and online. The survey takes only 10-15 minutes to complete and it's anonymous.

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/stirling/youth-bridge>

Youth voices in bridge: International survey of young people who play bridge.



<https://bridgemindsport.org/school-and-youth-bridge/>

MIXED TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIP

BUTLER RANKING

AFTER ROUND 8

TYLVAD Daniel - SIGSGAARD Julie Marina	1.65	DEN-DEN	112
PETELKO Lia - RETTER Koren	1.15	ISR-ISR	112
AUKEN Sabine - WELLAND Roy	1.08	DEN-DEN	84
CHARLSEN Thomas - DE BOTTON Janet	1.00	NOR-ENG	28
PIEDRA Fernando - SAINZ DE VICUNA Maria	0.98	SUI-ESP	42
BERNAL Francisco - OZBAY Irem	0.96	COL-TUR	56
BERTHEAU Kathrine - YETTICK Garth	0.91	SWE-USA	56
JANECZEK Marta - BUNIKOWSKI Andrzej	0.89	POL-POL	112
ROBERT Quentin - TARTARIN Anne-Laure	0.86	FRA-FRA	84
SCHALTZ Martin - DUURSMA Judith	0.83	DEN-NED	112
CIMA Leonardo - DESSI Barbara	0.82	ITA-ITA	84
VALIMARESCU Dan - FILIMON Irina Elena	0.81	ROM-ROM	112
KAZMUCHA Danuta - GAWEL Wojciech	0.76	POL-POL	84
BREWIAK Grazyna - HUTYRA Maciej	0.71	POL-POL	56
CECERE Amedeo - MARCELLI Cristina	0.71	ITA-ITA	56
BERTHEAU Peter - MADSEN Christina Lund	0.69	SWE-DEN	112
MALINOWSKI Artur - SENIOR Nevena	0.64	ENG-ENG	42
WANG Wen Fei - HAMPSON Geoff	0.63	HKG-USA	112
GOLDBERG Lars - GOLDBERG Ulla-Britt	0.62	SWE-SWE	112
VERSACE Alfredo - ALPERT Claire	0.58	ITA-USA	84
VINCENT Christine - ABOU CHANAB Bachar	0.58	SUI-SUI	98
BUSSE Piotr - BUSSE Grazyna	0.58	POL-POL	112
SERDAR Ekrem - DEMIRBILEK Zeynep Arzum	0.55	TUR-TUR	56
JAGNIEWSKI Rafal - LUCKA Dominika	0.53	POL-POL	70
NEIMANIS Janis - ANDERSONE Ilze	0.53	LAT-LAT	112
SARNIAK Anna - CHMURSKI Bartosz	0.50	POL-POL	28
EFRAIMSSON Bengt-Erik - ZACK EFRAIMSSON Anna	0.46	SWE-SWE	112
LORENZINI Cedric - MICHELSEN Marion	0.45	FRA-SWE	84
HEGEDUS Orsolya - WEINBERGER Simon	0.45	HUN-AUT	112
ERDOGDU Helin - TORUN Bulent Ozgur	0.44	TUR-TUR	112
GRZEJDZIAK Igor - GRZEJDZIAK Sabina	0.40	POL-POL	84
PAOLUZI Simonetta - MONTANARI Matteo	0.35	ITA-ITA	112
ASLAN Bulent - OZGUR Hatice	0.34	TUR-TUR	112
STEPINSKI Jeremi - ZALEWSKA Joanna	0.33	POL-POL	98
PALMA Antonio - NILSSON Andrea	0.32	POR-SWE	56
SIMIC Olga - SIMIC Mihailo	0.29	SER-SER	112
WEISS SELWAY Florian - WEISS SELWAY Louise	0.29	AUT-AUT	112
PILIPOVIC Marina - MARINOVSKI Kiril	0.29	CRO-CRO	84
OZBAY Tolga - ERYANIK Ceyda	0.26	TUR-TUR	42
ALPER Toygar - OZAN Eren	0.26	TUR-TUR	96
LUESMANN Claudia - LUESMANN Ingo	0.26	GER-GER	112
JANISZEWSKI Przemyslaw - SUSZANOWICZ Natalia	0.26	POL-POL	70
REES Tim - PUNCH Sam	0.24	WAL-SCO	70
PREDDY Kay - SELWAY Norman	0.24	ENG-ENG	112
SUZER Ugurcan - DEMIRBILEK Zeynep Arzum	0.20	TUR-TUR	56
JANSONS Ugis - VEKSA Natalija	0.18	LAT-LAT	112
SAUTAUX Monika - WOZNIAK Tomasz	0.17	POL-POL	112
SMITH Abbey - PASKE Thomas	0.15	ENG-ENG	112
WONG Hoi-Kei - KOO Hor Yung Charmian	0.14	HKG-HKG	14
ZMUDA Justyna - MARCINOWSKI Piotr	0.08	POL-POL	84
HERBST Ophir - ASULIN Adi	0.08	ISR-ISR	112
NEHMERT Pony Beate - FROEHNER Christian	0.07	GER-GER	112
ZOCHOWSKA Joanna - SCHMIDT Pierre	0.06	FRA-FRA	70
BAHNIKOVA Eva - BAHNIK Petr	0.04	CZE-CZE	112
GLADIATOR Anne - JANSON Bjorn	0.04	GER-GER	112



MACURA Milan - MACUROVA Michaela	0.04	CZE-CZE	56
BAHNIK Ondrej - KOHUTOVA Lucie	0.02	CZE-CZE	112
SARNIAK Anna - CHALUPEK Igor	0.02	POL-POL	56
GROMANN Ingrid - CAPPELLER Joachim	0.00	GER-GER	112
POPLILOV Lilo - POPLILOV Matilda	-0.09	BUL-ISR	70
DELESTRE Blandine - DELESTRE Daniel	-0.10	FRA-FRA	112
BRKLJACIC Tihana - MESTRIC Mate	-0.10	CRO-CRO	70
ROSTHOEJ Ella - HAMMELEV Nikolaj	-0.11	DEN-DEN	112
KOO Hor Yung Charmian - CHIANG Jeffrey	-0.12	HKG-HKG	42
PIEDRA Fernando - MEDIERO Marina	-0.14	SUI-ESP	42
WONG Hoi-Kei - LI Suet Yu Zoe	-0.14	HKG-HKG	84
BROCK Sally - GRAY Jonathan	-0.15	ENG-ENG	112
BAREL Michael - KATZ Paz	-0.15	ISR-ISR	84
HARAMATI Ofer - BRAJOVIC Ana Zorana	-0.16	ISR-SER	112
SZCZEPANSKI Radoslaw - PIETRZYK Agnieszka	-0.18	POL-POL	112
MARTENSEN-LARSEN Katrine - OLSEN Svein Arild Naas	-0.20	DEN-NOR	112
CHODOROWSKA Irena - CHODOROWSKI Jan	-0.22	POL-POL	112
YADLIN Israel - MORAN OHAYON Orit	-0.22	ISR-ISR	98
SANDQVIST Niklas (Nick) - SHASHOU Nathalie	-0.23	ENG-ENG	112
ERBIL Erdinc - KURTOGLU ZABCI Hatice Akten	-0.23	TUR-TUR	98
HOLOWACZ Krzysztof - CHMIELEWSKA Magdalena	-0.26	POL-POL	98
MISZEWSKA Ewa - ZAWISLAK Slawek	-0.28	POL-POL	112
ASHE Steven - MARICIC Jovana	-0.29	USA-SER	112
MENGU Kenan - SEN Nuray	-0.32	TUR-TUR	112
WNUK Tomasz - KREGLEWSKA-WNUK Anna	-0.32	POL-POL	84
LANTARON Luis - SAINZ DE VICUNA Maria	-0.32	ESP-ESP	56
CHMURSKI Bartosz - OCYLOK Dominika	-0.33	POL-POL	54
ZORIC Vedran - SVER Nikica	-0.36	CRO-CRO	70
LIRAN Inon - BEKKER Jeny	-0.38	ISR-ISR	98
DELLE CAVE Giuseppe - CARE Livia	-0.39	ITA-ITA	56
WONG Wai Man Flora - CHIANG Jeffrey	-0.39	HKG-HKG	28
DOBROWOLSKI Marcin - MADUZIA Anna	-0.40	POL-POL	84
SIKORA Jacek - SIKORA Marta	-0.46	POL-POL	70
HULT Simon - LUNDBERG Anne-Marie Katarina	-0.46	SWE-SWE	112
ROSSARD Martine - ROMANOWSKI Jerzy	-0.46	FRA-FRA	112
GOBEKLI Altug - OZAYDIN TANRIOVER Zerrin	-0.49	TUR-TUR	84
FRANCESCHETTI Pierre - SETTON Hilda	-0.54	FRA-SUI	56
BILDE Dorte Cilleborg - BILDE Morten	-0.55	DEN-DEN	84
BERTHEAU Kathrine - ABRAGI Andreas	-0.57	SWE-SWE	56
BROGELAND Tonje Aasand - BROGELAND Anders	-0.58	NOR-NOR	112
KORBEL Daniel - ZHANG Susan	-0.59	USA-USA	112
SMYKALLA Gisela - SCHNEIDER Michael	-0.59	GER-GER	112
BABSCH Andreas - SCHRECKENBERGER Ulrike	-0.61	AUT-AUT	112
HOLOWACZ Michal - CHMIELEWSKA Antonina	-0.65	POL-POL	98
WARE Peggy - JONES Spencer	-0.66	USA-USA	112
BASARIR Ipek - ELER Cuneyt	-0.69	TUR-TUR	112
KANDULA Pawel - ZYCHLINSKA Malgorzata	-0.73	POL-POL	98
FOLTYN Adrian - KLUPS Aleksandra	-0.77	POL-POL	98
SAPORTA Pierre - SAPORTA-TWORZYDLO Renata	-0.77	FRA-FRA	70
WONG Wai Man Flora - CHUI Daniel Siu Wai	-0.80	HKG-HKG	56
WROBEL Michal - KALISORAS Justyna	-0.80	POL-POL	56
SASSELLI Marco - SAESSELI Irene	-0.81	SUI-SUI	98
GOLD David - NETTLETON Diana	-0.81	ENG-ENG	112
HOFTANISKA Thor Erik - VIST Gunn Tove	-0.83	NOR-NOR	42
MERCIL Yasemin - ARSLAN Mustafa	-0.84	TUR-TUR	70
OZER Ahmet Murat - KANLIKILIC Ferda	-0.93	TUR-TUR	70
HERMANN Sophie - CRISAFULLI SADABA Patricio	-0.96	AUT-AUT	112
LANTARON Luis - MEDIERO Marina	-1.07	ESP-ESP	28
SAFTA Florin - GUJA Alexandra	-1.15	ROM-ROM	112
OZKURT Kenan - OZKOK KOCAMAN Ilkay	-1.49	TUR-TUR	70
ERBIL Erdinc - ALUF Maisy	-2.07	TUR-TUR	14
ALPER Toygar - ALUF Maisy	-2.43	TUR-TUR	14