

20th European Youth Team Championships

Riccione, Italy • 13-23 July 2005



Daily Bulletin



Editor: Brian Senior - Co Editor: Peter Ventura - Layout Editor: Iris Harilaou - Photographer: Maria Plubi

Bulletin 1

Thursday, 14 July 2005

LET THE GAMES BEGIN



France started the Junior Championship by blitzing last year's hosts, Czech Republic, 25-0, while Netherlands, England and Sweden also scored maximum 25s. Sweden's win was particularly impressive, being against well-fancied Israel. Meanwhile, champions Poland ground out a narrow 16-14 win over another of last year's medallists, Hungary. In the Girls Championship, defending champions Austria began with a maximum and already look to be the team to beat.

TODAY'S VUGRAPH MATCHES

10.00 *Russia v Austria* *Girls*

1400 *Austria v Hungary* *Juniors*

Vugraph Timings

Please note that if your team is appearing on vugraph the Closed Room will begin play 10 minutes before the advertised starting time for the round, while the Open Room will begin play 10 minutes after the advertised time.

Once again I am very pleased to welcome all of you players, team officials and guests to our flagship competition, the European Youth Team Championships. This year we are holding the 20th edition of this great event and I am glad that no less than 26 countries responded to our call and are represented here in Riccione. We are all very thankful to the Italian Bridge Federation for having chosen such a wonderful place for young people and grateful to the local authorities administrative and bridge for having prepared what appears to be an excellent championship.

I am sure that all of us will do whatever it takes to ensure the success of these championships and wish all of you to achieve your goals in Riccione '05.

Panos Gerontopoulos
(Chairman European Youth Committee)

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JUNIOR TEAMS RESULTS

ROUND 1			
Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 NETHERLANDS	AUSTRIA	83 - 22	25 - 3
2 GREECE	TURKEY	74 - 40	22 - 8
3 ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	90 - 28	25 - 3
4 PORTUGAL	LITHUANIA	93 - 71	20-10
5 POLAND	HUNGARY	44 - 37	16-14
6 FRANCE	CZECH REP.	112- 19	25 - 0
7 ROMANIA	SPAIN	51 - 21	21 - 9
8 BELGIUM	NORWAY	36 - 39	14-16
9 SWEDEN	ISRAEL	83 - 26	25 - 4
10 ITALY	CROATIA	74 - 45	20.5-8.5
11 LATVIA	DENMARK	53 - 43	17-13

JUNIOR TEAMS PROGRAM

ROUND 2 10.00		
Table	Home Team	Visiting Team
1	LATVIA	NETHERLANDS
2	DENMARK	ITALY
3	CROATIA	SWEDEN
4	ISRAEL	BELGIUM
5	NORWAY	ROMANIA
6	SPAIN	FRANCE
7	CZECH REPUBLIC	POLAND
8	HUNGARY	PORTUGAL
9	LITHUANIA	ENGLAND
10	SCOTLAND	GREECE
11	TURKEY	AUSTRIA

ROUND 3 14.00		
Table	Home Team	Visiting Team
1	NETHERLANDS	SCOTLAND
2	TURKEY	LITHUANIA
3	AUSTRIA	HUNGARY
4	GREECE	CZECH REPUBLIC
5	ENGLAND	SPAIN
6	PORTUGAL	NORWAY
7	POLAND	ISRAEL
8	FRANCE	CROATIA
9	ROMANIA	DENMARK
10	BELGIUM	LATVIA
11	SWEDEN	ITALY



GIRLS TEAMS RESULTS

ROUND 1			
Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 AUSTRIA	NETHERLANDS	103 - 47	25 - 4
2 ITALY	IRELAND	82 - 37	24 - 6
3 GERMANY	SWEDEN	24 - 64	7 -23
4 POLAND	ENGLAND	69 - 39	21 - 9
5 RUSSIA	DENMARK	72 - 45	21 - 9

GIRLS TEAMS PROGRAM

ROUND 2 10.00		
Table	Home Team	Visiting Team
1	RUSSIA	AUSTRIA
2	DENMARK	POLAND
3	ENGLAND	GERMANY
4	SWEDEN	ITALY
5	IRELAND	NETHERLANDS

ROUND 3 14.00		
Table	Home Team	Visiting Team
1	AUSTRIA	SWEDEN
2	IRELAND	ENGLAND
3	NETHERLANDS	DENMARK
4	ITALY	RUSSIA
5	GERMANY	POLAND



Team Flags at the Opening Ceremony

Opening Ceremony

Everything is in place for what will surely be a tremendous European Youth Team Championship, which was officially opened yesterday evening by the President of the European Bridge League, Gianarrigo Rona.

Stefan Back, Vice Chairman of the Youth Committee, welcomed us all to Riccione as the Master of Ceremonies.

The Mayor of Riccione, Daniele Imola, was happy to represent the city to be chosen for the 20th Championship. He finished with 'in bocca al lupo' - translated into English 'in the wolf's mouth', a common Italian expression for 'good luck'.

Salsomaggiore was the host in 1982 and Panos Gerontopoulos, Chairman of the EBL Youth Committee, was happy to bring the Championship back to Italy and the hospitality city of Riccione, a center for visitors. He was thankful to see 48 teams from 26 countries to be presented. Panos then welcomed Sevinc Atay, representing the European Bridge League, and the presented members of the EBL Youth Committee. Thereafter the championship-staff was presented.

At the end the ceremony featured a display of the flags of the competing nations as the teams were asked to introduce themselves in alphabetical order. We could notice that the Scottish squad was focused on the bottom of their outfit, all dressed in traditionally Scottish kilts. Perhaps that gave us a hint of where they will finish: on the bottom line...

The ceremony was followed by a fresh buffet with refreshments and that gave everyone the chance to renew old friendships.

Sports News

Cycling

Alexander Vinokourov of Kazakhstan won Wednesday's 11th stage of the Tour de France - a gruelling 172km Alpine slog from Courchevel to Briançon. The T-Mobile rider out-sprinted Colombian rival Santiago Botero, of Phonak, in the final 500m to win by a second in four hours 47.38 seconds. France's Christophe Moreau edged a chasing group that included Lance Armstrong to take third in 4:48.53. Armstrong finished sixth - good enough to see him retain the yellow jersey. But there was bad news for former Tour leader Jens Voigt, who was forced out of the 2005 race after finishing outside the time limit.

Cricket

Scotland defeated Ireland by 47 runs in the final of the ICC Trophy in Dublin. Both had already qualified for next year's World Cup.

Football

Liverpool began the defence of their Champions League Trophy with a 3-0 home win against TNS of Wales at Anfield, Steven Gerrard scoring all three goals. Other results in qualifying matches: Haka 1-0 Pyunik Yerevan, F91 Dudelange 0-1 Zrinjski, Glentoran 1-2 Shelbourne, HB Torshavn 2-4 FBK Kaunas, Gorica 2-0 KFTirana.



Gianarrigo Rona, Daniele Imola (Mayor of Riccione) and Stefan Back listen with interest to Panos's opening speech

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY BRIDGE CUP 2005

For juniors who also attend classes at college. This summer there will be an excellent opportunity to compete at the international level. Do not hesitate; go to Rotterdam, the Netherlands, for the:

9th European University Bridge Cup

Date: 24-29 August 2005

Venue: Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands

The Championship is open to teams with students of all European Universities and High Schools. Every country may send any number of teams. The age limit is 18-27 years (born after 1 January 1977)

Costs per player: €200 (entry fee including hotel, breakfast, lunch and dinner)

Information and reservation of the hotel: Harry vd Peppel (a.vdpeppel@wxs.nl)

Onsite organisation: Femmy Boelaars (teams2005@hotmail.com)

If you have questions you can turn to Kees Tammens, coach of the Dutch junior team in Riccione.



A General View From the Ceremony

Blast From The Past

Yesterday's schedule meant that there was no bridge played until the evening, making it not so convenient to try to include a match report in this morning's Daily Bulletin. However, we know that you would all like to have some bridge to read about, so are repeating an article from the 2003 World Junior Championships. We hope that you enjoy the story of the fourth and final set of the semi-final match between Italy and USA, which was without a doubt the highlight of the Championships.

With 16 boards to play in their semi-final match against Italy, USA2 trailed by 60.5 IMPs. Surely their hopes of successfully defending the title won two years ago in Brazil were dead and buried. If so, nobody told the Americans that. They came back strong in those 16 boards and gave the Italians a terrible scare.

Board 49. None Vul. Dealer North.

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

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Lo Presti	Mignocchi	Mazzadi
	Pass	Pass	1♦
2♣	Dble	Pass	2♥
3♣	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
F di Bello	Hurd	S di Bello	Wooldridge
	Pass	Pass	1♦
2♣	2♦	All Pass	

Mazzadi's 1♦ opening might have been based on a doubleton diamond with long clubs while Wooldridge promised at least three cards and usually four. Lo Presti had to start with a negative double where Hurd could simply raise diamonds. The diamond raise ended the auction when Furio di Bello judged not to bid a second time with the West cards. At the other table Bathurst repeated the clubs and bought the contract.

Against 2♦ the defence began with three rounds of clubs but crashed the queen in the process. Wooldridge was happy to let East take a club ruff and pitched a losing spade from the dummy. When he managed to play the hearts for one loser, expecting East to hold the greater length there, he had eight tricks for +90. Lo Presti led a heart against 3♣ but there was nothing to the play. Bathurst took nine tricks for +110 and 5 IMPs to USA2; 119.5-175.



Kevin Bathurst, USA

Board 50. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

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

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Lo Presti	Mignocchi	Mazzadi
	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♣	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
F di Bello	Hurd	S di Bello	Wooldridge
	Pass	1♣	Pass
2♣	Pass	2NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♠	Pass	4NT	Pass
6♣	All Pass		

Board 53. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

♠ 9 6 3 ♥ 9 5 ♦ K J 8 4 ♣ K Q 7 5	♠ K J ♥ K J 10 8 6 3 ♦ A 9 3 ♣ 9 4	♠ A Q 7 2 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ Q 10 7 6 ♣ J 10
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West Bathurst	North Lo Presti	East Mignocchi	South Mazzadi
3NT	I♥ All Pass	INT	Pass

West F di Bello	North Hurd	East S di Bello	South Wooldridge
2♣	I♥ All Pass	Dble	Pass

Where Mignocchi was happy to overcall INT, showing his hand-type and range, Stelio preferred to double in hope of finding a spade fit. Bathurst had an easy raise to 3NT, while Furio had a tricky choice and opted for the cautious 2♣ response because jumping in a four-card minor was an unattractive option.

Mazzadi led a heart against 3NT but Mignocchi ducked the first trick and, with one of the minor-suit aces in the short heart hand, could no longer go down; nine tricks for +400.

Furio had sufficient high cards between the two hands to overcome his lack of trumps and came to eight tricks for +90 but that was a further 7 IMPs to USA2, who had closed to 134.5-175.

Board 54. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

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

West Bathurst	North Lo Presti	East Mignocchi	South Mazzadi
4NT 6NT	Pass All Pass	2NT 5♦	Pass Pass

West F di Bello	North Hurd	East S di Bello	South Wooldridge
3♣ 3♠ 4NT	Pass Pass All Pass	2NT 3♦ 3NT	Pass Pass Pass

Bathurst made an invitational raise to 4NT and Mignocchi accepted, suggesting diamonds as an alternative contract. Bathurst settled for 6NT and now Mazzadi made a very surprising choice of opening lead, a low heart. I have always understood that one should generally make attacking opening leads against small slams played with a trump suit, but to do so against 6NT when the strong hand is on the right and both opponents are balanced is not a style with which I can agree. Here it gave declarer four heart tricks if he needed them. Mignocchi won the ♥Q and crossed to the ♦J to play a spade to the king. He later played a second spade to the queen, not believing that he would have the entire heart suit; +1440. On any lead, a successful spade play will give twelve tricks, of course.

Furio looked for a heart fit before inviting slam. Looking at a minimum, Stelio declined the invitation and he came to only eleven tricks, not that this mattered in the slightest; +660. USA2 had picked up another 13 IMPs and at 147.5-175 it was beginning to get interesting.

Board 55. All Vul. Dealer South.

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

West Bathurst	North Lo Presti	East Mignocchi	South Mazzadi
Pass Pass Pass All Pass	2♦ 2♠ 3♦	Pass Pass Pass	INT 2♥ 2NT 3♥

West F di Bello	North Hurd	East S di Bello	South Wooldridge
Pass Pass Pass	2♦ 3♦ 5♦	Pass Pass All Pass	INT 2♥ 4♦

Lo Presti showed his hearts, relayed, then showed the diamonds, before settling for partscore when his partner could do no more than bid 3♥. Bathurst led a low spade and Mignocchi

won the ace and returned his singleton diamond. A diamond ruff now followed by a spade to the king for a second diamond ruff would have led to one down, but Bathurst erred by cashing the ♠K before giving the ruff and now the defence had only four tricks; +140.

Hurd showed hearts then diamonds and bid game when Wooldridge could support the second suit. There are three top losers, of course, but the defence has to take the spades immediately. Stelio led the queen of clubs and Hurd could win and play ♥A then a heart to the jack. When the hearts behaved as required, he could throw a spade from dummy and had eleven tricks for +600 and 10 IMPs to USA2. The Americans had run off 43 unanswered IMPs and at 157.5-175 the match was very much alive.

Board 56. None Vul. Dealer West.

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

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Lo Presti	Mignocchi	Mazzadi
Pass	2♣	Dble	3♣
Dble	4♣	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
F di Bello	Hurd	S di Bello	Wooldridge
Pass	1♣	Dble	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

There was some badly needed relief for Italy when Lo Presti was allowed to make 4♣ doubled on this deal. The contract can only be defeated by a trump lead and two more rounds of trumps when they get in with the ace of spades, preventing a ruff of the fourth spade in dummy. On the actual lead of a diamond, Lo Presti could win in dummy and play a spade to his king then concede a heart. Nothing could prevent his winning the ♣Q and leading again towards the ♠Q, later ruffing a spade, as East would not be able to get in to lead the third round of clubs now that declarer had cut the defensive communications with that early heart play; +510.

Meanwhile, the di Bellos reached 4♥ in the other room on a club lead. The combination of four-one trumps and four-two diamonds was just too much to overcome even though South could only get in once to lead spades through the ace. The contract was down one for -100 but 9 IMPs to Italy; a little breathing space at 184-157.5.

Board 57. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

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

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

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Lo Presti	Mignocchi	Mazzadi
Pass	1♦	1♥	2♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	5♣
All Pass	5♦	Pass	5♠

West	North	East	South
F di Bello	Hurd	S di Bello	Wooldridge
Pass	1♦	1♥	1♠
All Pass	INT	Pass	3NT

Over the 1♥ overcall, Mazzadi's 2♥ was a transfer, showing spades, and Lo Presti jumped straight to the spade game. Mazzadi had quite a bit to spare and made a cuebid but then signed-off to leave the rest up to his partner. Lo Presti did not like his balanced near-minimum so passed 5♠ but that was already a level too high. A club was led to the ace and Lo Presti drew trumps then gave up a diamond. But there was no escape from two heart losers and the contract had to fail by a trick; -50.

Wooldridge did very well when he settled for a raise to 3NT rather than attempting to play in spades though 4♠ is OK. This was an intelligent attempt to create a swing, based on the danger represented by South's heart length once North had bid no trump. Four Spades might have been in serious jeopardy on a singleton heart lead if North held say, ♥KJx. Three No Trump was a sure thing, of course, and Hurd made an overtrick after a club lead; +430 and 10 IMPs to USA2. Italian relief had been short-lived as again the match closed up at 167.5-184.

Board 58. All Vul. Dealer East.

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

♠ A 8 2
 ♥ Q 10 9 8 5 3
 ♦ 7 5
 ♣ 6 4

West Bathurst	North Lo Presti	East Mignocchi	South Mazzadi
	INT	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

West F di Bello	North Hurd	East S di Bello	South Wooldridge
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Lo Presti opened INT and Mazzadi transferred to 4♥. With the club position protected, 4♥ by North was never under threat. The actual diamond lead gave declarer three tricks in that suit and Lo Presti threw two clubs and a spade from dummy then played ace and another spade to set up his ruff. When he took the ruff he continued with the heart finesse and had twelve tricks for +680.

Hurd's 1♦ opening meant that Wooldridge became declarer in 4♥ at the other table. Declarer ducked the spade lead and played safely for his contract, spurning the trump finesse when the inevitable switch came, to guarantee a spade ruff in dummy. He came to just ten tricks; +620 but 2 IMPs to Italy. Who could have imagined that the overtrick in this game would prove to be so crucial at the end of the day? Italy led by 187-180.5 with just three deals to go.

Board 62. None Vul. Dealer East.

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

West Bathurst	North Lo Presti	East Mignocchi	South Mazzadi
	All Pass	Pass	Pass
4♥			

West F di Bello	North Hurd	East S di Bello	South Wooldridge
	All Pass	Pass	3♦
4♥			

Wooldridge's off-centre but entirely reasonable in the circumstances pre-empt did not affect the final contract, but it may have helped to convince his partner to make a fatal misjudgement in defence.

At both tables the lead was a diamond to declarer's ace, and

a club was led towards dummy. Where Lo Presti went in with the ace and defeated the contract by a trick, Hurd ducked and that was the setting trick dead and buried. Italy scored +420 and +50 for 10 IMPs. With only two deals to play the lead was up to 16.5 IMPs at 197-180.5.

If anyone thought that the brave American challenge was over they were to be proved very much mistaken.

Board 63. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

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

West Bathurst	North Lo Presti	East Mignocchi	South Mazzadi
	2NT	Pass	2♠
4♥	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♣	Pass	4NT	Pass
6♦	Pass	5♦	Pass
		7♥	All Pass



Joel Wooldridge, USA

West	North	East	South
F di Bello	Hurd	S di Bello	Wooldridge
			2♦
2NT	Pass	3♦	All Pass

Disaster for Italy! Bathurst/Mignocchi did very well to bid to the grand slam in the face of an opposing weak two opening. Mignocchi transferred to hearts then checked on key cards, found one and asked for the queen of trumps. Six Diamonds showed both the ♥Q and ♦K and Mignocchi took a shot at seven. A spade lead into the ace-queen meant that there were thirteen tricks without having to find the queen of diamonds, though the diamond play would have become clear anyway as South turns up with three cards in both hearts and clubs to go with his long spades; +1510.

Wooldridge opened a multi and Furio overcalled 2NT. He had a mental lapse when Stelio transferred with 3♦ and passed. There was no problem in making 3♦ and Stelio actually came to twelve tricks, but +170 was totally inadequate and USA2 had picked up 16 IMPs from nowhere. With one board to play the margin was just half-an-IMP at 196.5-197.

Board 64. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

♠ Q 10 8 7 4 2	<table border="1" style="background-color: black; color: white; text-align: center; width: 80px; height: 80px;"> <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		♠ A K 9 6 3
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ A Q 9 8 6		♥ K 10 4									
♦ —	♦ 5 4										
♣ A 4	♣ J 10 2										
	♠ J										
	♥ J 5										
	♦ K Q 10 8 7 3										
	♣ Q 8 7 3										

West	North	East	South
Bathurst	Lo Presti	Mignocchi	Mazzadi
1♠	Pass	2NT	3♦
5♦	6♦	6♥	Pass
7♠	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
F di Bello	Hurd	S di Bello	Wooldridge
1♠	Pass	2♣	4♦
Pass	5♦	5♠	Pass
5NT	Pass	7♠	All Pass

It says a lot for the character of the di Bello brothers that they could come back from the disaster of the previous deal and bid competently to a grand slam on the very next deal - and once again in the face of an opposing pre-empt. Both East/West pairs did very well to overcome the opposing intervention. There was little to the play and the board was a push at +1510.

After all the drama and excitement, Italy had survived by the narrowest of margins, 197-196.5. The defending champion USA2 team had bowed out of the tournament but had given us a terrific match and could be proud of their performance, even if every member of the team would have some board to rue where one extra trick would have made all the difference.

Bridge Master The Best of Edgar Kaplan

If you are looking for a good read you could do a lot worse than get your hands on a copy of Bridge Master - The Best of Edgar Kaplan, published by The Bridge World magazine. The book is hardback and retails at \$26-95. There is discussion of Kaplan's life in bridge and his importance to the game, in particular, his influence in the area of bridge law and the way in which the game is regulated. Truly, things could be quite different today were it not for the many years of Kaplan's work in this area. The remainder of the book comprises a selection of the very best of his writing - and the very best is very good indeed. Anyone who is serious about their bridge and has not read these articles before should find them very rewarding.

Consider the following suit combination, the play of which is discussed by way of a fictional conversation between the expert staff at the Bridge World:

A x opposite Q 10 8 7 6

Playing for the maximum number of tricks, we all know that we lead the ace followed by the small card and, if none of the king, jack and nine have appeared, it is a guess whether to put up the queen or finesse the ten. We also know that if the nine falls offside on the first round it is correct to play to the queen next as jack-nine doubleton permits us to take four tricks, king-nine doubleton allows only three winners whether we guess right or wrong. Until I read the article in the book, I had never seen a discussion of what the defenders could do in this situation. Here is just a taster if you want the whole thing, buy the book!

Sitting over the length and holding king-nine-small, we know that declarer has a straight guess if we play low on the first round. However, if we drop the nine, will he not routinely guess wrong by going up with the queen, hoping to drop our doubleton jack?

Again, sitting over the length and holding jack-nine doubleton, we know that if we play the nine on the first round declarer will guess right, playing the queen next. But what if we drop the jack? Will he not now duck the second round, playing us for king-jack doubleton and partner for four to the nine?

VALLEVERDE®
la moda comoda italiana



*“È bello camminare
in una Valleverde”*

Edgar Kaplan

Coriano (RN) Via Piane, 78