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Bridge League



Croatian Bridge
Federation



Opatija
Bridge Club



European Olympic
Committees

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ITALY WINS BOTH GROUPS



The Maiden with the Seagull, symbol of Opatija

Probably the biggest upset of these two Round Robins was the elimination of the Monaco team even before the final round started. In Group A, GS Allegra from Turin, Italy, had been causing havoc all over group A, finishing with over 86 VP from a possible 100. The only team to keep up with the Italians' pace was the other qualifying team, Bulgaria's KI. Though they too, lost to Allegra, this happened at a time when both teams were already sure of making it to today's semis.

In group B, we had real drama in the end. The leaders before the final round, Reggio Emilia, had to play the Poles who were 1.9 VP behind them. The Russians, who were 0.24 VP behind the Italians, had to play the Dutch who were 6.51 VP behind the Russians. So whoever would score a

comfortable enough win, would go through. As it happened, the Reggio Emilia v. Ruch Wroclaw match ended in a tie so the Italians were certainly through. The Poles, whoever, had to wait for the result of the other match: a big win by either team in that match would see the winners through at the expense of the Poles. On the penultimate board of that match, the Dutch scored a big swing to lead by 13.20 to 6.80 VP which would not be enough to see either of them through, as the Russians were now 1.64 VP behind the Poles but still 0.11 VP ahead of the Dutch. When the last board proved a push, this also became the final outcome in group B. It thus would be Reggio v. Bulgaria KI and GS Allegra v. Wroclaw for the semifinals.

Group A**ROUND 3**

Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 MONACO FMB	BAREKET	48-65	5.99-14.01
2 STORSJOBYGDEN BK	G.S.ALLEGRA	30-120	0-20
3 KI	HINDEN	82-28	19-1

ROUND 4

Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 MONACO FMB	KI	57-50	11.83-8.17
2 STORSJOBYGDEN BK	BAREKET	64-49	13.61-6.39
3 G.S.ALLEGRA	HINDEN	76-26	18.63-1.37

ROUND 5

Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 G.S.ALLEGRA	KI	48-24	15.28-4.72
2 HINDEN	BAREKET	32-57	4.55-15.45
3 STORSJOBYGDEN BK	MONACO FMB	62-58	11.08-8.92

Group B**ROUND 3**

Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 BC'T ONSTEIN	DR J.TOMLJENOVIC BRIDGE	49-29	14.58-5.42
2 BRIDGE CLUB REAL	ASD REGGIO EMILIA	63-40	15.11-4.89
3 RUCH SA AZS PWR WROCLAW	BAMBERGER REITER	79-41	17.32-2.68

ROUND 4

Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 BC'T ONSTEIN	RUCH SA AZS PWR WROCLAW	52-45	11.83-8.17
2 BRIDGE CLUB REAL	DR J.TOMLJENOVIC BRIDGE	66-21	18.12-1.88
3 ASD REGGIO EMILIA	BAMBERGER REITER	58-15	17.9-2.1

ROUND 5

Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1 ASD REGGIO EMILIA	RUCH SA AZS PWR WROCLAW	38-38	10-10
2 BAMBERGER REITER	DR J.TOMLJENOVIC BRIDGE	41-46	8.66-11.34
3 BRIDGE CLUB REAL	BC'T ONSTEIN	21-34	6.8-13.2

Group A

1	G.S.ALLEGRA	86.46
2	KI	68.17
3	MONACO FMB	48.06
4	BAREKET	40.87
5	STORSJOBYGDEN BK	39.99
6	HINDEN	17.03

Group B

1	ASD REGGIO EMILIA	60.08
2	RUCH SA AZS WROCLAW	58.28
3	BRIDGE CLUB REAL	56.64
4	BC'T ONSTEIN	56.53
5	DR J.TOMLJENOVIC BRIDGE	37.89
6	BAMBERGER REITER	30.58

QUALIFICATION

Round 3



CLUB REAL

v

REGGIO EMILIA



After the first day, the VP difference between the leaders and the last-placed team in Group A was 31 already. In Group B, this difference was only 10.5 as the Italians from Reggio Emilia were on just over 36 whereas the real Russians were on 16.6. The latter two teams were scheduled to meet in Round 3 on Friday morning, so we would get the opportunity to see if the Italians were to hold on to their lead or if the Russians would come back from behind to somewhere near a possible qualification spot.

On the first board, the Russians immediately showed their intentions:

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vulnerable.

<p>♠ KT6 ♥ A93 ♦ KT9764 ♣ J</p>	<p>♠ AQJ97 ♥ Q75 ♦ Q ♣ A964</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #006400; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ - ♥ KT864 ♦ A8532 ♣ Q52</p>
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Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Mina</i>	<i>Krasnosselski</i>	<i>Basile</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>
	1♠	3♣	4♠
5♦	Pass	Pass	5♠
6♦	Dbf	All Pass	

By bidding one more, Gladysch did the right thing as 5♦ is cold. Going on to 6♦ thus only was a matter of changing +100 into -100, vital in pairs' events but usually not too costly in team matches.

Provided...

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Sabbatini</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Comella</i>
	1♠	3♣	4♠
5♦	All Pass		

...your team-mates are doing the right thing as well, for example being left alone in 5♦.

Real Russia +400 here, so a gain to them of 7 IMPs had changed into a gain of 11 IMPs when E/W went on to six..

Two boards later, the Russians were driven into a cold game:

Board 3. Dealer South. E-W Vulnerable.

<p>♠ A9754 ♥ 75 ♦ QJ8 ♣ T72</p>	<p>♠ K6 ♥ T ♦ AT92 ♣ KJ9843</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #006400; color: white; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ JT ♥ AQJ864 ♦ 653 ♣ Q6</p>
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Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Mina</i>	<i>Krasnosselski</i>	<i>Basile</i>	<i>Gladysch</i>
			1♣
Pass	2♣	2♥	Pass
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

When the 2♥ overcall came back to him, Krasnosselski correctly judged he had a nice hand, so game was reached easily enough. As the combined N/S heart holding provided a double stopper, declarer could even afford to lose the club finesse and still come to nine tricks. Real Russia +430 when West was caught in a spade-diamond endplay when East returned a spade to dummy's king upon winning his ♣Q.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Sabbatini</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Comella</i>
			1♣
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	All Pass	

Cautious bidding by the Italians led to a non-vulnerable game being missed. Not overcalling proved quite useful to E/W this time. Reggio Emilia +150 but 7 more IMPs to Real Russia.

More IMPs to the Russians when their less cautious bidding talked the Italians out of a game:

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vulnerable.

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

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Mina	Krasnosselski	Basile	Gladys
1♦	Pass	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

When Basile correctly passed, the Russians had an easy road to 3NT once Gladys could show a 15-17 NT in 4th position. Real Russia +400 as declarer had nine tricks by driving out the ♣A after a diamond lead to the queen and ace.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
Versace	Sabbatini	Lauria	Comella
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	All Pass

When Lauria responded 1♥ to his partner's opening bid, everybody was impressed. They still were after his correction to 2♦ and rightly so, as this contract proved a make when the defence did not cash three rounds of trumps early on (would you have found this defence?). After ducking a club, Versace could dispose of a club loser on a top spade and ruff a club for his 8th trick. Real Russia another +90 and 10 more IMPs.

Two boards after this, the Reggio Emilians finally hit back severely. They produced mainly the same auction as their more famous counterparts but were more effective at the last hurdle.



Board 10. Dealer East. All Vulnerable.

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

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Mina	Krasnosselski	Basile	Gladys
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♠	All Pass

On a heart lead to South's ace, declarer's problems were soon over. Reggio Emilia +1430.

Please note that declarer will have to do some guesswork in hearts on a more neutral lead. This explains why 6♠ did not always make at the other tables where it was bid.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
Versace	Sabbatini	Lauria	Comella
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♦	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♠	All Pass

The same auction but for the final bid. Twelve tricks on the same heart lead but only +680 to Real Russia and 13 IMPs back to the Italians.

Slam time again on the next board but without much justification, this time:

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vulnerable.

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

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Mina</i>	<i>Krasnosselski</i>	<i>Basile</i>	<i>Gladysz</i>
4♠	5♥	6♠	2♥
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	Pass

Pre-empting over a pre-empt would raise an eyebrow or two, here and there. Basile must have been disappointed upon seeing what his partner actually held. This disappointment did not apply to Krasnosselski, however...down two and +300 to Real Russia.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Sabbatini</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Comella</i>
4♠	Pass	5♦	Pass
5♠	All Pass		Pass

Lauria, too, was taken by surprise but as the pair managed to stop in 5♠, not too much harm was done. They even gained 6 IMPs by going down only one, undoubled.

After a partscore swing to the Italians on board 12, the Russian lead went further up on the next board when, once again, the Italians bid too cautiously:

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vulnerable

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



Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Mina</i>	<i>Krasnosselski</i>	<i>Basile</i>	<i>Gladysz</i>
1♦	Pass	Pass	1♣
3♦	1♠	Dbl	2♠
	4♠	All Pass	

Once Gladysz could produce a competitive raise, Krasnosselski had no problem to raise to game and hope for the best. So it proved: Real Russia +650 on the lead of a top heart from East. When the ♥A won the second round of hearts, the club loser later disappeared on a heart.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Versace</i>	<i>Sabbatini</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Comella</i>
Redbl	Pass	1♥	Dbl
Dbl	2♠	Pass	Pass
3♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
	All Pass		

Over partner's 2♠, Comella could not make a competitive raise when East passed. When he kept quiet at his next two turns as well, 3♦ became the final contract and was made without great trouble. Real Russia another +110 and 13 IMPs to them.

Board 16. Dealer West. E-W Vulnerable.

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

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
<i>Mina</i>	<i>Krasnosselski</i>	<i>Basile</i>	<i>Gladysz</i>
Pass	Pass	INT	Dbl
2♥	3♥	Dbl	Redbl
Pass	4♦	All Pass	

Against the weak NT, the penalty double got the Russians underway to a good partscore contract but it never occurred to them they had a game on in either clubs or NT. As it happened, South's redouble of 3♥ took away some room to manoeuvre so they eventually missed out on their best fit, ending up in not so good a partscore. Down four, Reggio Emilia +200.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
Versace	Sabbatini	Lauria	Comella
Pass	Pass	1♦	INT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

When Lauria opened 1♦ which need not necessarily be natural, you would not necessarily need a diamond stopper to overcall INT. This overcall was duly found by Comella and it proved a success when it offered partner an easy raise. With the spade finesse working, the defence had no chance. Reggio Emilia +400 and 12 IMPs back to them.

Two board later, the Russians had the last word in the match:

Board 18. Dealer East. N-S Vulnerable.

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

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Mina	Krasnosselski	Basile	Gladysch
Pass	INT	1♣	Pass
Pass	2♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	2NT
All Pass		Pass	3NT

Once again, their strong INT in 4th position made it easy for the Russians to reach game. On a heart lead, declarer

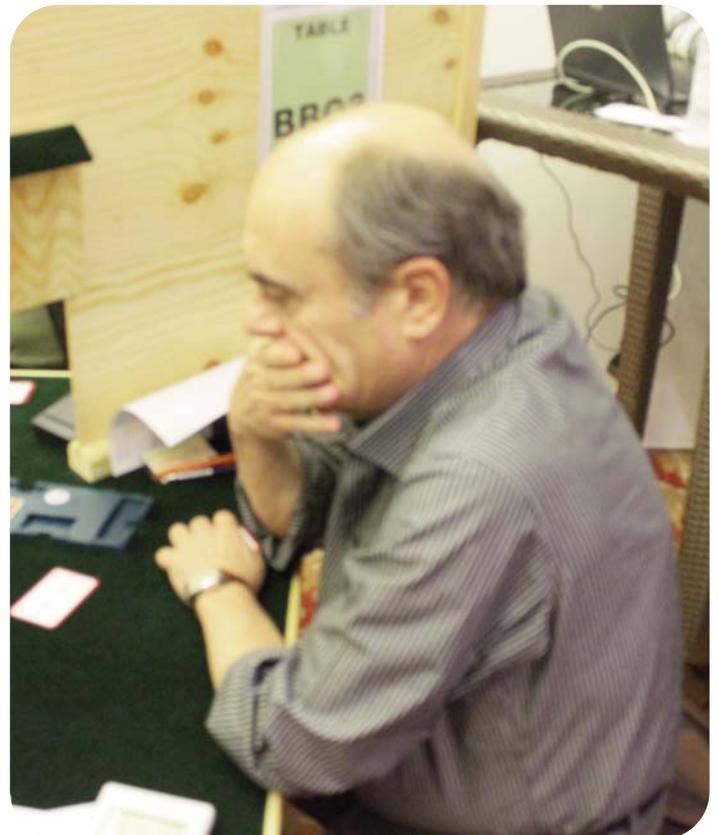
won, led a spade to dummy's ten which held the trick and then continued a low club off dummy. East won the jack and returned a heart but was then squeezed on the run of the clubs. When he elected to blank his ♦K, declarer even made two overtricks when he led a diamond to his ace...Real Russia +660.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
Versace	Sabbatini	Lauria	Comella
		INT	All Pass

At the other table, Lauria's weak NT again did the trick as no penalty doubles were in use, apparently. On a low club lead, Lauria managed four tricks at a cost of 50 per under-trick. Reggio Emilia +150 but another 11 IMPs to Real Russia who thus won the match 63-40 or 15.11-4.89 VP.

The standings in Group B thus became very exciting with just two more matches to be played: the Poles were 8 VP ahead of a cluster of three teams with less than 0.7 VP between them: Reggio Emilia, Onstein and Real Russia. Even the 5th and 6th placed teams could theoretically make it into the semis at this point. It would be an interesting afternoon in this group, much more so than in the other group where the Bulgarians and the Allegra Italians both were more than a match ahead of the others.



QUALIFICATION

Round 4



K1

v

MONACO FMB



RUCH WROCLAW

v

BC'T ONSTEIN



Bulgaria has had a very good start of the round robin phase so far, but the real challenges were yet to come.

The first big test for them was Monaco, and the action started immediately on the first board.

The first board had a motto „what you bid is what you play“. Doubled, of course.

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Van Prooijen	Kwiecien	Verhees
	Pass	Pass	1♣
3♠	Dbl	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

As you can see, your chances of scoring a game are not lost immediately when the opponents overcall 3♠ only. As soon as North produces a sound, you are there. 't Onstein +600.

When they overcall 4♠, the situation changes dramatically:

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
De Wijs	Klukowski	Muller	Tuczynski
	Pass	Pass	1♣
4♠	4NT	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

Opposite a Polish Club, what should you do, vulnerable? 4NT looks not unreasonable but only if you can be sure partner has one of the stronger variations. One down, 't Onstein another +100 and 12 IMPs. Just they start they wanted, in all probability.

The second board of the match saw Bulgaria striking back immediately.

Board 21. Dealer North. N-S Vulnerable.

	♠ -										
	♥ JT 9 8										
	♦ JT 8 4										
	♣ A Q 8 3 2										
♠ QJT 8 7 6 4		♠ 5 3									
♥ 3		♥ K Q 7 5									
♦ K Q 2		♦ 9 6 3									
♣ JT		♣ 9 7 6 4									
	<table border="1" style="background-color: #006400; color: white; text-align: center; width: 80px; height: 60px;"> <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		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ A K 9 2										
	♥ A 6 4 2										
	♦ A 7 5										
	♣ K 5										

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Fantoni	Stefanov	Nunes
	Pass	Pass	1♣
4♠	Dbl	All Pass	

Aronov selected level four. That was worth 800 for the opponents.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Nanev	Helness	Gunev
	Pass	Pass	1♣
3♠	Dbl	All Pass	

Helgemo chose level three and that was worth 500 to the opponents but 7 IMPs for Monaco.

In the other featured match between 't Onstein and the Ruch AZS team from Poland, the latter were leading by about 8VP over of a cluster of three teams of which 't Onstein was one. Not surprisingly, the first board was interesting in this match, too.

Board 22. Dealer East. E-W Vulnerable.

	♠ 9										
	♥ A Q 7 5 3										
	♦ 9 6 2										
	♣ A T 9 3										
♠ A K 6 2		♠ JT 8 5 4 3									
♥ T 6		♥ K J 4 2									
♦ A K Q J 7 5		♦ T									
♣ J		♣ 7 4									
	<table border="1" style="background-color: #006400; color: white; text-align: center; width: 80px; height: 60px;"> <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		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ Q 7										
	♥ 9 8										
	♦ 8 4 3										
	♣ K Q 8 6 5 2										

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Fantoni	Stefanov	Nunes
		Pass	Pass
1♣	1NT	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	4♠	5♣
5♦	Pass	5♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

Nunes could not open 3♣ as a preempt due to his system, so Fantoni was not able to maximize their pressure on the opponents. Fantunes did eventually bid 5♣ but Aronov and Stefanov were in control and stopped in 5♠. Fantoni's double came in as a handy bonus when 5♠ made.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Nanev	Helness	Gunev
		Pass	3♣
Dbl	5♣	Pass	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

Gunev did open 3♣ and Nanev put maximum pressure on Norwegians that sailed a bit too high on this one. Gunev led a heart and Nanev simply cashed his two aces for one off.

The Dutch more than doubled their lead on this same board:

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Van Prooijen	Kwiecien	Verhees
		Pass	3♣
Dbl	5♣	Pass	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♠	Pass
6♠	All Pass		

After the tactical raise to 5♣ by North, can we blame East for not holding the ♠A for his voluntary bid of 5♠? West's raise to slam is quite OK if partner is holding that card together with some large number of mediocre spades. One down, 't Onstein +100.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
De Wijs	Klukowski	Muller	Tuczynski
		Pass	3♣
Dbl	3♥	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

When North at the other table showed his suit by bidding 3♥, East had room to clarify his hand with a jump to 4♠. When west showed no interest after East's diamond cuebid, it rested in 5♠ for a safe +650 and another 13 IMPs to 't Onstein.

Board 23. Dealer South. All Vulnerable.

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

	N	
W		E
	S	

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

Board 23 was another game swing for Bulgaria when Stefanov judged better than Helness in a similar auction.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Fantoni	Stefanov	Nunes
			Pass
1♥	Dbl	4♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

Stefanov decided to collect what he could on 4♠ and was pretty satisfied when it turned out to be a 500.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Nanev	Helness	Gunev
			Pass
1♥	Dbl	3NT	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	All Pass

Helness was not happy with doubling 4♠ so he pushed to 5♥ only to find out that he is going one down. 12 IMPs to Bulgaria.



In the other match, the Dutch registered a third consecutive double-figure swing on this board to sail into an overwhelming 37-0 lead after just three boards:

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Van Prooijen	Kwiecien	Verhees
1♥	Dbl	2NT	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	All Pass

Maybe, the solution is to double 4♠ with the West hand, to show no particular interest in going any higher. 5♥ had to go one light when declarer could not avoid two club losers. 't Onstein yet another +100.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
De Wijs	Klukowski	Muller	Tuczynski
1♥	Dbl	3♠	4♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

After his initial splinter, Muller was in a much better position to judge the situation and let partner think as well. His double clearly denied any higher ambitions so De Wijs had an easy pass. Down two, 't Onstein +500 and another 12 IMPs to them.

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vulnerable.

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

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

Board 27 gave us insight on the different approach to stoppers.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Fantoni	Stefanov	Nunes
1♠	Dbl	2♠	3♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

When Fantoni selected not to bid his jack to four as a stopper below 3NT Fantunes eventually finished in 5♦. Nunes played for the club ace to be onside as the best

chance to make it and went off when that was not the case.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Nanev	Helness	Gunev
1♠ INT	Pass	1♣	3NT
All Pass			

On the actual layout, 3NT from North's hand can be beaten only with a queen of clubs lead. Helness led a spade but was given another chance after Helgemo took the ace, returned the eight of spades and Gunev, after some thought ducked. Overtaking the spade and playing the club would have set the contract but when Helness played a low spade it was quickly over. 10 IMPs to Bulgaria.

Board 28. Dealer West. N-S Vulnerable.

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

	♠ Q J T 8	
	♥ Q 8 7 4	
	♦ 7	
	♣ K Q 5 4	

With the score being 42-9 after 7 boards it was high time for Monaco to get some IMPs in the bag. The first two digit swing for them came on board 28.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Fantoni	Stefanov	Nunes
1♦	Dbl	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Dbl
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Fantoni doubled the short diamond opening on his three bare aces in a balanced hand and that hit the jackpot. Nunes passed on the first round but then entered the auction after the 2♦ signoff by East and bid a spade game when he found out about the fit. When Stefanov led a heart he scored 11 tricks for a nice 650.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Nanev	Helness	Gunev
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

Nanev passed the opening bid and decided to enter the auction later on. Unfortunately for him, Gunev took his delayed double for penalty and passed it. Helgemo had an easy sailing to 8 tricks for +180 and 13 IMPs to Monaco.

In the other match, the same problem occurred:

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Van Prooijen	Kwiecien	Verhees
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♣	Dbl	2♦	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

This is the type of N/S hands where you can easily go wrong. North's double in the second round shows some diamond strength but the number of hcp in the combined hands remains unclear. The spade fit, too, never came to light., even though N/S might even make game in that denomination. The final result of down two, +500 to the Poles, was the price the Dutch had to pay here...

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
De Wijs	Klukowski	Muller	Tuczynski
2NT	Pass	3♦	All Pass

At the other table, the Poles made no problem of the hand. They left E/W in peace and collected another +50 and 11 IMP to trail 14-37 now.

Board 30. Dealer East. None Vulnerable.

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

♠ A Q 7 4

♥ A Q 6 3 2

♦ 9 3

♣ 6 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

Board 30 produced some vanishing spade suits on various tables.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Fantoni	Stefanov	Nunes
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥
2NT	3♦	2♣	2♠
4♣	4♠	All Pass	3♠

The Open Room had no problem with spades after Fantoni responded 1♠ on the partner's opening bid. 4♠ was reached easily enough and 11 tricks were even easier to take for +450 NS.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Nanev	Helness	Gunev
		Pass	1♥
Dbl	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	Pass	3♣	Pass
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

The Closed Room had some problems with spades though. They simply vanished from the board. Gunev opened 1♥, Helgemo decided to double and voila, the spades were gone.

Nanev was not comfortable with bidding his shorter and weaker suit after the information that spades are most likely breaking badly, so he simply bid diamonds twice.

In our other match, the problem of the vanishing spades also played its part. In the Open Room, however, it was in fact the problem itself that vanished rather than the spade suit, as N/S were playing Canapé.

Open Room:

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Van Prooijen	Kwiecien	Verhees
		Pass	1♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Four Diamonds confirmed the fit so N/S reached their proper contract almost too easily. 't Onstein +450.

Closed Room:

West	North	East	South
De Wijs	Klukowski	Muller	Tuczynski
Pass	1♥		
INT	2♦	2NT	Pass
3♣	3♦	Pass	Pass
4♣	All Pass		

When De Wijs overcalled a normal enough INT, North could not find a way to show his second suit, so the Poles



eventually sold out cheaply. Down two, +100 to them but 8 IMPs to the Dutch.

Board 34. Dealer East. N-S Vulnerable.

♠ K J 9 6 5 2 ♥ 6 ♦ Q 7 ♣ A 9 6 4	♠ A 4 3 ♥ Q J 2 ♦ A J 8 2 ♣ J 7 3 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 5px auto;"> N W E S </div> ♠ Q T ♥ A K T 7 ♦ K 6 ♣ Q T 8 5 2	♠ 8 7 ♥ 9 8 5 4 3 ♦ T 9 5 4 3 ♣ K
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Board 34 brought us yet another game swing for Monaco and they took a lead in the match again, making the result 44-42 with 6 boards to go.

3NT can always be set, but if South declares it, it will probably take someone with eyesight problems in West to put a club among the spade suit in his hand and lead it.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Fantoni	Stefanov	Nunes
2♠	Dbl	Pass	INT
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♥
		All Pass	

Aronov had no eyesight problems, he managed to divide his black suits properly in his hand and, unfortunately for him, led a spade to finish the board quickly.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Helgemo	Nanev	Helness	Gunev
2♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
Pass	3NT	Pass	Dbl
		All Pass	

After Helness opened East hand Bulgarians were in problems. Gunev passed the 2♥ opening bid and doubled Helgemo's 2♠ in the balancing position. That drove them to game but the notrump declarer was North, not South. Spade lead crushed through Q10 meant an easy one off and 13 IMPs to Monaco.

Few more IMPs exchanged hands until the end of the match so the end came with the result at 57-50 for Monaco or 11.83 – 8.17 VP. As a consequence, Monaco could no longer qualify for the semis when it turned out that Allegra had scored a nother big win.

The 't Onstein-Ruch AZS match ended 52-45 or the same 11.83-8.17 VP to 't Onstein. On board 36, a Dutch declarer went down in a seemingly unbeatable 5♣ contract for 13 IMPs to the Poles and on the last board of the set, the Dutch reached 3NT with only one half of a heart steeper between them: ♥Q10 opposite ♥xx. Down two when the suit broke 6-3. Needless to say, 5♦ was cold and duly bid by the Poles. Due to the BBO temporary breakdown we are a littleshort of info here...

With one round to play, the cluster of three teams had moved into places 1-3, with 't Onstein, 5-7VP behind them, being forced to beat Real Russia in their last match to keep alive their chances for a semifinal berth.

