

11th
EUROPEAN CHAMPION'S CUP
Eilat, Israel 15th - 18th November 2012



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Friday, 16 November 2012

MONACO, RUSSIA GROUP WINNERS



No language problems in many matches of this event. Here we see an example in Sweden vs. Monaco

Two of the pre-tournament favourites won their groups yesterday and they both did it in style. The Russians because they had already been leading overnight and held on easily enough and Monaco because they registered the highest score of all participants, 91 V.P. out of a maximum 125. The highest score of the day, 55 V.P., was recorded by another qualifier, the holders Allegra, who had to beat Het Witte Huis to ensure qualification and duly did so by a margin of 24 IMPs which would have been much higher had they not gone down in a grand missing a vital ace.

During the final round, last night, both Israel Blue in Group A and Het Witte Huis in group B were the virtual qualifiers at certain stages of their matches but at the post,

the Angelini team made it to the final four by 1 V.P. in spite of their heavy defeat against Monaco, finishing just ahead of the Israel Blues.

Programme

SATURDAY November 17th Semifinals

10.30-12.50Segment 1
14.00-16.20Segment 2
16.40-17.00Segment 3

RESULTS

Group A

ROUND 3

	Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1	Monaco FM	Israel Blue	36 - 29	16 - 14
2	Burghausen I	BK Lavec – Smile	21 - 41	11 - 19
3	Hinden -English	Angelini	31 - 61	9 - 21

ROUND 4

	Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1	Burghausen I	Monaco FM	36 - 43	14 - 16
2	Hinden -English	Israel Blue	32 - 46	12 - 18
3	Angelini	BK Lavec – Smile	62 - 27	22 - 8

ROUND 5

	Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1	Monaco FM	Angelini	65 - 31	22 - 8
2	BK Lavec – Smile	Hinden -English	90 - 29	25 - 3
3	Israel Blue	Burghausen I	37 - 30	16 - 14

Group B

ROUND 3

	Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1	G.S.Allegra	Israel White	20 - 32	13 - 17
2	Consus Kalisz	Bridge Club Real	20 - 43	10 - 20
3	Radkov b	Het Witte Huis	32 - 50	11 - 19

ROUND 4

	Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1	Consus Kalisz	G.S.Allegra	12 - 45	8 - 22
2	Radkov	Israel White	60 - 22	23 - 7
3	Het Witte Huis	Bridge Club Real	56 - 57	15 - 15

ROUND 5

	Home Team	Visiting Team	IMPs	VPs
1	G.S.Allegra	Het Witte Huis	41 - 17	20 - 10
2	Bridge Club Real	Radkov	55 - 57	15 - 15
3	Israel White	Consus Kalisz	38 - 37	15 - 15

Final Rankings

Group A

1	Monaco FM	91
2	Angelini Bridge Team	81
3	Israel Blue	80
4	BK Lavec – Smile	72
5	Hinden -English Premier League	67
6	Burghausen I	55

Group B

1	Bridge Club Real	89
2	G.S.Allegra	86
3	Radkov Bridge Club	78
4	Het Witte Huis	77
5	Israel White	67
6	Consus Kalisz	50

The Red Sea Festival

The Eilat Red Sea Bridge Festival, organized by David Birman and his team, is the proud host of the 2012 European Champions Cup. Thus it would be appropriate to give a short history of this festival.

The Red Sea Festival in Eilat started in 1995 on the initiative of David Birman and the Isrotel hotel group. Up to that time Israel had the annual Tel Aviv Festival in February. David's idea was to combine a vacation at Israel's southern resort with a good bridge competition. Accordingly the program included one session a day to allow enough time for leisure activities.

About one hundred bridge players came to Eilat in 1995, most of them Israelis, but since then the Red Sea Festival has developed enormously. In the most recent editions of the festival there were about 1500 participants each year from more than 20 countries, with more than 500 pairs in the main event. Tournaments were added, and the festivals became longer. Some participants like the ten-day schedule while others come only for the last four days which include the Open Pairs and the Teams. In addition, there are now morning competitions and lectures for those who are making their first steps in the game.

Besides the sheer numbers, there was a qualitative leap as well. Most of Israel's leading players (two of which have just won the prestigious Cavendish Pairs in Monaco) eagerly await the festival each year, but in recent years they have been challenged by strong delegations from abroad with many top-level players.

The 18th Red Sea Festival starts simultaneously with the Champions Cup, but continues for a further six days. We do hope that some of the great stars of Europe will stay with us for the main Pairs and Teams events.

Let's see some interesting hands from the 16th edition in 2010. The renowned Polish coach and author Krzysztof Martens proved that he is still also a formidable player by taking first place in the Open Pairs, but in the following hand it was his partner Dominik Filipowicz who stole the show.

to the maximum, starting with winning the $\diamond 10$ in dummy and pitching a spade. Two more spades were discarded on the $\diamond AK$, but there was still a lot of work to do, especially with trumps breaking 4-1.

Declarer cashed the $\clubsuit AK$ from dummy, ruffed a spade in his hand and cashed the $\clubsuit Q$ (discarding a spade from dummy) before leading trumps for the first time. West's $\heartsuit K$ appeared, and the trump distribution became clear.

Accordingly, declarer won the $\heartsuit A$ and ruffed dummy's last spade. The remaining cards were

\spadesuit -	\heartsuit 10 3	\diamond J 2	\clubsuit -
\spadesuit A J	\heartsuit -	\diamond Q 9	\clubsuit -
\heartsuit -	\diamond -	\clubsuit -	\spadesuit 10
\diamond Q 9	\clubsuit -	\spadesuit 10	\heartsuit J 9 7
\clubsuit -	\spadesuit -	\heartsuit Q 8	\diamond -
\spadesuit A J	\heartsuit -	\diamond -	\clubsuit -
\heartsuit -	\diamond -	\clubsuit 8 6	\spadesuit 10
\diamond Q 9	\clubsuit -	\spadesuit 10	\heartsuit J 9 7
\clubsuit -	\spadesuit -	\heartsuit Q 8	\diamond -
\spadesuit A J	\heartsuit -	\diamond -	\clubsuit -
\heartsuit -	\diamond -	\clubsuit 8 6	\spadesuit 10

Amazingly, East's trump holding was sufficient for only one trick. South ruffed a club with North's $\heartsuit 10$. If Easts discards, North leads a diamond and South discards a club while East ruffs high.

Actually East overruffed, but now he has nothing to do. A spade continuation would allow declarer to ruff in dummy and play a diamond through East. East led a heart, and declarer carefully laid down the $\heartsuit 8$, drew the last trump and took the last trick with the $\clubsuit 8$. Obviously twelve tricks provided a top for the Polish pair.

The other major events of that festival were won by the host country. Nathan Hetz-Assi Levinger won the Invitational Pairs largely thanks to the following big result:

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

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

Filipowicz (South) was playing four hearts. West led a small diamond, and declarer exploited this favourable lead

West	North	East	South
	2♣	Dbl	Rdbl
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

Many pairs use a double of a strong 2♣ opening to show clubs, but in my opinion such an agreement shows lack of understanding of the principles of competitive bidding. The purpose of an interference should be to take bidding space away from the opponents, while in this case the double gives South two extra options: Pass and Redouble.

Had East made a proper overcall of 3♣, the diamond suit would probably never have been mentioned.

At the table South exploited one of his extra options, redoubling to show a very weak hand (0-4 HCP). Now after 2♠ he had a maximum for his previous bid so he could afford to show his diamonds. Furthermore, with club length after the double it was more likely that North had short clubs together with diamond support.

The 3♦ bid got North excited, and he immediately drove to a slam. Apparently the slam depended on a 2-2 trump break, but there was an extra chance.

Nathan Hetz won the club lead with his ace and tried two top trumps. He continued with three top spades, discarding a club (not a heart!), a spade ruff and a successful heart

finesse. He continued with the ♥A and the fifth spade (discarding another club). Finally West was thrown in with a trump. He had only hearts remaining and had to give declarer his twelfth trick by a ruff and sluff.

Our final hand is taken from the last round of the Swiss Teams.

Board 9, Dealer North, Vul E/W

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Pachtman</i>	<i>Chmurski</i>	<i>Ginossar</i>	<i>Stryker</i>
	3♥	3♠	4♥
4♠	All Pass		

Many experts advocate: "When in doubt, bid 4♠ over 4♥". This board would not do their case any good as East happens to have a defence-oriented hand, and both games seem to be going down. Nevertheless, the 4♠ bid turned out to be a great success at the table. How?

South led the ♥A, and upon seeing the singleton in dummy he switched to the ♠Q. That was not a thoughtful defence. North had opened 3♥ so declarer was expected to have a doubleton heart along with the ♠A. The ruff was already unavoidable. The ♠Q switch would have been immediately fatal if North had a singleton ♠K, and it was not absolutely safe even when North had a doubleton king.

Eldad Ginossar won with the ♠A, ruffed the ♥Q, returned to hand with the ♦A and led the ♠10. A good declarer would have played like this also from a suit headed by the A K 10 9. South was left with an awkward guess. At the end he put up the ♠J, and the contract was made.

At the other table the Poles doubled North's 4♥ contract. A club lead would have resulted in down one, but East chose the spade ace. Doron Yadlin (North) played his king, and the diamond switch was too late. Doron guessed right to ruff the third diamond high, finessed East's ♥Q and pitched a club loser on dummy's winning spades. An unlikely double game swing, which helped the Israeli team to win the tournament!



Michal Nowosadzki, Consus Kalisz

Israel White v. Het Witte Huis and Lavec v. Monaco

In this short report, I will present two boards from both these matches. This can be done in a quite convenient way as interesting things tend to happen on certain boards in more than one match.

Have a look at board 23, for example:

Board: 23. Dlr: South/All

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

In the Sweden-Monaco match, both South players opened and both Wests took action, which led to final contracts of 2♥ doubled at both tables, going down 3 and 4. So Lavec lost 7 IMPs for scoring +800 only...

In the other match, both Verhees (South for Het Witte Huis) and Jansma (West for Het Witte Huis) opened NT and were allowed to play there. So Fisher as South did well to pass as West's INT went down three, vulnerable for +300 to Israel White whereas Verhees just made 8 tricks for +120. Another 5 IMPs to Het Witte Huis.

Board 25 was a matter of finding the right play.

Board: 25. Dlr: North/EW

<p>♠ K Q 6 4 ♥ Q 10 9 ♦ J 3 ♣ 9 8 7 6</p>	<p>♠ J 9 ♥ J 6 4 ♦ A 10 8 7 2 ♣ A J 4</p>	<p>♠ 8 5 ♥ A K 8 7 5 3 2 ♦ K ♣ K 5 3</p>	<p>♠ A 10 7 3 2 ♥ - ♦ Q 9 6 5 4 ♣ Q 10 2</p>
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For Israel White, Alon Birman was allowed to play 4♥ which peacefully went one down. At all three other tables, 5♦ was the final contract. For Lavec Smile, Wrang had opened 1♥ after Fantoni's initial pass. For Monaco, Helness had overcalled 1♥ and later 4♥. For Het Witte Huis, Paulissen had overcalled 2♥ after North opened 1♦.

Fantoni, for Monaco, ruffed the top heart lead in dummy and immediately played a diamond to his ace, felling the king. Fredin, for Lavec, also ruffed the opening heart lead and next ran the ♦Q, losing to the king... Schwartz, for Israel White, did much better as he postponed the trump decision: he ruffed the heart lead in dummy and ran the ♣Q unsuccessfully. On the next page, you can find out how his play of the hand continued.

Israel White v Het Witte Huis

The Israel White team, including the recent Cavendish Pairs winners Schwartz-Fisher had a poor start against Russia's Bridge Club Real, while the Dutch champions started with a win against Poland's Consus Kalisz. The Israelis were eager to get back into contention, and they started out with a blitz, with quite a lot of help from their opponents.

Already in the first board Jansma went down in a cold 3NT. After four boards it was 18:0 to Israel, and the margin was about to increase:

Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

♠ K Q 6 4 ♥ Q 10 9 ♦ J 3 ♣ 9 8 7 6	<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #38761d; 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	♠ 8 5 ♥ A K 8 7 5 3 2 ♦ K ♣ K 5 3	♠ A 10 7 3 2 ♥ - ♦ Q 9 6 5 4 ♣ Q 10 2
N						
W E						
S						

West	North	East	South
<i>Jansma</i>	<i>Schwartz</i>	<i>Paulissen</i>	<i>Fisher</i>
	1♦	2♥	2♠
3♦	Pass	4♥	5♦
Dbl	All Pass		

The very first bid turned out to be the crucial one. At the other table North didn't open with 11 HCP and East-West were allowed to play in 4♥, going down one.

Once North opened, South was going to compete to 5♦. In addition, East-West were hampered by the agreement that Pass is forcing after their side bids a vulnerable game.

Assuming that passing out 5♦ was contrary to the system, they had a choice between going minus 500 in 5♥ doubled or minus 550 in 5♦ doubled.

In fact, declarer can even make an overtrick in 5♦ by going after the spades, but Ron Schwartz after finessing clubs made the percentage play in trumps by laying down the ♦A. Plus 550 and 10 IMPs to Israel White, increasing their lead to 28:0.

It was further extended when the Dutch failed to bid two regulation games in boards 6 and 7. The latter hand was the more interesting one, since they had to find the game after a 1NT opening by the opponents.

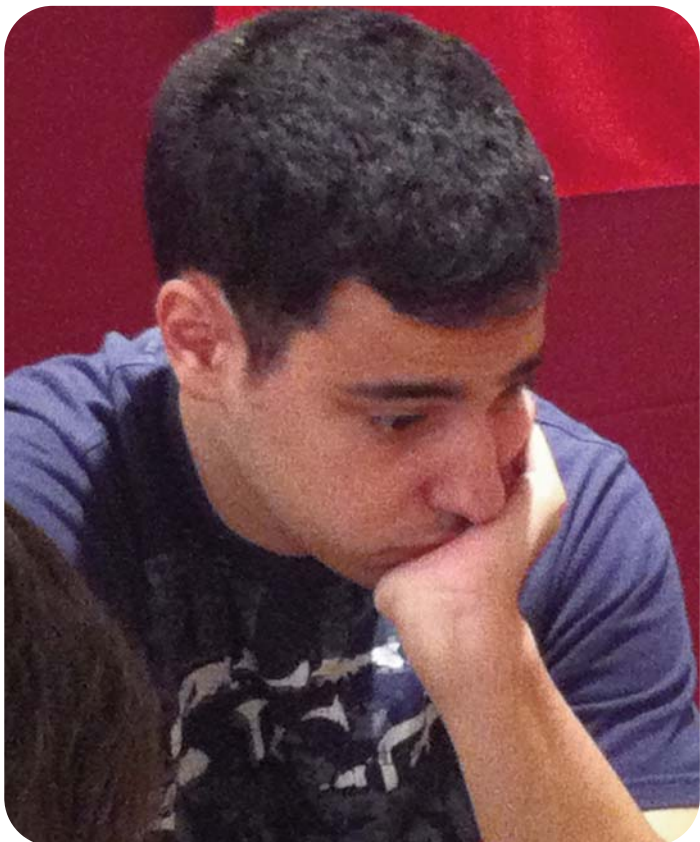
Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

♠ A 9 8 2 ♥ A ♦ 9 7 ♣ A K 10 7 6 3	<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #38761d; 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	♠ Q J 10 5 4 ♥ Q 8 7 6 4 ♦ J 4 ♣ 2	♠ 7 3 ♥ 9 5 3 2 ♦ 8 6 5 3 ♣ Q J 9 ♠ K 6 ♥ K J 10 ♦ A K Q 10 2 ♣ 8 5 4
N						
W E						
S						

West	North	East	South
<i>Jansma</i>	<i>Schwartz</i>	<i>Paulissen</i>	<i>Fisher</i>
	Pass	2♦	INT
Dbl	All Pass		Dbl

West	North	East	South
<i>Padon</i>	<i>v Prooijen</i>	<i>Birman</i>	<i>Verhees Jr</i>
	Pass	2♦	INT
Dbl	All Pass		Dbl
3♣	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

At both tables West's double showed a four-card major accompanied by a longer minor. 2♦ asked partner to show



Dror Padon Israel White

his major. Jansma did this by 2♠, but this didn't get across his extra values, and unfortunately became the final contract.

In the Closed Room Padon thoughtfully bid 3♣, indicating a bigger hand. 3♦ asked again for the major, and game was duly reached.

The only difference in the play was that Van Prooijen led a diamond, while Schwartz ignored his partner's double of 2♦ and led a club. This resulted in two unnecessary overtricks. Jansma took all 13 tricks, and it cut his team's loss to 5 IMPs.

However, this minor defensive slip seemed to be momentum-changing. At this moment Israel White led 44-0, but there followed three swings of 3-4 IMPs where the Israelis overbid in partscore deals, and in the following deal the Dutch missed a much bigger swing:

Board 32. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ - ♥ 9 6 5 4 3 ♦ J 9 6 5 2 ♣ 5 4 2	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; 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 J 9 2 ♥ A 7 ♦ Q 7 ♣ A 10 9 6 3	♠ Q 7 3 ♥ J 10 8 ♦ K 10 8 4 3 ♣ Q 8
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ A 10 8 6 5 4 ♥ K Q 2 ♦ A ♣ K J 7										

West	North	East	South
Jansma	Schwartz	Paulissen	Fisher
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♦	Pass	7♠
All Pass			

Was Fisher's decision to bid the grand slam directly once he learned that partner has all the missing keycards overconfident? Not necessarily. After all one doesn't need the trump queen to bid a grand with a 10-card fit. As for the club queen, it was at worst on a finesse, and there was an extra chance that partner has the ♦K (although in this case he might have looked for a stronger bid than 4♠).

Anyway the ♦5 was led and declarer had to take a view in the trump suit. Fisher played for the opening leader to have the ♠Q, and went down after playing the ♠A at trick two. However, there was no need to find the ♣Q. Declarer eliminated the red suits and endplayed East with the ♠Q. Minus 50 – apparently a horrible result for the Israelis.

In the Closed Room the Dutch pair used an artificial system and North became the declarer in 7♠. The ♥J was led, and once again declarer played the opening leader to have the ♠Q, this time guessing right.

However, the Israelis had the last laugh. Declarer had to finesse for the ♣Q, or else play for a squeeze in case the

same defender holds the ♦K and the ♣Q. Van Prooijen knew that West had longer clubs, and decided to finesse against him. He postponed the crucial play by cashing all of his other winners. As a result, Alon Birman took the final two tricks with his ♣Q and ♦K. Down two and 2 IMPs to Israel!!

Het Witte Huis still trailed 8-47, but they realised that their opponents were not invincible. From here till the end of the match they played very well, outscoring the Israelis 25-1.

Board 36. Dealer West. All Vul.

♠ A 10 6 5 4 3 ♥ 9 4 ♦ 7 2 ♣ J 9 2	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; 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		♠ J 9 ♥ Q 7 6 5 ♦ J 8 6 ♣ A K Q 10	♠ K 8 7 ♥ K J 10 ♦ K 9 ♣ 7 6 5 4 3
	N											
W		E										
	S											
		♠ Q 2 ♥ A 8 3 2 ♦ A Q 10 5 4 3 ♣ 8										



Gert Jan Paulissen, Het Witte Huis

West	North	East	South
Jansma	Schwartz	Paulissen	Fisher
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♥	2♠	4♥
All Pass			

West	North	East	South
Padon	v Prooijen	Birman	Verhees Jr
Pass	1♦	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

The Israelis reached game via a natural sequence, allowing East-West to bid and support spades. Even under these circumstances it was not totally obvious to lead the ♠A, but Jansma chose that card and the contract went down instantly. At this stage declarer didn't know about the trump position, and his efforts to make the contract led to down two.

In the Closed Room South started with an artificial 2♣ response, shutting out West's spades. The relay-style bidding led to North declaring. Alon Birman saw no reason to underlead any of his kings, and his passive club lead gave away plus 620 and 13 IMPs.

Board 39. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Jansma	Schwartz	Paulissen	Fisher
			Pass
2♦	2♥	Dbl	3♠
Pass	4♥	Dbl	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♥	5♠	All Pass

West	North	East	South
Padon	v Prooijen	Birman	Verhees Jr
			Pass
2♠	3♥	4♠	5♥
Pass	Pass	5♠	6♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All Pass

West's 2♦ showed a weak two bid in an undisclosed major. Of course East expected him to have hearts, therefore he doubled 2♥ (meaning Pass or correct). The fact that West had spades was confirmed only in the third round of bidding, much to East's delight, but Paulissen didn't get overexcited and realised that 5♠ was the limit of the hand. Even this contract needed a successful finesse in diamonds.

As for South, he knew all the way that he would be competing up to 5♥, and he had to decide what to do after 5♠. Fisher preferred to defend after indicating a lead to partner with a 5♣ bid, but the final contract was unbeatable. Plus 650 to Het Witte Huis.

The Closed Room bidding started naturally with 2♠ and moved on much more swiftly. Verhees could also bid 5♣ to indicate a lead, but he preferred just to go on to the six level, which proved right. Birman made the correct decision to double, but it was worth only plus 500. Well played all around, and 4 final IMPs to Het Witte Huis.

The final score was 48-33 IMPs. Israel White won by 18-12, but they certainly expected more at the middle of the match! After two rounds they found themselves in 5th place out of 6 with 28 VP, but the differences are very small and they still have all to play for in the remaining three qualification rounds. Het Witte Huis are in a better position, 2nd place with 33 VP.



Ron Schwartz, Israel White

The Open Room bidding started somewhat comically.

Round 3, England v. Angelini

On Friday morning, the overnight leaders in Group A, England's team Hinden, had to face the Angelini team from Rome. Though the Italians had scored only average on Thursday, they should still be considered a dangerous opponent as they have won the Champions Cup on a number of occasions.

In the Closed Room, where Burn and Sandqvist were facing Lauria-Versace, play went like lightning. They reached the last board of the set in just an hour and a half, only to find out that they would have to wait for more than half an hour before they could start comparing their results.

The opening boards of the set were not too exciting, except for a fine slam missed at both tables on board 3. By the time they reached board 6, England were leading 6-0.

Board: 6. Dir: East/EW

♠ 9 5 4 ♥ A J ♦ A 9 4 2 ♣ J 6 5 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #2e7d32; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K 3 ♥ 10 8 4 3 ♦ Q J 8 3 ♣ Q 10 4	♠ A Q J 6 2 ♥ 9 5 ♦ K 10 5 ♣ K 8 3
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
GIUBILO	HINDEN	CIMA	OSBORNE
		1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♠	All pass

2NT was an invitational raise and after some more stretched bidding, the final contract was reached. This proved miles too high, however, and down two meant +200 to England.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
BURN	LAURIA	SANDQVIST	VERSACE
		1♠	Pass
INT	All pass		

A much better judged auction by the English saw them land on their feet safely. On a low diamond lead by North, David Burn easily made an overtrick for another +120 and 8 IMPs to England.

And then:

Board: 7. Dir: South/All

♠ 6 3 2 ♥ Q 9 8 6 ♦ A K 4 ♣ K 4 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #2e7d32; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ K 10 ♥ K 10 5 4 3 2 ♦ Q 10 5 ♣ 10 9	♠ A J 8 ♥ A J ♦ 8 3 2 ♣ 8 7 6 5 2
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West	North	East	South
GIUBILO	HINDEN	CIMA	OSBORNE
BURN	LAURIA	SANDQVIST	VERSACE
		Pass	Pass
1♣	Pass	1♥	1♠
2♥	2♠	3♥ / 4♥	All pass

A normal enough auction by the Italians but with both black kings well-placed for him, Cima easily made ten tricks. Angelini +170.

Sandqvist might have been hoping for a spade lead on this auction when he boldly jumped to 4♥ but it did not even matter on the actual layout. England the same ten tricks but worth +620 and 10 IMPs to them. They suddenly led 24-0.

England scored another 4 IMPs on the next board, but then suffered a serious setback when one of their pairs ended up in a no-play slam, due to a bidding misunderstanding. That cost 14 IMPs.

On the next two boards, Angelini scored another 6 and 5 to reduce the deficit to 28-25. From that point, the match came to rest as over the next 7 boards, England extended their lead to 31-27.

Then came the final three boards, which would dramatically change the complexion of this match:

Board: 18. Dir: East/NS

♠ K 10 9 2 ♥ J 8 6 ♦ Q 3 2 ♣ A 8 2	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #2e7d32; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 6 5 ♥ Q 9 3 ♦ J 10 8 4 ♣ 10 9 5 3	♠ - ♥ A 10 5 2 ♦ A 9 7 6 ♣ K Q J 7 6
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♠ A Q J 8 7 4 3 ♥ K 7 4 ♦ K 5 ♣ 4	
--	--

Open Room

West GIUBILO	North HINDEN	East CIMA	South OSBORNE
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	2♠
Pass	3NT	All pass	3♠

East led the ♠J but it quickly proved that dummy did not have enough entries to both establish and enjoy the long spades. One down, Angelini +100.

In the Closed Room, Versace showed better judgement:

Closed Room

West BURN	North LAURIA	East SANDQVIST	South VERSACE
Pass	2♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	2♠
Pass	3NT	Pass	3♥
All pass		Pass	4♠

Versace considered his spades good enough to be playable opposite a void. Right he was; as the heart loser goes on the clubs, 4♠ was never in real danger. Angelini +620 and 12 IMPs to take the lead for the first time in the match. Then:

Board: 19. Dlr: South/EW

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

Open Room

West GIUBILO	North HINDEN	East CIMA	South OSBORNE
1♥	1♠	2♦	Pass
Pass	Pass	Dbf	3♠
4♥	All pass		Pass

Four Hearts is by no means cold, but it definitely is the place where you want to be, even more so when you are vulnerable. With one red king right and the other one wrong, declarer needed either a 3-3 break in clubs or a doubleton honour in North for his contract. Angelini +620 when this duly materialised.

Closed Room

West BURN	North LAURIA	East SANDQVIST	South VERSACE
2♥	All pass		Pass

Vulnerable against not in 2nd position, a weak two should be sound. Occasionally, you might miss a fair game by this approach. England +170 but another 10 IMPs to Angelini.

Board: 20. Dlr: West/All

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

Open Room

West GIUBILO	North HINDEN	East CIMA	South OSBORNE
1♦	1♠	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	3♦	Pass
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
All pass			

This is a reasonable auction to a fully normal contract. You can't make it, however, as the trumps are 4-1. Still, it looked as if England had little to worry about when they lost 100.

It turned out rather differently when the Italians slightly overbid in the other room and East had to find a lead:

Closed Room

West BURN	North LAURIA	East SANDQVIST	South VERSACE
1♦	1♠	2♦	2♠
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥
All pass			

Had East led a diamond, his partner's suit, 4♥ would no doubt have drifted two off. When he tried the ♣Q instead, Versace immediately took his chance when West ducked his ace. He won the king, drew three rounds of trumps and played a spade from dummy, East winning the queen with his ace. A diamond came back to West's jack but it was already too late as West could not profitably continue the suit. When West cashed his ♣A and continued a club, the hand was over as declarer still had a trump entry left to his last established spade. Angelini a surprise +620 and 12 more IMPs to suddenly emerge victorious by no less than 61-31 IMPs, 21-9 in V.P.s.