



European
Bridge League



Croatian Bridge
Federation



Opatija
Bridge Club



European Olympic
Committees

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Editor: Jos Jacobs • Lay Out Editor: Fotis Skoularikis

Sunday, 17 November 2013

ANOTHER WIN FOR G.S. ALLEGRA

Closing Speech of Yves Aubry, EBL President

Mr Ivo Dujmić – Mayor of Opatija

Mr or Mrs the Representative of the county Primorsko-Goranska

Mr Gianarrigo Rona – President of the WBF

Mr Jurica Carić - President of the Croatian Bridge Federation

Dear Friends,

The 12th edition of the European Bridge Champions' Cup is nearly ending and this EBL competition is now one of the major events of the international calendar with the participation of all top European players. I want to thank the authorities of Croatia and the city of Opatija for their great support.

All my congratulations to the Croatian Bridge Federation, its President Jurica Carić, and all the organising committee led by Branka and Goran Grgurić for the great job they have done to organise this 12th Champions' Cup in Opatija.



KI (Bulgaria) - Silver Medal



G.S. Allegra (Italy) - Gold Medal

All my thanks also go to Mr Ivo Josipović, President of the Republic of Croatia who honoured us with his presence.

To celebrate this event, I will ask Branka Grgurić, Venue Facility Manager, to come to the stage to receive a plaque from EBL.

I will ask Goran Grgurić, On-Site Organiser, to come to the stage to receive a plaque from EBL.

I will ask Jurica Carić, President of the CBF, to come to the stage to receive a plaque from EBL.

I will ask Ivo Dujmić, Mayor of Opatija, without whom the EBL would never have come to Opatija for either the Champions' Cup or the 2014 Team Championships, to come to the stage to receive a plaque from EBL.

I would like to thank all the staff members who have contributed to the perfect organisation of this competition.

Thank you to the organising committee: Jurica Carić – Maurizio Di Sacco – Goran Grgurić – Branka Grgurić – David Harris – Milka Ivančić and Catherine Vitry

Thank you to the TDs, IT System & Scoring: Andras Booc

- Ivan Juračić - Dusan Krautsak - Gianluca Barrese and Fotis Skoularikis

Thank you to the Hospitality-Registration desk: Ersilija Kopani – Irena Marković

Thank you to the Daily Bulletin: Jos Jacobs – Iva Mrkić and Tomislav Šćepanović

Thank you to the Duplication: Ivan Brajković - Tomislav Sašek

Thank you to the logistic team: Andre Katnić – Marijan Katnić

Thank you to the Key-Board operators and Vu-Graph commentator: Stella Dobrijević - Lucijana Ivelja – Branko Krolo – Jurica Maričić – Kiril Marinovski - Kristijan Sentić - Zoran Šimec – Sandra Tomljanović and Branko Špiljak

Thank you also to all my colleagues of the EBL Executive Committee and the work done during the 3 days meetings.

But I would above all thank you the players, thanks to you this competition became an EBL major competition. You have given through those four days, a nice image of bridge, a high level of play, a sporting spirit and friendship. I hope you will all come back next June for the Team Championships.

I am confident that the 12th Champions' Cup will be for all of you, players, officials, journalists and guests, a great moment in your bridge.

Next year, we will hold this event in Milan, Italy starting on the 13th of November.

Still one big thank you to all of you and have a safe return home tomorrow.



Ruch SA AZS PWR Wroclaw (Poland) - Bronze Medal



Monaco FMB (Monaco) - 5th Place

FINAL

Teams	c/o	1st	Tot	2nd	Tot	3rd	Total
G.S. ALLEGRA	0	57	57	62	119	52	171
KI	0	22	22	23	45	17	62

Teams	c/o	1st	Tot	2nd	Total
RUCH SA AZS PWR WROCLAW	0	79	79	52	131
ASD REGGIO EMILIA	0	32	32	23	55

Teams	c/o	1st	Tot	2nd	Total
MONACO FMB	0	41	41	64	105
BAREKET	0	36	36	13	49

Teams	c/o	1st	Tot	2nd	Total
BAMBERGER REITER	0	11	11	6	17
HINDEN	0	44	44	37	81

SEMIFINAL

Round 2



REGGIO EMILIA

v

K1



The second set started with some technical problems, so we missed some action and will try to bring you as much information as we can.

Board 18 was not actually played in the match. It was played in the Closed Room only, but there the Bulgarians managed to bring home an impossible notrump game after some defensive errors. The director decided to adjust the score of this board to 10 IMPs for Bulgaria. So the Bulgarians increased their lead after the second board of the second set, but after that the hell broke loose.

Board 22. Dealer East. E-W Vulnerable.

<p>♠ Q 9 8 6 ♥ K T 7 3 ♦ J 9 8 ♣ 9 2</p>	<p>♠ A K T 5 ♥ A 8 6 ♦ 6 3 ♣ K T 7 4</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ 3 ♥ 9 ♦ A K Q T 7 4 ♣ A Q J 6 3</p>
	<p>♠ J 7 4 2 ♥ Q J 5 4 2 ♦ 5 2 ♣ 8 5</p>	

Board 22 brought us a suboptimal play by the Bulgarian East which was punished by the Bridge gods.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Sabbatini	Stefanov	Comella
		1♣	1♥
Pass	2♣	2♦	Pass
3♦	3♥	5♦	All Pass

After the normal bidding, Stefanov got a trump lead and it seemed that he suffered a minor stroke when he took it in hand and played a major instead of taking it in dummy and playing a minor. The stroke was not fatal for the declarer, but it was fatal for the contract. After losing a heart and another trump back he took it in dummy and finessed clubs but now he was one entry short when king of clubs turned out to be fourth. Italy +100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gianardi	Nanev	Fornaciari	Gunev
		1♦	Pass
1♥	DbI	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Fornaciari didn't have any minor health problems on this one and he brought it home after the diamond lead for +600 and +12 Italy.

Italy took another two-digit swing on board 27 when Nanev and Gunev bid an unmakeable slam on their mirror hands and Italians stopped in game. 6♠ down one, and 4♣ plus one meant +11 IMPs to Italy.

Board 31. Dealer South. N-S Vulnerable.

<p>♠ T 7 6 5 ♥ A Q J 9 6 ♦ K J 9 7 ♣ -</p>	<p>♠ K Q 9 8 2 ♥ K 7 3 2 ♦ 2 ♣ A 6 5</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N W E S </div>	<p>♠ A J 3 ♥ T 5 4 ♦ 8 4 ♣ J T 9 4 2</p>
	<p>♠ 4 ♥ 8 ♦ A Q T 6 5 3 ♣ K Q 8 7 3</p>	

The Italians closed their IMP gaining streak on the penultimate board of the set. Do you trust that opponents can find their best fit? Stefanov didn't and it cost a bit.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Sabbatini	Stefanov	Comella
			1♦
1♥	1♠	2♥	3♣
3♥	5♣	All Pass	

Stefanov was obviously afraid that opponents are in the wrong contract so he didn't double 5♣ and collected +200 when it went two off. But he could only have saved few IMPs here since his teammates didn't find their best fit.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Gianardi	Nanev	Fornaciari	Gunev
			1♦
1♥	2♦	2♥	3♣
3♥	DbI	Pass	4♦
Pass	5♦	Pass	Pass
DbI	All Pass		

After a nebulous diamond opening in South, and an artificial 2♦ by North that I was not able to decipher until the closing of this article, NS finished in the inferior minor suit game. Gianardi decided Gunev had nowhere to run so she doubled for down three, +800 and +12 IMPs to Italy to set the score at 78-59 with one set to play.

SEMIFINAL

Round 3



G.S. ALLEGRA

v RUCH WROCLAW



With 16 boards to play, GS Allegra, the defending champions, were looking at a 29-IMP lead, healthy enough but by no means big enough for them to sit back and relax, as the Poles proved right on the first board.

Board 1. Dealer North. None Vulnerable.

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

<p>♠ 8 7 ♥ K J 8 7 ♦ Q T 7 6 ♣ T 9 6</p>	
--	--

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Bocchi	Kwiecien	Madala
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Dbf	Redbl	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♥	All Pass	4♦

Bocchi showed a strong balanced type of hand by rebidding 2♥ and Madala showed his hearts with 3♠. Against a certain spade lead, Bocchi then preferred the Moysian fit to the more straightforward 3NT. Due to the duplication in the black suits, they would have to lose four tricks anyway, whereas there happened to be nine top tricks in 3NT. One down, +50 to the Poles.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Golebiowski	Sementa	Starkowski
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♥
All Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT

The Polish Club made it easy to get to 3NT as North's 1NT rebid showed the 18-19 range. Just made and 10 IMPs back to the Poles.

On board 3, the Poles recouped six more IMPs when the Italians overbid to a hopeless game so the Italian lead had dropped to 17 when board 7 arrived, probably the decisive board of the set.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vulnerable.

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

<p>♠ Q 7 2 ♥ 9 7 4 ♦ J 7 2 ♣ KT 8 4</p>	
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Bocchi	Kwiecien	Madala
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♠	Pass	6♦	All Pass

This is not such a good slam as it would have no play once the club finesse is wrong. Even if this finesse is working, there is still a lot of work to do as you have to get rid of a lot of hearts. You might ruff a few of them in dummy but this plan will fail if the defenders can play a second round of trumps in time. As a consequence, you will go down if the defence starts off by leading a trump – and that is exactly what Madala did. As soon as declarer gives up a heart, a second round of trumps leaves him with no chance whatsoever. Well done by Allegra for +100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Golebiowski	Sementa	Starkowski
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♠	Pass	6♦	All Pass

2♦ was an artificial game force.

When South led a heart, the second best lead, Sementa had no trouble in ruffing two hearts and taking a success-

ful club finesse to land his contract. Allegra +1370 and 16 IMPs to lead by 33.

It looked all over but then came the next board...

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vulnerable.

♠ T ♥ JT 5 ♦ J 6 5 3 ♣ A Q J 6 4	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ A K 7 3 2 ♥ A 3 ♦ K Q 7 4 ♣ 8 7
N					
W E					
S					
♠ Q J 9 8 6 5 4 ♥ 9 ♦ T 8 ♣ K T 3	♠ - ♥ K Q 8 7 6 4 2 ♦ A 9 2 ♣ 9 5 2				

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Bocchi	Kwiecien	Madala
3♠	Pass	4♠	5♥
Pass	Pass	5♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	All Pass	

In the Open Room, the Poles did well to take the save as 5♥ looks cold as the cards lay, whereas 6♥ would be easily defeated on a diamond lead. Allegra +100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Golebiowski	Sementa	Starkowski
3♠	Pass	4♠	5♥
Pass	Pass	5♠	Pass
Pass	6♥	Dbl	All Pass

We will never know if the state of the match had anything to do with North's decision to bid one more but it turned out to be the winning move when West led a spade rather

than a diamond. Declarer ruffed, conceded to the ♥A and took the winning club finesse. When the suit broke, he could dispose of all his diamond losers and chalk up a tremendous +1210 to get 15 IMPs back. The deficit was down to 18 again.

After this, we saw a long series of partscore hands, right through till the end of the match. Here are the first two of them, just to illustrate the difference in approach by both teams.

Board 9. Dealer North. E-W Vulnerable.

♠ Q 4 2 ♥ J 5 3 ♦ 9 5 4 ♣ A Q 7 5	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ AT ♥ A 8 4 ♦ A K 7 6 ♣ J 6 4 3
N					
W E					
S					
♠ J 8 7 6 3 ♥ K T 9 6 ♦ T ♣ T 9 2	♠ K 9 5 ♥ Q 7 2 ♦ Q J 8 3 2 ♣ K 8				

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Bocchi	Kwiecien	Madala
2♣	Pass	INT	Pass
2♥	Pass	2♦	Pass
	All Pass		

2♥ showed a weak hand with both majors, unspecified suit length.

Bocchi led a trump to the queen and king, which seems to give up the defensive trump trick. This was not quite true, as we shall see. Declarer played a spade to the ten and king and won the diamond return with dummy's ace. He then cashed the ♠A and the ♦K and ruffed a diamond in hand. A spade was ruffed in dummy and another diamond ruffed in hand. When North overruffed with the jack and returned a trump, the defence had the rest of the tricks. One down, Allegra +100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Golebiowski	Sementa	Starkowski
2♥	Pass	INT	Pass
	Pass	2♠	All Pass

At the other table, Duboin would have nothing of it. He stuck to the old adage that a 5-2 fit should be preferred over a 4-3 fit and he proved right once again. He finished up with an overtrick when all suits behaved pretty well. So another +140 to Allegra, 6 IMPs to them almost out of nothing.

On the next board, it was again a matter of bidding carefully.



Board 10. Dealer East. All Vulnerable.

♠ J 7 5 ♥ Q J 9 4 ♦ T 5 4 ♣ Q T 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #336633; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ A K T 4 ♥ T 8 6 2 ♦ 8 3 2 ♣ 6 4	♠ Q 9 2 ♥ A 5 3 ♦ K Q 7 6 ♣ K 7 5
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1♦ showed hearts. This modest contract just came home for +80 to Allegra.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Duboin	Gołebowski	Sementa	Starkowski
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	1♥
Pass		All Pass	

As South could not rebid INT in Polish Club, he had to introduce a possible three-card major. The raise was automatic but the safety level thus had been passed automatically as well as there are at least six losers glaring into declarer's face. Down two, another +200 to Allegra who thus added another 7 IMPs from nowhere to their tally to lead by 31 now.

A few more hands of this type saw the Italians' lead go up a bit more as the match progressed. The final score became 106-67 to GS Allegra.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Gawrys	Bocchi	Kwiecien	Madala
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♣
All Pass		Pass	1♥

SEMIFINAL

Round 3



REGGIO EMILIA

v

K1



The Bulgarians entered the last set trailing by 19 IMPs and were very eager to find some IMPs that would change the momentum of the match.

And, suddenly, nothing happened. The first ten boards saw 7 IMPs exchange hands, Bulgaria leading 6-1 and thus reducing the gap to 14 IMPs. But they were in a desperate need for some huge gain.

And then came the board 11 with the motto "lead the unbid minor".

Board 11. Dealer South. None Vulnerable.

♠ A Q 9 6 5 2 ♥ Q ♦ 7 4 ♣ J T 9 6	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #336633; color: white; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> N W E S </div>	♠ - ♥ 9 5 3 ♦ T 8 3 2 ♣ K Q 8 7 4 3	♠ T 8 7 ♥ J 7 6 ♦ A K J 6 5 ♣ 5 2
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Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Sabbatini	Stefanov	Comella
Pass	1♠	3♣	1♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	4♣
All Pass			4♠

After Stefanov bid clubs, Sabbatini was aware of the board motto and settled for a game in spades. A diamond lead meant a quick 11 tricks for NS and +450 Italy.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Basile	Nanev	Mina	Gunev
1♦	1♠	4♦	1♣
Pass	4♣	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

Gunev was also aware of the board motto so he knew he would get a club lead and thus he confidently bid a slam in spades which was, of course, cold after the king of clubs

lead. Bulgaria +980 and +11 desperately needed IMPs for them.

Five boards to go, Italy was up 5 IMPs. Board 12 was a push and board 13 saw the Italian lead melt away.

Board 13. Dealer North. All Vulnerable.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Sabbatini	Stefanov	Comella
	1♣	1♠	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
All Pass			

After Comella bid 2♣ the Italians were overboard. The good defence should set even INT but that is a challenge. 2NT was no challenge for the defence and when Comella chose to play on diamonds rather than clubs it looked like it would finish two off. In the end the defence allowed him to score his 7th trick making it one off and +100 for Bulgaria.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Basile	Nanev	Mina	Gunev
	1♣	1♠	INT
All Pass			

Since Gunev decided to stay low Bulgaria got a chance to level the match score. It is not easy to make the proper timing in the defence and take 7 tricks before the declarer does. The race in the Closed Room finished with Gunev arriving first at the 7 tricks finish line, scoring +90 and +5 IMPs for Bulgaria with 3 boards to go.

And then:

Board 14. Dealer East. None Vulnerable.

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

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Sabbatini	Stefanov	Comella
		1♦	Dbl
2♦	2♠	Pass	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	All Pass

When Stefanov decided to open his balanced 11 count cabbage, Aronov could easily compete over 2♠ landing in 3♣ that easily made with an overtrick. Bulgaria +130.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Basile	Nanev	Mina	Gunev
		Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

With Mina silent in East it was very difficult for Basile to enter the auction so the Italians sold out to 2♠ that easily made. +110 and +6 IMPs Bulgaria to take the lead in the match with two boards to go.

On the last two boards, we saw just two IMPs being scored, one for each team, although the last board had a swing potential when a 21 count no special feature game was available for North-South. But this game was practically impossible to bid, only 2 pairs in the whole field found it (Russia and Sweden).

The final score was 88-82 for Bulgaria meaning that the "other minor lead" slam pushed them to finals and the possibility for a vendetta against the other Italian team that beat them in the group phase.



FINAL

Round 1



G.S. ALLEGRA

v

K1



Right on the first board of the final, the holders took the lead when Aronov, having to find out which defender might hold a doubleton spade honour, misguessed the situation in 5♥ for one down. Ferraro guessed right in the same contract.. That was 11 IMPs to Allegra.

Two boards later, 7 IMPs went back to K1 when Ferraro passed partner's INT holding a weak 5-2-4-2 opening hand. The 2♦ rebid, duly found in the other room, would have hit the jackpot.

On board 5, we saw two spectacular auctions leading to the same contract..

Board 5. Dealer North. N-S Vulnerable.

♠ A J 5 4	<table border="1"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td></tr> </table>	N	W	S	E	♠ 9 7 3
N						
W						
S						
E						
♥ 8 3	♥ A J T 5					
♦ A T 9 3 2	♦ 4					
♣ K 6	♣ A J 7 5 4					
	♠ Q T					
	♥ 9 7 6 4 2					
	♦ 7 6 5					
	♣ Q 8 2					

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Bocchi	Stefanov	Madala
	1♣	1♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	All Pass

Over partner's invitational 2♣, Stefanov had to accept the consequences of his frivolous overcall. Not so frivolous after all, as he easily made nine tricks when South led a club. Even a trump lead would not defeat this contract. K1 a nice +140.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Ferraro	Nanev	Sementa	Gunev
	INT	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All Pass		

In the other room, Nanev's INT duly stopped Sementa from frivolously entering the auction but this time, his partner had the last word. Sementa happily passed Ferraro's

double and the defenders quickly set the contract three tricks when Sementa led his singleton diamond by means of five top tricks and three ruffs, basically the same tricks as declarer made in the other room... Allegra+800 and 12 IMPs to them.

Two boards later, K1 reached a relatively thin vulnerable game:

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vulnerable.

♠ Q J 8 5	<table border="1"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td></tr> </table>	N	W	S	E	♠ K 6
N						
W						
S						
E						
♥ J T 7 5	♥ K 9 8 3 2					
♦ 8 7 4	♦ Q 6 3					
♣ A 2	♣ Q 7 6					
♠ 3 2		♠ A T 9 7 4				
♥ A 6 4		♥ Q				
♦ K J T 5		♦ A 9 2				
♣ J 9 5 4		♣ K T 8 3				

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Bocchi	Stefanov	Madala
Pass	3♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	All Pass	3♥

3♦ showed a mixed raise but partner's 3♥ enquiry did not make Bocchi happy. Ten tricks when the ♠K behaved well. Allegra +170.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Ferraro	Nanev	Sementa	Gunev
			1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

2♥ was either any splinter or a mixed raise. When 3♠ denied the splinter, Gunev just bid one more for the road, not wanting to miss a vulnerable game with his nice 5-4-3-1 distribution. Right he was, +620 to the Bulgarians and 10 IMPs to them to trail by 6.

Two boards later, we saw another possible slam coming up.

Board 9. Dealer North. E-W Vulnerable.

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

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Bocchi	Stefanov	Madala
	5♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	5NT	6♣
6♦	7♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All Pass		

Once the Bulgarians decided to have a go at six, quite reasonably so once East bid 5NT “pick a slam,” Bocchi had no option but to save at the 7-level. Down three, K 1 +500.


Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Ferraro	Nanev	Sementa	Gunev
	5♣	Pass	Pass
Dbl	Pass	5♥	6♣
Dbl	All Pass		

When Sementa contented himself with 5♥ only over partner’s double, he showed that he probably was not thinking about a slam at all. The Italians thus sold out at 6♣ for down two and a 5-IMP loss.

On the next board, it was slam time again, the slam for E/W being cold this time. As so often, the Italians had little trouble in getting there:

Board 10. Dealer East. All Vulnerable.

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

West	North	East	South
Ferraro	Nanev	Sementa	Gunev
		1♦	1♠
4♦	4♠	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♦	All Pass


Four Diamonds was barrage. 4NT in the Italian style is not Blackwood but just a general further enquiry. When Ferraro showed a good hand for his bidding with values in clubs, Sementa sensed that a slam might be in the air, so he bid it. Allegra + 1370.

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Bocchi	Stefanov	Madala
		1♣	1♠
2♣	3♠	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	5♦	All Pass

Strong Club and 2♣ showing diamonds. Over North’s 3♠, there was no room left for E/W to show the spade void at a safe level and thus the slam was missed. K 1 +620 but 13 IMPs to Allegra to lead by 14. With the help of two more partscore swings the Italian lead had gone up to 25 when the last board of the segment came up.

Board 16. Dealer West. E-W Vulnerable.

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

West	North	East	South
Aronov	Bocchi	Stefanov	Madala
Pass	INT	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

INT was 9-12 and 3♦ was general GF. Five Spades asked about trump quality. When Bocchi suggested another trump suit, Madala was happy to accept. Allegra +940 when the black suits both behaved.

With no mini-NT available, the Bulgarians in the closed room came nowhere near bidding a slam despite a strong 1♣ opening by South. After the diamond intervention, clubs were never mentioned as a suit so any chance of getting to a slam was gone. K 1 scored +480 but lost 10 more IMPs to trail 22-57 after the first segment.