

Chagas and Levit-Porat Head Rankings

Two excellent sets by Gabriel Chagas saw him overtake Piotr Gawrys and open a gap of almost two tops going in the last 24 boards of the Mens. Gawrys and Michel Bessis are tied for second place.

In the Women's event, Ruth Levit-Porat has a lead of just over two tops entering the final session. Sue Picus of the USA lies second, and in third place the name of Veronique Bessis gives rise to the possibility that the Bessis family will collect two medals later today.

Transfers to the Airport on Monday 20 April

Buses will leave the Hotel Campo dell'Oro for the airport at the following times:

08h30

11h45

16h15

Each bus will leave exactly at the scheduled time, so if you are not ready it will leave without you. Please note that flights are likely to be overbooked so it is important that you get to the airport in good time for your flight.

Mens Ranking after 39 Rounds

1	CHAGAS	BRA	337.0	389.0	349.0	1075.0	57.43	27	MAHMOOD	PAK	336.0	329.0	269.0	934.0	49.89
2	GAWRYS	POL	408.0	307.0	320.0	1035.0	55.29	28	HELGEMO	NOR	264.0	354.0	315.0	933.0	49.84
2	BESSIS	FRA	359.0	341.0	335.0	1035.0	55.29	29	KARLAFTIS	GRE	301.0	310.0	320.0	931.0	49.73
4	PERRON	FRA	305.0	363.0	359.0	1027.0	54.86	30	WOLFF	USA	303.0	287.0	338.0	928.0	49.57
5	WESTRA	NTH	368.0	293.0	358.0	1019.0	54.43	31	COPE	SAF	301.0	306.0	319.0	926.0	49.47
6	KOWALSKI	POL	359.0	327.0	330.0	1016.0	54.27	32	QUANTIN	FRA	319.0	321.0	279.0	919.0	49.09
7	BOMPIS	FRA	323.0	362.0	323.0	1008.0	53.85	33	SZWARC	FRA	293.0	295.0	330.0	918.0	49.04
7	MARI	FRA	331.0	334.0	343.0	1008.0	53.85	34	MULTON	FRA	324.0	334.0	258.0	916.0	48.93
9	RICHMAN	AUS	392.0	358.0	255.0	1005.0	53.69	35	MOUIEL	FRA	334.0	288.0	293.0	915.0	48.88
10	CRONIER	FRA	303.0	343.0	356.0	1002.0	53.53	36	LEVY	FRA	301.0	300.0	306.0	907.0	48.45
11	MARTENS	POL	274.0	390.0	334.0	998.0	53.31	37	JOURDAIN	GBR	320.0	287.0	297.0	904.0	48.29
12	ROBSON	GBR	302.0	415.0	279.0	996.0	53.21	38	SACUL	IDN	269.0	323.0	310.0	902.0	48.18
13	CHEMLA	FRA	314.0	300.0	369.0	983.0	52.51	39	MORSE	USA	277.0	292.0	331.0	900.0	48.08
14	ALLEGAERT	USA	288.0	326.0	368.0	982.0	52.46	40	FLODQVIST	SWE	327.0	270.0	299.0	896.0	47.86
15	HELNESS	NOR	348.0	331.0	301.0	980.0	52.35	41	KOKISH	CAN	328.0	282.0	280.0	890.0	47.54
16	ABECASSIS	FRA	316.0	343.0	311.0	970.0	51.82	42	DELMOULY	FRA	282.0	249.0	350.0	881.0	47.06
17	HACKETT Ja	GBR	321.0	317.0	320.0	958.0	51.18	43	BALDURSSON	ICE	306.0	244.0	330.0	880.0	47.01
18	HACKETT Ju	GBR	374.0	271.0	312.0	957.0	51.12	44	FUCIK	AUT	298.0	282.0	299.0	879.0	46.96
19	MITTELMAN	CAN	279.0	319.0	353.0	951.0	50.80	45	KHOLOMEV	RUS	331.0	261.0	281.0	873.0	46.63
20	WANG	CHN	344.0	311.0	293.0	948.0	50.64	46	AUKEN	DEN	286.0	265.0	309.0	860.0	45.94
21	ROUDINESCO	FRA	271.0	371.0	304.0	946.0	50.53	47	SHARIF	EGY	278.0	290.0	281.0	849.0	45.35
22	ZHONG	CHN	307.0	295.0	337.0	939.0	50.16	48	MAAS	NTH	277.0	302.0	265.0	844.0	45.09
23	FREEMAN	USA	340.0	299.0	299.0	938.0	50.11	49	BOCCHI	ITA	304.0	238.0	301.0	843.0	45.03
23	DUBOIN	ITA	300.0	289.0	349.0	938.0	50.11	50	LAMBARDI	ARG	276.0	279.0	284.0	839.0	44.82
25	STOPPA	FRA	270.0	308.0	357.0	935.0	49.95	51	SZYMANOWSKI	POL	309.0	249.0	253.6	811.6	43.35
25	LANTARON	SPA	285.0	374.0	276.0	935.0	49.95	52	SHIVDASANI	IND	262.0	311.0	234.0	807.0	43.11

Women's Ranking after 18 Rounds

1	LEVIT-PORAT	ISR	187.0	199.0	386.0	59.57	14	D'OVIDIO	FRA	150.0	177.0	327.0	50.46
2	PICUS	USA	205.0	155.0	360.0	55.56	16	SMITH	GBR	160.0	164.0	324.0	50.00
3	BESSIS	FRA	180.0	178.0	358.0	55.25	16	von ARNIM	GER	160.0	164.0	324.0	50.00
4	LANDY	GBR	182.0	174.0	356.0	54.94	18	de LUCCHI	ITA	176.0	144.0	320.0	49.38
5	ROSETTA	ITA	195.0	160.0	355.0	54.78	19	FLODQVIST	SWE	136.0	170.0	306.0	47.22
6	ZUR-ALBU	ISR	183.0	165.0	348.0	53.70	20	LISE	FRA	144.0	161.0	305.0	47.07
7	AUKEN	GER	161.0	184.0	345.0	53.24	21	CRONIER	FRA	165.0	134.0	299.0	46.14
8	SUN	CHN	160.0	178.8	338.8	52.28	22	McGOWAN	GBR	126.0	172.0	298.0	45.99
9	WANG	CHN	162.0	176.0	338.0	52.16	23	POLET	BEL	143.0	151.0	294.0	45.37
10	KHALIL	EGY	163.0	171.0	334.0	51.54	24	VRIEND	NTH	145.0	147.0	292.0	45.06
11	DELOR	FRA	153.0	180.0	333.0	51.39	24	GORDON	CAN	154.0	138.0	292.0	45.06
12	van der PAS	NTH	169.0	159.0	328.0	50.62	26	MEYERS	USA	147.0	144.0	291.0	44.91
12	DHONDY	GBR	186.0	142.0	328.0	50.62	27	ERHART	AUT	131.0	154.0	285.0	43.98
14	WILLARD	FRA	165.0	162.0	327.0	50.46	28	HARASIMOVICZ	POL	148.0	131.0	279.0	43.06

Two Trick Endplay

The most interesting play hand of the first session was this:

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Baldursson</i>	<i>Westra</i>	<i>Lambardi</i>	<i>Jourdain</i>
<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Mari</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Bessis</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	Pass	INT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

At every table, East opened One No Trump and ended in Three No Trumps, usually by a direct raise from West. Kholomeev was almost the only declarer to succeed.

South led a diamond won in dummy. Which suit should declarer tackle at trick two?

Take first the play at the Editor's table.

At trick two Lambardi took a club finesse. I won and led a second diamond, the eight, which was consistent with a holding that did not include the jack, so Lambardi put up the king. Westra threw a spade. Declarer could not afford to cash his top diamond, so he now finessed a heart. I won and exited with a heart. Declarer now had to play spades from his own hand. Westra won, cashed the heart and exited with a spade. Declarer cashed his major suit winners and, destined to go at least one off, had now to guess who had ♣J. If he plays ace and another club South has to concede the last trick to dummy. But Lambardi took the inference that Westra's failure to play a club when in with ♠A meant he held ♣J. So he threw North in with the fourth spade to go two off for a shared bottom.

The declarers who played on hearts at trick two also usually failed. South won and played a second diamond and again the finesse was refused. (Perhaps declarer should finesse at trick one, so he has no worries later.) If declarer now finesses hearts again South can exit with a spade; and if North wins the heart he can play a club.

By contrast Kholomeev as declarer led a *spade* at trick two. The king won and he ducked a heart. South led a second diamond. Kholomeev refused the finesse and led a second spade off dummy.

Mari, North, ducked again so the queen won. Now Kholomeev led another low heart which was won by South, Michel Bessis, who had only minor suit cards left. Bessis knew if he exited with the king of clubs he would be end-played again to lead a diamond, so he had to play a diamond first.

Declarer therefore not only got back his two diamond tricks in dummy – he also was able to take a winning heart finesse. This gave him nine tricks.

This was well played, but there were some other points of interest. On the second heart, when South played the queen, declarer made the technical play of unblocking the ten from dummy. This gave Mari the chance to overtake his partner's heart to play a club. Now declarer can only succeed by playing the queen. South cannot avoid giving dummy the lead. Note that declarer fails if he ducks the club – South wins the jack and exits carefully with the club king to end-play declarer into conceding two spade tricks to North.

Note also that if Mari puts his ace of spades on the second round and then plays a club South will win and play a second heart. Declarer lets this hold and South is end-played.

Suppose, finally, North takes his ace of spades on the first round of the suit in order to play a club. Declarer must finesse the queen. South wins this and plays a second diamond, declarer refusing the finesse. Declarer can cash two more spades before exiting with ace and another heart. North cannot afford to overtake because of dummy's ten of hearts, but if South is left on play he is finished.

Back to the Ajaccio Festival

By Barry Rigal

Win Allegaert and Jaggy Shivdasani had a spectacularly successful tournament, winning the Open Pairs and the Patten Teams – their attempt to play in the Mixed Pairs to complete the set was less successful!

Their winning margin in the Open Pairs was an astounding 9%. Part of the margin came on this hand against Quantin and Abecassis, where Win drew a delicate inference to be the only declarer to bring home his game.

E/W Vul. Dealer South.

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

West	North	East	South
–	<i>Jaggy</i>	–	<i>Win</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♣	Dble	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Four hearts is not a terrible contract but the cards do lie very poorly. Win got the ♣8 lead to the nine, ten and his three. East cashed the ♣A and then tried to create trump tricks for his partner by leading the ♣K – a low club would have worked better as the cards lie, but that was far from clear at the time.

Win ruffed high and paused for reflection when West threw the ♠3. The diamond finesse, though tempting, was a broken reed. East had failed to overcall with a good club suit and apparently the ♠Q – he could hardly have the ♦K as well.

Backing his judgement, Win drew three rounds of trumps, discovering the bad news, and then cashed the ♠AK. Now he led the winning ♣Q and West could not ruff or else he would be endplayed to lead diamonds into the ace-queen. So he discarded a diamond, but Win simply ruffed a spade to hand and endplayed West with his trump winner to lead diamonds in the two-card ending. (West could have defeated the contract by discarding a diamond rather than a spade at trick three, but that does not detract from Allegaert's card reading).

Director!

By Ernesto d'Orsi

In the first session, Gabriel Chagas was the almost passive protagonist of the most amazing bidding sequence seen in the Bridgevision, when Bompis–Abecassis bid up to 6♦, the trump suit being mentioned for the first time at the six level after five rounds of bidding, with every other suit and NT being mentioned at least twice.

In the second session he passively listened:

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Delmouly</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>Fucik</i>	<i>Chagas</i>
–	Pass	Pass	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥!	Pass
7♥	All Pass		

2♣ is forcing, 2♦ = neutral, 3♦ natural and now Fucik started reading the system which says: "Cheaper minor = second negative through 3♦". Probably he didn't read the first part and bid 3♥ as the second negative. He heard 7♥ from his partner and immediately after the ♣K opening lead, Fucik yelled for the Director!

Probably he was calling the Director against himself because he misread the system ... this became clearer when Fucik asked the Director if he was obliged to play 7♥ with the singleton facing AKJx ...

He played, of course, for six down and almost all the matchpoints went to Chagas–Zhang.

Nevertheless Chagas contributed towards the 40 match points he and Zhang got on this round.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Delmouly</i>	<i>Zhang</i>	<i>Fucik</i>	<i>Chagas</i>
–	–	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

The opening lead was the ♣J and Chagas proceeded down the following route, searching for another “top”. He won the ♣K in hand, played a small diamond to the nine, won the club return and played a trump; East took the ace and played another club, ruffed.

Now trumps were drawn, the ♥A cashed and, of course, West was unable to keep the fourth diamond as well as the four hearts. Five spades making was worth 20 out of the 24 match points, keeping Chagas in third place in the general ranking after 22 rounds of the Generali Masters.

The Editor / Player

By Guy Dupont

My friend and colleague, Patrick Jourdain is between the devil and the deep blue sea in the Fourth Generali Masters ... he is, in fact, both Editor of the Daily Bulletin and a player. How does he manage to do both? It really does pose many problems. As a journalist, I often ask him for a hand or an article for one of my columns, and he replies “Of course I have a hand for you!” Now he is a player as well, and asks me for a hand for the Bulletin, so I am glad to be able to respond and provide one for him - especially such a hand, where he played so well.

Here is the story of a lovely coup that happened during board 18 of the second session:

Board 18. NIS Vul. Dealer East.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Helgemo</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>Jourdain</i>	<i>Stoppa</i>
–	–	1♠	2♣
2♠	3♣	3♠	4♣
4♦	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Bidding the game in spades was one thing. Making it was another. Stoppa led the ♣K and Auken took his ace to play the ♥Q. After the ♥A, Patrick Jourdain played a diamond and took his first good decision when South played the ♦2 by calling for the ♦K. Then he played another diamond and had the pleasant experience of seeing the ♦Q and ♦A fall together.

Stoppa now led the ♣Q and Jourdain took his second good decision – not to ruff but to discard a diamond from the dummy. Now suddenly the end was easy, as he ruffed the next club in hand, cashed the top spades dropping the queen, and crossed to the jack of spades, drawing the last trump, to reach the good diamonds.

The editor–player scored 21/24 for this excellent play.

The Commentator's Chari-Vari

By Barry Rigal

The Mens Second Session

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Levy</i>	<i>Sharif</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
–	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

It might be considered a routine point of technique, but Alain Levy showed that he could defend effectively against the squeeze on this hand.

Omar had an unopposed auction to 3NT (many tables intervened with the E/W cards) and received the ♠8 lead. He correctly put in the ten, crossed to hand with a diamond and ran the ♥9. If Levy continues with a diamond, Cronier gets squeezed in the black suits. But Levy won the ♥J and played the ♣J, then won the ♥A to lead the ♣10. This effectively cut declarer's communications – if the defence do not play clubs twice, declarer can cash the ♠A as a Vienna coup, and run his red suit winners to generate 11 tricks.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Stoppa</i>	<i>Kholomeev</i>	<i>Jourdain</i>	<i>Justin Hackett</i>
–	–	2♥	3♦
3♥	4♠	All Pass	

Vadim Kholomeev has not been having a very successful tournament so far, but he reached the optimum spot on this hand and then gave it the best play.

As North he had an awkward decision at his first turn to speak: would 3♠ have been forcing? To avoid that problem he simply jumped to 4♠ and received the lead of the ♥A and a club switch. He took this in dummy, threw his club loser on the ♥K and then led a trump to the ♠K and carefully followed up with the ♠Q, pinning the ♠10 and holding his trump losers to two to make his contract. (The alternative line of leading a low trump to the seven initially is far less likely to hold your trump losers to two. If trumps are 3–3 all lines succeed.)

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Robson</i>	<i>Baldursson</i>	<i>Quantin</i>
–	–	1♣	1♠
2♣	3♣	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Somehow you rather expect the commentators to play less well than the participants – if they could do better they would be taking part in the event! During the session, Jean-Christophe Quantin showed that he could play a squeeze single-dummy far better than the eminent panel of commentators could manage at double-dummy.

When Bocchi led the ♣J, Quantin won it in hand and played a trump to the jack and queen. Baldursson ducked, so Quantin ducked a diamond in return. Now I believe a second diamond is best, but Jon cashed the ♠A and led a second spade. Quantin won and led a club to the ace and ruffed a club. This was the ending:

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

As you can see, West still has to discard, and whichever red suit he discards allows declarer to ruff out the suit and take the rest. Very nicely played.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Delmouly</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Hackett</i>
–	–	–	Pass
1♣	Pass	2♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♦	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	6♠	All Pass

The two leaders of the tournament, Piotr Gawrys and Bobby Richman, were involved in a comedy of errors on this hand, with Gawrys coming off far the better.

Piotr had reached a delicate slam, and Justin Hackett led the ♣J to trick one. Gawrys naturally covered this and Richman had to shift to a diamond to beat the contract legitimately – I think he should do so. When he played a heart, declarer was in with a chance.

The winning line is to cross to dummy's ♠Q, lead the ♥K, then ruff a club to run the trumps and squeeze South in the minors. Gawrys followed a different approach; if South had only four clubs without the ♦K, the winning line was very different. Gawrys led a spade to the ♠9 (intending to

ruff a club, go back to the ♠Q, ruff another club and claim.) He made the fine decision to play low from dummy, by saying “spade”* not “nine of spades.” Richman followed low, in sleep, and Gawrys ruffed a club and reverted to the winning minor suit squeeze when Hackett showed out, to make his slam.

* **Editor:** *The Laws of Bridge do NOT say “spade” must mean “low spade”. Players who use this lazy description are contravening one Law and running a major risk. An Appeal Committee has the right to decide that “spade” means “high spade” depending on the context.*

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

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

Hackett and Richman exacted revenge on the next deal, where Gawrys reached a thin game and ran into an accurate defence.

West	North	East	South
<i>Delmouly</i>	<i>Richman</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>	<i>Hackett</i>
1♣	1♥	Dble	2♦
Pass	2♥	2NT	3♦
Pass	Pass	3NT	Dble
All Pass			

Hackett led the ♦K and Gawrys took it to lead a club to the jack and queen. Richman played a spade, and dummy's queen won. Now a heart to the jack and king and a heart ducked to Richman saw him exit with a second spade.

Hackett took the ace and carefully got off play with a club and the defence had the upper hand. There was nothing that Gawrys could do in diamonds without surrendering the setting trick.

Jens Auken claimed that if you ducked the first trick, you could arrange to squeeze North in the black suits. If you do that, you certainly have to duck the first club as well – but is that sufficient? I leave it to the arm-chair analysts!

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Mari</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Abecassis</i>	<i>Jourdain</i>
–	INT	Pass	2♥
Dble	Pass	Pass	2♠
Dble	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Dble	All Pass	

Christian Mari managed a conjuring trick on this deal, to avoid disaster in Three Hearts doubled.

The defence started well, cashing the ♦A and shifting to the ♥Q. Mari in turn won the trick and thoughtfully exited with the ♥7 to give Wang the lead.

He got out with the ♣6 and Mari took the ♣9 with his king to play off two more rounds of trumps. Wang was in again and led the ♦K, allowing Mari to ruff and take his last trump and the ♠A.

This was the ending:

	♠ A Q		
	♥ –		
	♦ J 6		
	♣ –		
♠ K 3		♠ J 7	
♥ –		♥ –	
♦ –		♦ Q 9	
♣ 8 3		♣ –	
	♠ 10 9		
	♥ –		
	♦ –		
	♣ Q J		

Mari exited with a low spade, and Wang scored the ♠Q and ♠A, but had to concede the last two tricks to dummy.

However, both West and North were at fault here: Wang could have achieved +300 by winning the ♠A and exiting with the ♠Q. And Mari should have led the ♠K first – that

ensures he escapes for one down.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Freeman</i>	<i>Westra</i>	<i>Wang</i>	<i>Gawrys</i>
–	1♥	2♦	Pass
3♦	Dble	Rdbl	Pass
Pass	3♥	Dble	All Pass

Berry Westra also demonstrated Houdini-like techniques to escape lightly in Three Hearts doubled after his opponents had given him a chance to wriggle off the hook.

Had Wang led the ♦A and continued the suit he had an easy 500, but he led a low club to Westra's nine. The ♥J held, then Wang took the ♥K with the ace to underlead in diamonds.

Freeman assumed his partner knew what he was doing, so led back a club for Wang to ruff. Now declarer ruffed the next diamond and drew the last trump. This was the ending:

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

Westra led the ♠K to cut the defensive communications. He ruffed the diamond return and led a spade to the jack and when the ♠10 appeared he had miraculously escaped for one down and –100, a great result.

The Women's Series, Session One

By Tony Gordon

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

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

West	North	East	South
INT	2♠	All Pass	

East leads the ♦2. You play the ♦10 and it holds. What now? At the table, declarer crossed to the ♦A and played a heart to the king and ace. West won and switched to a low trump. Eventually declarer lost three hearts, two clubs and a spade for one down. Of course, West might have withheld the ♦K at trick one, but if you believe that East has led from ♦K–J, then West must have all the other high cards and a low heart at trick two stands out.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West

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

West	North	East	South
Zur-Albu	Dhondy	Levit-Porat	Harasimovicz
1♣	1♦	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦	2♥
3♣	3♥	4♠	All Pass

North/South can make 5♥ on this hand but they usually sold out to 4♠. The sole pair who played in 5♥, doubled by East, went one down when South spurned the trump finesse.

At the table in question, North could have doubled 2♣ to show hearts, but North/South were given a second chance when East chose to cue bid 2♦. Now South could come in with 2♥ but East was still allowed to play in 4♠.

South led the ♦9 and North won with the ace and returned the ♦10 for South to ruff. However, South took the ♦10 as suit preference and proceeded to underlead the ♥A. A grateful declarer was soon drawing trumps and pitching her losing club on the ♦Q for an overtrick and all the matchpoints.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

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

Board 17 left some players with egg on their faces.

The normal auction was 3♠ by North followed by a raise to 4♠ by South. At two tables East cashed ♦AK then played ♣A and another club. West won her ♣K and continued craftily with a low diamond and both declarers viewed to ruff with the ♠9 and went two down.

At another table, East cashed the ♦KA and then switched to the ♣7. West won her ♣K and continued with the ♦Q. Declarer ruffed high and was soon claiming her contract. Presumably West thought she had shown six diamonds and was being put in to lead a third diamond and promote her partner's ♠jxx, but if the ♣7 was a true card, then declarer had to have another club.

