

40TH WORLD TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

15-29

OCTOBER 2011

THE NETHERLANDS



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DAILY BULLETIN

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A MAGICAL START



Magician Hans Kazan, third from left, with five WBF leaders: former Presidents Bobby Wolff, José Damiani and Jaime Ortiz-Patiño, current President Gianarrigo Rona and former President Ernesto D'Orsi.

In an appropriate kickoff for a competition in which players will try to make magic with the playing cards, the 40th World Bridge Team Championships were declared open just before 8 p.m. Saturday in Veldhoven.

As the World Bridge Federation pennant unfurled, a stately gathering of WBF presidents, assisted by magician Hans Kazan, made the start official. Play begins today at 10:30 a.m.

"The stage is yours," declared WBF President Gianarrigo Rona. "Competing against each other in spirit of sportsmanship and high standard of ethics will be your contribution to the success of this event."

Moments later Rona was joined on stage by former WBF Presidents Jaime Ortiz Patino (now President Emeritus), Jose Damiani (WBF Chairman Emeritus and current President of the International Mind Sports Association), Ernesto D'Orsi and Bobby Wolff.

The master of ceremonies was Kazan, who performed card tricks and other feats of legerdemain in between introductions of the speakers. Near the end of the program, three of Kazan's offspring – Oscar, Renzo and Mara – wowed the audience with

several illusions before Rona took the podium.

The official welcome was offered by Dutch Bridge Federation President Peter Zwart. "I'm delighted to see so many people in Veldhoven," he said. "This must be a bridge championship for the players. It is a place for players to be at home."

Veldhoven Mayor Jack Mikkers said the 40th Bridge Team Championships – featuring the Bermuda Bowl, Venice Cup, D'Orsi Senior Bowl and the World Transnational Open Teams – "is something to be proud of. A sport that requires such mental gymnastics could not be held in a better place."

Mikkers noted that the area, known as the Brainport Region, is a hotbed of technological creativity and innovation: "The machine that produces the fastest chips in the world is in Veldhoven, and the compact disc was invented five kilometers from here."

The mayor added, "Our restaurants, bars and shops want to meet you in a friendly way. Feel at home."

Last year in Philadelphia, Damiani ended 16 year as WBF president, turning the reins of the organization over to Rona.

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Line-Up

For online line-up visit <http://87.213.232.196/ScoringUtil/LineupSystem.asp>



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LAVAZZA



Ministerie van Volksgezondheid,
Welzijn en Sport

WBF President Welcome

Mr. Mayor of Veldhoven, Jack Mikkers, Mr. President of the Nederlandse Olympic Committee, André Bolhuis, Mr. Deputy of the Province North-Brabant, Bert Pauli, Mr. Chairman of the Dutch Bridge Federation, Peter Zwart, Mr. President of IMSA, José Damiani, Mr. President Emeritus of the WBF, Jaime Ortiz-Patiño, Mr. the Ambassadors of Australia, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Authorities, dear friends and colleagues of the World Bridge Federation, ladies and gentleman, dear players, dear friends, I am very pleased and honored to welcome you here in Veldhoven at the Opening Ceremony of the 40th World Bridge Teams Championship and thank you for coming.



This is my first official speech at such a great event, the most important in the bridge calendar and I hope that you will forgive my emotion, due also to the presence of the magician, as I am hoping that he does not decide to make me disappear.

The WBF comes back for the fifth time to Netherlands with a world event – after the World Pairs in 1966 in Amsterdam, the Youth Teams in 1987 again in Amsterdam, and the Olympiad twice, in 1980 in Valkenburg and in 2000 in Maastricht – but it is the first time that the World Teams Championship has been held in the “orange” country.

Here in Veldhoven, we celebrate the 40th edition of the Teams Championship – born in 1950 in Bermuda – with the patronage and under the auspices of the European Olympic Committees, the Nederlandse Olympic Committee, SportAccord and IMSA. This is the sign of the importance of our role in the great sports families and we are rightly very proud of it.

The occasion is even more extraordinary because for the first time in our history we have here, all together, five WBF Presidents. I am glad to express both on behalf of the whole bridge movement and personally our gratitude to Jaime Ortiz-Patiño, Ernesto D’Orsi, Bobby Wolff and José Damiani.

I am pleased to underline that this event has been realized thanks to the generosity of the Chairman of the BC ‘t Onstein, Mr. Hans Melchers, as well as the great support of the Nederlandse Bridge Bond, chaired by our friend Peter Zwart. Not forgetting, of course, the great help received from the City of Veldhoven, the Brainport Eindhoven and all our sponsor-friends to whom our thanks goes.

I would like, in addition, to congratulate the Local Organizing Committee, with my dear friends Eric Laurant; the Chairman, Armand Trippaers, the Vice Chairman and Just van der Kam, the On Site Organiser. I am sure that this event will achieve the deserved success rewarding the excellent work done by them with passion, enthusiasm and dedication.

Let me emphasize that this championship was conceived and executed with the comfort and needs of the players in mind. We have all the benefits of a magnificent venue, with ample space and with the most modern bridge technologies. The innovative Card Reader System which, after appropriate tests, will be launched here, representing a real revolution in the field of application of technology for our competitions, and I am confident that it will be welcomed by the players, the championship’s officials and the spectators, too.

Dear players, we tried to do our best in the preparation and we will continue to do it in managing the event to meet your expectations.

Now the stage is yours. Competing against each other in spirit of sportsmanship and high standard of ethics will be your contribution to the success of this event.

You have the great opportunity to enjoy once again a great bridge event in peace and harmony and, as Hans Melchers wrote, even if you are not winning, every hand you play represents another wonderful experience.

Enjoy and good luck.

...continued from page 1.

Although Damiani is busy as president of the mind sports association, he told the crowd, “My heart belongs to bridge. My heart belongs to you. I’m pleased to be with all my friends.”

Andre Bolhuis, former international hockey player, is now president of the Netherlands Olympic Committee. He noted that the Netherlands Bridge Federation, with more than 100,000 members, is one of the largest such organizations in the world. “Bridge is important in our country,” he said, noting that the world championships will help with the Olympic committee’s efforts to attract the Games in 2028. The tournament he said, “contributes highly to our Olympic ambitions.”

Bert Pauli, representing the Province North Brabant, welcomed visitors and described how the region became known

as the Brainport.

Rona’s address was his first at a world championship since he took over as WBF president last year. He paid tribute to the tournament’s sponsors, including Hans Melchers, Honorary Chairman BC ‘t Onstein. In his message in the tournament program, Melchers said, “When I was offered the opportunity to sponsor the Dutch Open Team, I said yes immediately ... When I was invited to sponsor the World Bridge Team Championships 2011, once again I did not hesitate. A once in a lifetime opportunity for the Netherlands to host this major event.”

Rona noted that the tournament in Veldhoven is the fifth world championship in the Netherlands but the first time the World Bridge Team Championships will be played in the country.

Message from the SportAccord President



I am very pleased to be the patron of the 40th edition of the World Bridge Team Championships taking place here in Veldhoven from 14-29 October. Every year, bridge players and fans from around the world eagerly anticipate this event. We all look forward to the exciting performances by top-level teams participating in this fascinating and very popular Mind Sport!

On this occasion, I would like to underline the exceptional qualities of the Mind Sports. They are truly global, played passionately in most countries and throughout countless cultures. Their power to bring people from different backgrounds and age groups together has been demonstrated throughout centuries.

In December of this year, the world of Mind Sports will be introduced to a new and noteworthy international event: the SportAccord World Mind Games. The capital of China, Beijing, is the host with five major Mind Sports participants: Bridge, Chess, Draughts, Xiangqi (Chinese Chess) and Go. The Games bring together the world's best players for a competition characterized by intellect, strategy, concentration and mental stamina.

The SportAccord World Mind Games have the potential to reach half a billion passionate Mind Sports players worldwide. New media, games software and information technology let the fans experience the event through the online tournament. This tournament is organised for each of the Mind Sports participating in the SportAccord World Mind Games and takes place in time sequences from September to November, 2011. The online tournament in Bridge is already active, with the winners receiving an invitation to the venue in Beijing. The four largest Bridge platforms, three international and one Chinese, host our online tournament. At this very moment, there are tens of thousands of players competing to win the prize in the SportAccord World Mind Games online Bridge tournament! At SportAccord, we are very proud of the support that the International Bridge Federation has provided to all of our activities.

I wish all the teams an outstanding competition at this year's Championships! I am confident that we will witness some memorable Bridge moments in the upcoming days.

Hein Verbruggen
President, SportAccord

VUGRAPH PRESENTATIONS



Round 1 (10.30)

Match	Room	Teams	Series Table
BBO 1	8 Open (VG Studio) 50 Closed	South Africa - Netherlands	BB/1
BBO 2	12 Open 24 Closed	USA 1 - USA 2	BB/2
BBO 3	13 Open 23 Closed	Poland - Egypt	BB/10
BBO 4	16 Open 22 Closed	Australia - Israel	BB/6
BBO 5	17 Open 21 Closed	USA 1 - USA 2	VC/25
BBO 6	18 Open 9 Closed	Sweden - Iceland	BB/7
OurGame	19 Open 11 Closed	New Zealand - China	BB/8
StepBridge	14 Open (studio) 10 Closed	Bulgaria - Netherlands	OSB/46

Round 2 (13.45)

Match	Room	Teams	Series Table
BBO 1	8 Open (VG Studio) 50 Closed	USA 1 - China	BB/5
BBO 2	12 Open 24 Closed	Italy - Japan	BB/4
BBO 3	13 Open 23 Closed	Germany - Netherlands	VC/25
BBO 4	16 Open 22 Closed	Indonesia - France	OSB/51
BBO 5	17 Open 21 Closed	Brazil - India	BB/10
BBO 6	18 Open 9 Closed	Sweden - England	VC/31
OurGame	19 Open 11 Closed	China - Indonesia	VC/23
StepBridge	14 Open (studio) 10 Closed	USA 2 - Netherlands	BB/11

Round 3 (16.45)

Match	Room	Teams	Series Table
BBO 1	8 Open (VG Studio) 50 Closed	Italy - Bulgaria	BB/5
BBO 2	12 Open 24 Closed	Canada - Israel	BB/2
BBO 3	13 Open 23 Closed	USA 1 - Egypt	BB/6
BBO 4	16 Open 22 Closed	France - Italy	VC/28
BBO 5	17 Open 21 Closed	Pakistan - Sweden	BB/7
BBO 6	18 Open 9 Closed	Denmark - USA 2	OSB/46
OurGame	19 Open 11 Closed	Chile - China	BB/11
StepBridge	14 Open (studio) 10 Closed	China - Netherlands	VC/31

Maria Erhart

In October 1969 a young Austrian women happened to drop into the *Cafe Monopol* in Vienna. In the corner three tables were occupied by very serious-looking people playing cards. It turned out to be a fateful decision as she stayed to watch them. Their game fascinated her so much, that every day for the next ten days at exactly 5:00 p.m. she went to the cafe to watch them play. On the eleventh day, they asked her to play.

So began the bridge career of one of the finest and most charismatic players in the history of the game, Maria Erhart.



Image by Louk Herber for BridgeTopics.com

Born in Vienna, she lived in Rattenberg. She did her studies at the world trade university there, started a job in merchandising, and afterwards in a leading position of marketing research. She lived in the beautiful Tyrol with Peter, a medical doctor whom she married in 1987, working as a medical assistant and looking after the commercial side of his profession. It took more than four hours to go to Vienna which restricted the opportunity for training with her teammates, but it gave her more time and opportunities to pursue her other hobbies, like being responsible for the social community affairs of her city's government, skiing, playing tennis and golf, sometimes treating Peter's piano and sometimes going to the great music festivals of Salzburg and Bayreuth.

So far as Maria's bridge development was concerned she didn't take lessons or read a book, she learned simply by watching and talking to good players. A year after learning the game she went to the tournament in Venice where she met the top Italians and got a copy of *The Blue Club*. In 1971 she met Rixi Markus and thereafter they played once or twice a year. They won the St. Moritz teams just two months before Rixi's death in 1992.

Like Rixi, she did not always treat her partners with velvet gloves, but everybody who entered into the game with her had long-lasting memories of the event and left a better player.

Just five years after her introduction to the game she made her debut in the Austrian Open team, and a year later she won a bronze medal in the European Women's teams partnering Barbara Lindinger.

In 1991, although she could command a place in the Open team, Maria decided to concentrate primarily on women's events. The European Championships that year were in Killarney and Maria focused her attention on putting together a strong Austrian women's team. The first foundations had been laid at the Olympiad three years earlier, but it was in Ireland that her work came to fruition.

Many deals from that tournament could be used to illustrate Maria's dynamic approach to the game. This one is from the match against Israel:

Dealer West. None Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Naveh	Erhart	Melech	Bamberger
1♠	2♠*	Pass	3♠*
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♣
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

In the other room, North overcalled 3♣ to show her two suiter and South jumped to 5♦.

Once her partner showed a decent hand with both minors, Maria realised that West's opening bid meant any missing high cards were likely to be well placed and she jumped to the excellent slam that gave her team 11 IMPs.

Having won the European Championships Austria travelled to Yokohama for the Venice Cup (it was there that I met Maria for the first time). In the quarter finals they played a historic match against Germany. Germany won the first set 48-45, the third 36-20, the fourth 51-33, the fifth 56-37 and the sixth 37-8. That adds up to an 85 IMP advantage, but Austria had taken a remarkable second set 105-10 to win the match by 10 IMPs.

This is one of the deals from that incredible second set:

Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Bamberger	Zenkel	Erhart	von Arnim
	1♠	2♣	3♣*
Pass	3♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	4NT*	DbI
5♦	Pass	Pass	DbI
All Pass			

At the other table Austria were allowed to play in 4♠, which made in comfort.

Sabine Auken (Zenkel as she then was) cashed the ace of hearts and switched to a diamond. But when when South withheld the ace the heart ruff was lost and Austria had 15 IMPs.

Despite two extended absences from the game, one because of work commitments, the other due to illness, Maria was the driving force behind the Austrian Women's team. In a report on the 1992 Olympiad in the London Times, Albert Dormer wrote: 'Erhart could grow into the role once held by the late Rixi Markus, as the *Grande Dame* of European Bridge.'

I remember that World Championship particularly well, as I was captain of the British team that lost to Austria in the final. After three sessions GB held a comfortable lead, but then, just as they had against Germany the year before, Austria produced a match-winning set.

This deal is from the match between Austria and France:

Dealer North. Both Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Weigkricht	Delor	Fischer	Lise
	2♦*	Pass	2♥*
2♠	5♦	5♠	6♦
All Pass			

This slow approach meant there was little chance of a defensive error – a spade lead and a heart switch gave declarer no hope. At the other table Maria opened the North hand with what we might call a 'Landy Slam Try' (you bid a slam, then you try to make it) of 6♦. When East led the ace of clubs declarer was soon recording +1390.

Maria won a second world title that year, the *Generali Women's World Masters Individual*, but soon thereafter was forced to take a break as a result of illness and it was not until 1996 that she was able to return to the fray, winning the *European Mixed Pairs* with Fritz Kubak.

In 1998 Maria was on the Austrian team that won another World Championship, the *Louis Vuitton McConnell Cup* in Lille. The following year Austria took second place in the European Championships in Malta.

In 2002 she was a member of the Lavazza squad that captured the *European Mixed Teams* title in Oostende and a year later she won the *European Women's Pairs* in Menton with Jovi Smederevac.

Here is deal from that event, which shows how tough life can be for a defender:

Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Midskog	Erhart	Bertheau	Smederevac
	1♣*	Pass	Pass
Pass	1♥*	Pass	1♦*
Pass	INT	Pass	1♠*
All Pass		Pass	3NT

With North having shown a balanced 20-21 East led a diamond and declarer won with the six and continued with the king. When that held she played the jack and East took the ace. With no clue as to declarer's distribution West parted with two clubs and then threw a spade when East exited with a diamond. A club finesse gave declarer four tricks in that suit and when West discarded a second spade she had a slightly incredible +490.

Although plagued by a serious debilitating disease, Maria continued to appear at the table. This story appears by kind permission of its author, the Editor of IMP magazine, Jan van Cleeff:

Don't spoil Maria's Brilliances

Playing the Open Pairs of the St. Moritz Winter Festival with Maria Erhart, I was confronted with the well known Bols Tip of Brazil's Gabriel Chagas, 'Don't spoil your partners' brilliances'.

Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
	Jan		Maria
			Pass
INT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

3NT is in serious trouble on the lead of a heart honour or an unlikely diamond. However I kicked off with a low heart to the ten. Declarer played a club to the king and a club to the jack. Maria won the ace, paused 12 seconds and found the great switch of a surrounding ♠J.

Declarer rightfully played low on the first and second spade. Coming in with the ♠Q I returned a heart to the ace to leave this position:

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

Declarer crossed to hand in diamonds. On the penultimate club I discarded a heart, but on the last club I had to surrender and the overtrick had materialised.

Not cashing the ♠A prevented us from winning the tournament. Still, Maria's temper was not affected. Why? As a result her husband Peter, playing with Heini Berger, finished on top.

Apart from the tournaments I have already mentioned Maria had countless other successes at national level, as well as in numerous festivals, etc. (The chapter on Maria in Marc Smith's World Class is terrific.) This year, St. Moritz honoured Maria who, although handicapped by her disease, finished third in the Mixed Pairs, second in the Open Pairs and first in the Teams!

Maria Erhart was born in 1944. After a long and increasingly arduous struggle against incapacitating disease she passed away during the night of September 2nd 2011.

This Sporting Life

Leaving no stone unturned we bring you a round up of what's happening in the world of sports. If your favourite is not mentioned let the Daily Bulletin know!

Horse Racing

Unbeaten Frankel cruised to his ninth successive victory as he landed the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes on the inaugural British Champions Day at Ascot.

The three-year-old colt, trained by Sir Henry Cecil and ridden by Tom Queally, was a comfortable winner on the country's richest ever raceday.

Frankel had won all eight of his previous runs, over seven furlongs and a mile, and never looked in danger of losing the QEII, worth £1m, once he stalked his stable-mate Bullet Train. It was the fifth Group One win of his career, and his fourth of the season, after victories in the 2,000 Guineas, St James's Palace Stakes and Sussex Stakes

Football

Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson was disappointed with the referee's decision to award the free-kick that lead to Liverpool's goal in the 1-1 draw at Anfield.

United secured a point when Javier Hernandez equalised Steven Gerrard's goal.

Ferguson says he left Wayne Rooney on the bench because of his disappointment after UEFA's decision to ban him for three games following his sending off for England against Montenegro.

Rugby Union

Wales' World Cup dream ended in the most heart-breaking fashion as they fell one point short after an epic effort in Auckland.

A controversial red card for skipper and key man Sam Warburton reduced Wales to 14 men for 61 minutes and seemed to have cost them the semi-final as Morgan Parra kicked three penalties for France.

A stirring, tireless second-half display somehow kept them in the game, Mike Phillips darting over for the game's only try with 23 minutes left to set up a desperate finale.

But Stephen Jones hit the post with the conversion which would have snatched the lead, and Leigh Halfpenny then came up just short with a long-range penalty at the death.

For France, beaten twice in the pool stages and seemingly on the ropes, now comes their third World Cup final in the most unlikely of circumstances.

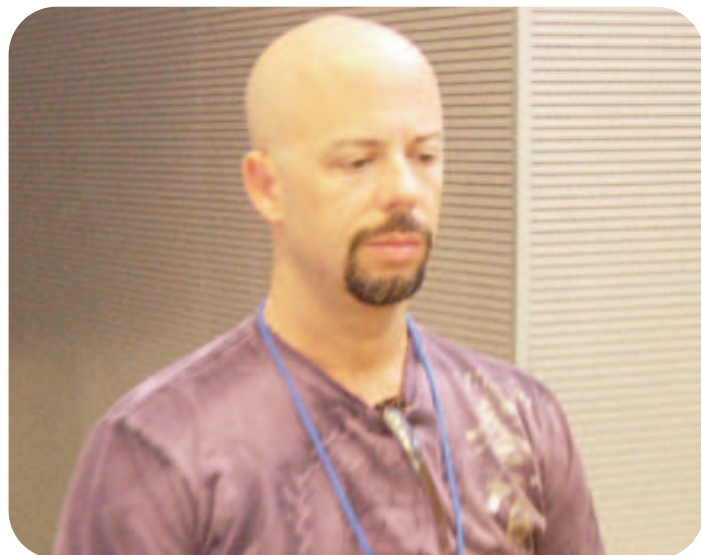
Youth Has Its Day

by Brian Senior

The USA is the current holder of two of the WBF's Open World team titles – the Bermuda Bowl, won by the Nickell team in Sao Paulo in 2009, and the Rosenblum, won by Team Diamond in Philadelphia in 2010. For the Bermuda Bowl at this tournament, USA has the right to enter two teams. Rather than have one trial from which two teams are decided, they have one trial each year, each of which qualifies one team to represent USA at the World Championships. In 2010, a team headed by Martin Fleisher won the trials, so going into the 2011 trials we knew that one of the two reigning World Champion teams would not be in Netherlands. And the shock result of the 2011 trials means that neither the Nickell nor the Diamond team will play in this year's Bermuda Bowl.

The winners of the 2011 trial were Joe Grue/Justin Lall, John Hurd/Joel Wooldridge, Kevin Bathurst/Daniel Zagorin. All but Zagorin are in their early 30s. Zagorin is the only one not to have represented USA at World Youth Teams level. Bathurst represented USA in three Youth Championships from 1999 to 2003, winning a bronze medal in Paris in 2003. Hurd represented his country four times from 1999 to 2005. He won bronze in Paris in 2003, but gold in Mangaratiba in 2001 and in Sydney in 2005. Wooldridge played in no fewer than six championships from 1995 to 2005. He won bronze in Paris in 2003, silver in Florida in 1999, and gold in Mangaratiba in 2001 and Sydney in 2005. Grue played in four championships from 2001 to 2006. He won bronze in Paris in 2003, and was a member of all three successful USA teams, winning the gold in Mangaratiba in 2001, Sydney in 2005, and Bangkok in 2006. Lall played in the two gold medal teams in Sydney in 2005 and Bangkok 2006. Only 24, he still qualifies as a youth player. Various team members have represented USA in other world youth events.

Fifteen teams took part in the trials. The format was straight knockout, each match comprising 120 boards



Geoff Hampson, USA

played over two days, making for a total of 60 boards a day for eight days – a tough schedule but rightly so, as the Bermuda Bowl itself is also a test of stamina as well as technique and judgement. The field was seeded with Team Diamond having a bye to the quarter-finals. Bathurst was originally seeded in the bracket 9-12.

In the Round of 16, Bathurst led throughout against Mahaffey, eventually winning by a slightly deceptive 291-256 after Mahaffey gained in each of the last three 15-board sets.

In the quarter-final, Bathurst faced the second-seeded Nickell team, reigning Bermuda Bowl champions. Down 57-79 after 30 boards, Bathurst moved into a 184-139 lead after 75. Nickell came back in the sixth set to close to 198-174, but Bathurst pulled away again in the penultimate set and won by 282-237.

The semi-final against Wolfson saw Bathurst trail by 26-42 after the first 15 boards but take the lead in the second set and never lose it again. They pulled away to win by 262-180, Wolfson conceding with a set to play.

Diamond had justified their seeding by getting through to the final with relatively few alarms. They won the first set by 43-36 but Bathurst won each of the next six sets to lead by 256-175 with one set to go. Diamond played on and won the set by 82-32 but Bathurst had won by 288-257 and is USA2 in these championships. Spare a little sympathy for the Diamond team – they were also the losing finalists in the 2010 trials.

Over the course of the trials, the young challengers earned their points in all areas of the game. This is just a sample of their gains from the final.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

<p>♠ 6 ♥ A K 6 2 ♦ K 10 9 5 4 2 ♣ K J</p>	<p>♠ K 10 8 4 ♥ J 9 8 ♦ J 8 7 3 ♣ 3 2</p>	<p>♠ A J 3 2 ♥ Q 7 4 3 ♦ — ♣ A Q 8 6 4</p>	<p>♠ Q 9 7 5 ♥ 10 5 ♦ A Q 6 ♣ 10 9 7 5</p>
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West	North	East	South
Hampson	Bathurst	Greco	Zagorin
–	–	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
Wooldridge	Platnick	Hurd	Diamond
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	5NT	Pass
6♥	All Pass		

Diamond led by 43-36 at the end of the first set and the second set began with six flat boards. Board 22 saw Bathurst take a lead which they were never to relinquish.

Eric Greco's 2♦ opening was the old Precision style, 10-15 three-suited with short diamonds. Two No Trump bid asked and 3NT showed the shape. Now 4♣ was an end-signal, demanding 4♦ so that Geoff Hampson's next bid would be a sign-off. Hampson won the trump lead with the queen and led a second heart to the ace. He ruffed a diamond, played a club to hand and ruffed a second diamond then another club to hand to draw the last trump. The ace of spades provided an entry to dummy to cash the long clubs; twelve tricks for +680.

Hurd opened with a three-plus card 1♣, and his third bid completed the picture of a three-suited near-minimum hand. Having limited himself, he was delighted to co-operate in a slam hunt and, though Wooldridge signed-off in 4♥ after making just one cuebid, Hurd went on with a grand slam try. Again, the lead was a trump, Diamond knowing of the diamond shortage in declarer's hand and hoping to cut down his ruffs. Hurd won the ace and ruffed a diamond, played a club to the jack and ruffed a second diamond, then cashed the queen of hearts and crossed to the king of clubs to draw the last trump. He too had the spade entry to the long clubs; +1430 and 13 IMPs to Bathurst.



Eric Greco, USA

This line would not be available on a spade lead as there would be no late entry to the long clubs. Declarer does not have the entries to hand to ruff spades instead of diamonds. If he therefore plays to ruff diamonds in hand, he will be dependent on an even club split and, when that does not materialise, will go down. There is a winning line, to ruff two diamonds then give up a diamond, dropping the ace by leading low from dummy. Though the queen does appear when declarer takes the second ruff, that could be from several different diamond holdings. So he would be pretty pleased with himself if he read the position correctly and made his contract.

If that first swing was decided by the bidding and opening lead, these next two were all about the play and later defence. Bathurst came out on top on both deals.

Board 49. Dealer North. None Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Hampson	Grue	Greco	Lall
–	1♥	1♠	Dble
2♠	3♣	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	5♣
All Pass			

West	North	East	South
Wooldridge	Moss	Hurd	Gitelman
–	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Dble	3♠	4NT
Pass	5♣	All Pass	

Grue opened the North hand, after which there was never any doubt that game would be reached. By contrast, Moss preferred to pass then come in with a double at his next turn. Gitelman had been obliged to pass over the 1♠ opening on his right but he too now caught up, bidding 4NT to ask for Moss's minor. Both Easts led the king of spades then switched to their singleton diamond.

Moss won the ace of diamonds, cashed the ace of hearts and led a diamond to his king. Had that stood up, he would have been in good shape, but Hurd ruffed and returned his remaining trump. Moss won the ace and ruffed a heart low, then cross-ruffed in the majors. However, the five-two heart split meant that he was left with a heart losers at the end so was one down for –50.

spade up, Greco taking the ace and returning a trump. This ran to the ten and now Hurd played a diamond to the ten and king. Hampson returned a diamond to Greco's ace and he played a third trump. Hurd tried to ruff out the queen-jack of spades and, when that did not materialise, ruffed a low diamond, the jack coming down. The nine of diamonds was now the tenth trick; +420 and 11 IMPs to Bathurst.

Hurd was a little fortunate. Had the diamonds been a little differently laid out, one diamond ruff would not have been sufficient. Perhaps he should have played a diamond at trick two rather than touching trumps.

Board 73. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Diamond</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Platnick</i>	<i>Zagorin</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
All Pass			

West	North	East	South
<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Greco</i>	<i>Hurd</i>	<i>Hampson</i>
–	Pass	Pass	3♠
Dble	4♠	4NT	Pass
5♦	Pass	5♥	All Pass



Joe Grue, USA

Zagorin opened 1♠ in third seat and Diamond passed! Surely, even if you play equal level conversion as showing extras, it is normal to double with the West cards, planning to convert a club response to diamonds. When Bathurst used Drury and passed the minimum-showing 2♠ rebid, diamond passed again. Platnick may have been short in spades in pass-out seat, but he could hardly imagine that his partner had such a strong hand, and that he had to balance. Zagorin lost two diamonds, a club and a spade; +140.

In the other room, Hampson tried a pre-emptive opening but failed to silence Wooldridge. Greco raised to 4♠ and Hurd bid 4NT, two places to play, then converted 5♦ to 5♥, ending the auction. There was nothing to the play, Hurd just losing the two aces; +650 and 13 IMPs to Bathurst.

Board 82. Dealer East. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Grue</i>	<i>Greco</i>	<i>Lall</i>	<i>Hampson</i>
–	–	INT	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

West	North	East	South
<i>Diamond</i>	<i>Bathurst</i>	<i>Platnick</i>	<i>Zagorin</i>
–	–	INT	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Grue/Lall had an interesting piece of system for this one. Two Diamonds was a transfer and 2♠ a relay, demanding 2NT. Now the raise to 3NT showed a balanced hand that was happy to see partner choose to play 3NT when holding three hearts. An immediate 3NT over 2♥ would have shown a hand more suited to suit play. Looking at soft values in the minors and a source of tricks in spades, Lall chose the no-trump game.

Hampson led the seven of diamonds, ducked to the king, and Greco returned the suit to Lall's queen. Lall knocked out the ace of hearts and had ten painless tricks for +430.

Platnick/Diamond had the auction that any of us could have duplicated to the heart game. Again the lead was a diamond, the eight – third and low. Brian Platnick ducked this to the king and back came the five, Zagorin following with

the two. Platnick led the three of hearts to the king then the two back to the queen and ace. Zagorin led a diamond and Bathurst could ruff dummy's ace with the ten. He excited with a club and Platnick won, ran the trumps and tried to split the spades. When they proved to be four-two, he was one down for -50 and 10 IMPs to Bathurst.

This was a pretty poor effort from declarer. Firstly, playing the jack of hearts on the second round instead of low to the queen would have left him in a position to over-ruff the diamond and claim ten tricks. Secondly, if only he had led a middle heart to the queen on the second round, he could now have afforded the diamond ruff, as he would have been able to ruff a spade then lead the two of hearts to his six to cash the fifth spade. For a strong player to mess up this hand so badly illustrates what tiredness and pressure can do to almost anyone.

Board 96. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

♠ 7 3 2 ♥ K Q 10 7 4 ♦ 10 9 6 2 ♣ 10	<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K 10 9 8 ♥ J ♦ Q J 7 5 4 3 ♣ 5 3	♠ Q J 6 4 ♥ 8 6 5 3 ♦ 8 ♣ K 9 6 4
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ A 5 ♥ A 9 2 ♦ A K ♣ A Q J 8 7 2											



Joel Wooldridge, USA

West	North	East	South
Grue	Hampson	Lall	Greco
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♣	Pass	6♣
All Pass			

West	North	East	South
Moss	Hurd	Gitelman	Wooldridge
Pass	Pass	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♥
Dble	Rdbl	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

On my final offering, Hurd/Wooldridge comprehensively outbid Hampson/Greco.

Greco opened 1♣, strong, and rebid 3♣, natural and game-forcing, over the negative 1♦ response. Now 3♦ was potentially merely a waiting bid with nothing to show. When Hampson next showed some club support, Greco assumed that he would also have some slam interest and jumped to the club slam in hope of giving Grue a blind lead.

Six Clubs is not a terrible contract, requiring little more than a three-two trump split. But trumps were four-one and there was no way home after Grue's lead of the queen of hearts. Greco won the heart and played the queen of clubs to keep control. Lall took the king and forced dummy to ruff a heart and when he could ruff the second diamond there was also a heart to cash for down two; -100.

Wooldridge opened 2♣, standard, and rebid 2♥, Kokish, either hearts or GF balanced. Hurd duly relayed and found that his partner had the strong balanced type. He asked for a major then, on getting a negative response, introduced his long diamonds. Wooldridge was happy to co-operate as he had so much playing potential, and Hurd redoubled four hearts to show a control. When Wooldridge could cuebid a second time, Hurd showed his spade control and Wooldridge settled for the small slam, knowing that the king of clubs must be missing.

Hurd won the heart lead, cashed the top diamonds and ruffed a heart back to hand. He drew the missing trumps and took the club finesse, came back to hand with a spade and repeated the finesse. Ruffing out the clubs produced all 13 tricks for +940 and 14 IMPs to Bathurst.

The Bathurst team will be thrilled at their success, but they know that they have completed only the first half of the job. The real goal is, of course, the Bermuda Bowl.



Hans Melchers: My incentive is sheer enthusiasm

by Marjo Chorus

It's pouring with rain. A team of black Berner Sennen dogs guard the entrance to the Onstein Castle, barks deep and penetrating. My host, Hans Melchers, calls out to me from the shelter of the hall: "Just come along, they won't hurt you when I'm here!" I reach the entrance to the castle, escorted by a couple of giant, soaking-wet dogs that are now wagging their tails. Despite the rain, the view of the symmetrically laid out garden and pond is breathtaking. Some peacocks are walking on the grass. Hans Melchers, known among bridge players as the person who enabled the Dutch Team to become World Champions in Chile in 1993 and who gave a (financial) guarantee in 2010 for the World Championships in the Netherlands in 2011, remarks: "I'm very proud of those peacocks. They have only recently started nesting here."

Love of the game

"I didn't learn to play bridge until I was 50 years old," says Melchers. "It's a pity that it was as late as that. My wife organised a bridge drive to celebrate my 50th birthday. Then she invites (Alan) Sontag and (Billy) Eisenberg, two world-class American bridge players! You will understand we ended up right at the bottom! But I had been grabbed by the game!"

In the 1990s Melchers is persuaded to sponsor a training programme for the Dutch Open Team that is to run for several years. "I happened to get chatting with Fayo Durksz and André Boekhorst. Boekhorst and I really got on like a house on fire. He said: 'You really have to step in here, we need this desperately. Just regard it as a business assignment.' And he immediately handed me a list of trainers for me to choose from....." Melcher's eye fell on the Canadian Eric Kokish. "I could get on well with him." The training sessions started at the castle in 1990-1991.

The Chile team

In the beginning, some of the players grumbled at having to travel all the way to Vorden for their training. But the enthusiasm grew. Not really surprising, if you regularly get to play against opponents from all over the world. "Yes," says Melchers, "almost everybody has been here to play against the team." He grins and continues: "I have a funny story about that French top player, (Paul) Chemla. During the game, one of my dogs is lying under the table and Chemla shows it his cards and says: 'Chien, chien, regarde mes belles trefles!' ('Dog, look at my fantastic clubs!') The opponent immediately calls the tournament director. 'Well', Chemla tells the TD innocently, 'I have such good cards, everyone will probably bid small slam but I want to show the dog that they are good enough for grand slam!' Isn't that great?"

The training and support of the selection were wholly the responsibility of Kokish and captain Jaap Trouwborst. "Even though I had no say in the selection of the team, Kokish and Trouwborst did involve me. We had a very open and pleasant relationship", says Melchers, looking back on the time when the team was selected. "And, would you believe, they went to Chile and scored well there. It was nerve-racking, terribly exciting with those measly 3 points of difference against America in the semi-finals!" There was no BBO yet, so the match could not be followed live in the Netherlands. Suddenly he is informed that the Dutch are in the finals against Norway. "I immediately phoned my daughter Claudia and we got on the



first available flight. When we arrived in Chile, they had 30 deals left to play." He remembers how (Enri) Leufkens and (Berry) Westra reached the wrong slam, blood-curdling, cost heaps of points. "But after that, they played really well." He is deeply moved when the players leave the playing room jubilantly. World Champions!

World Championships 2011

Meanwhile, Melchers is a well known figure, both nationally and internationally. He meets the present NPC Eric Laurant, with whom he forms a long lasting bridge partnership. They play together at bridge club 't Onstein, which he has accommodated in his own bridge farm. "All sorts of people play at that club," he says. "We play on Wednesday afternoons and Friday evenings." The members of his Meesterklasse teams are present on Friday nights, if they are in the country. He continues: "Do you know what makes bridge so special? If you play tennis against a good player, you are bound to be thrashed. In bridge it's possible to score against a top player once in a while!"

Due to his contacts with Eric Laurant and because of his own 't Onstein teams, he is once again a prominent presence in the Dutch bridge scene. He is present when his first team wins the Dutch Team Championships. At the prize-giving he exclaims enthusiastically: "And now for the World Championships!" During drinks, immediately afterwards he is approached by Armand Trippaers, who tells him they would like to play the 2011 World Championships at home. "We discuss it for a moment," Melchers explains, "I ask him about the price tag, and, well, I have not been doing badly lately, and" he grins, "I had had a glass of champagne, so I agreed to put up a financial guarantee for a large part of the expense. I thought: 'I'll just go for it one more time.'" He continues: "I need to be able to become enthusiastic about something. I get on well with the boys in my present MK teams, that is also a factor."

He looks out into the rain-swept gardens and ponders: "I have grown increasingly fond of the game."