



Moisio

Competition is fierce at the level of international bridge tournaments. Two of this year's team members, Eric

Murray (checked coat) and Sam Kehela (opposite him), play U.S. team in first Olympiad, Italy, 1960.

# Canada's Team May Top The Bridge World

With luck it could beat 30 other nations at the coming championship

By Sam Kehela

**A** 29-YEAR-OLD Toronto bridge teacher and writer, Sam Kehela is a top authority on bridge systems and conventions. He is also a top player; in 1963, Al Sobel, one of the world's leading tournament directors, selected Kehela as North America's player of the year.

THE EDITORS

**T**HE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH for bridge players will be staged at a hotel in New York starting May 1. Teams representing some 30 countries will battle for 12 days to decide the bridge championship of the world, and the competition will be as fierce as the game's gentlemanly rules will permit.

And, in my opinion, Canada will be represented by the fifth strongest team in the field. If some of the breaks go our way, Canada might win.

In experience and man-for-man ability we rank closely with the favorites — Italy, U.S., France and Britain. We may get some nasty surprises from unexpectedly good play by, say, Venezuela or Finland, but over the long hours of play the factor of luck tends to be minimized. Skill, experience and stamina, with emphasis on the latter two, will decide the winner.

The team Olympiad, which is held under the auspices of the World Bridge Federation, has two divisions, the Open (men) and the Women's. The Open event will consist of a complete round-robin, each team playing an 18-board (hand) match against every other. At the end of this, the four top teams will engage in a play-off to decide the single winner.

The women, having a shorter schedule (only 18 countries are participating in the women's division), will play

longer matches. But they will have no play-off. The leader at the end of the round-robin will be declared the victor.

Since this year's Olympiad will be held in the United States, the American Contract Bridge League will act as host. And because the league represents all North America, Canada will, in a sense, be the host, too. Some 3,500 Canadians are members of the league, and Eric Murray, representing the Ontario region, has been one of the league's directors.

No bridge game is complete without a kibitzer, and for a modest fee second-guessers can sit — in strict silence — at the elbow of the world's greatest experts. And ordinary spectators can buy seats in an auditorium and watch the proceedings on "Bridge-O-Rama." This is a large, illuminated board upon which it is possible to follow the bidding and play — without actually seeing the players — and to receive the benefit of commentary on the proceedings by a battery of experts situated on the sidelines.

During actual play, all nations use the same tongue, English, the official language of bridge. At the card tables, all bidding must be in English, all comments between partners must be in English, and even such questions as "What time is it?" must be asked in English. To rub salt in this linguistic wound, a player from, say, Sweden, must use English at the end of a hand to tell his own partner what a blundering idiot he is. This tends, inadvertently, to reduce acrimony.

Players who cannot speak English are usually at a disadvantage, but sometimes this language handicap turns out to be a benefit. In one famous hand from a match between Italy and England, an Italian player intended to place the final contract in six spades. His limited English

## WOMEN'S BRIDGE TEAM



**Joyce Phillips**



**Louise Mark**



**Ruth Easto**



**Mary Bowden**



**Frances Pielsticker**



**Helen Smith**

## MEN'S BRIDGE TEAM



**Sam Gold**



**Ralph Cohen**



**Ronald Forbes**



**Jack Howell**



**Eric Murray**



**Sam Kehela**

deserted him in this moment of crisis, and he accidentally said "Seven spades." In vain the Italian tried to retract the bid. But it had to stand and, thanks to a favorable opening lead and a fortunate lie of the cards, the contract was made. The result was disastrous for England.

**I**n the Olympiad, Canadian women will be getting their first taste of international competition. Our entry consists of three partnerships, all from Toronto:

Mrs. Mary Bowden and Mrs. Ruth Easto; Mrs. Joyce Phillips and Mrs. Louise Mark; and Mrs. Helen Smith and Mrs. Frances Pielsticker. Non-playing captain for the women is Baron Wolf Lebovic, also of Toronto.

Among the women, the best known perhaps is Mrs. Bowden, who has won or placed in several national tournaments in the United States. All are enthusiastic duplicate players, and the first four mentioned are Life Masters of the American Contract Bridge League (this is the highest status a tournament player in North America can achieve).

Women's bridge has been dominated of late by Britain, France and Denmark, although, almost astoundingly, the last Olympiad for women was won by the United Arab Republic. I do not anticipate that Canadian women will pose a

serious threat to the favorites. However, the tournament will provide them with valuable experience which cannot help but brighten their prospects for the future.

In the Open series (for which women are theoretically eligible but will not be involved) Canada will have an opportunity to improve on its performance at the first Olympiad, in Turin, Italy, in 1960. Canada won five matches, lost three and drew one, just failing to make the play-off round.

Representing Canada in New York — the first four mentioned are newcomers to the team — will be:

Sam Gold, 55, bridge-club operator, of Montreal; Ralph Cohen, 37, a wool importer, also of Montreal; Dr. Ronald Forbes, 43, a pathologist, of Parry Sound, Ont.; Jack Howell, cost accountant, of Toronto; Eric Murray, 36, lawyer, of Toronto; and myself.

Al Lando, 33, a Toronto chartered accountant, will serve as non-playing captain.

The Canadian teams, both the Open and the Women's, were selected on the basis of open trials. Any pair that wished to could try out for the team by entering a provincial heat, from which the top pairs advanced to the final trials. The top three pairs **Continued on next page**

Continued from preceding page

in that tournament automatically qualified to represent the country.

Among top bridge players the world over, relatively few are what might be termed professionals in the sense that they make a large share of their living from the game — by teaching, writing books or playing for high stakes. Among the strongest teams in the Olympiad, the make-up of the Canadian group is about average in its background.

Sam Gold has been playing bridge for 30 years and was the second Canadian to earn the coveted "gold card" awarded to Life Masters (the first was Canada's "Mr. Bridge", Percy Sheardown, of Toronto). For years, Gold has been Montreal's leading player. His partner, Ralph Cohen, started playing bridge before he was 10 years old, but of late has not been able to devote much time to the game. Nevertheless, he and Gold had the best record in the trials.

Dr. Ronald Forbes was the outstanding player in Jamaica before he moved to Canada five years ago. His partnership with Jack Howell is of comparatively recent origin, but they play nicely together and have enjoyed a fair measure of success.

Eric Murray needs no introduction to readers of *Week-end Magazine*. Two years ago, in these pages, Murray confessed to being the world's greatest bridge player. Nothing in the interim has changed his mind. His tournament record is unequalled by any Canadian. He is the possessor of nearly 5,000 master points, and he was the first non-US. player to gain a berth on the North American team which, in non-Olympiad years, plays an inter-zone tournament for world honors. In bridge circles Murray is known as well for his sharp wit as for his sharp play, and he is a much respected opponent by strong players everywhere.

Modesty is an unbecoming attribute in the make-up of a bridge expert, most of whom adopt an "I can lick anybody in the house" attitude. The Canadian team has this brand of confidence in good measure. My opinion is that if we play at the top of our form we should have no difficulty in qualifying for the four-team final. I rank Switzerland and Sweden as the only other serious contenders, but in such a tournament as this any country can upset any other. A few minutes of erratic play, a few mistakes in judgment, or a clash of temperament can turn victory to defeat.

In gruelling contests like the Olympiad, it is well established that even the best players do not measure up

to their potential. We play three 18-board matches a day, which means eight hours of bridge, starting in the afternoon and continuing past midnight. Keep this up for 12 days or more and even the keenest competitive edge is dulled.

Not many people associate endurance with a sedentary activity like a card game, but physical stamina is vital. In 1960, the British team appeared to have the tourney won until, on the last day, one of its veteran pairs developed combat fatigue and had to be replaced, whereupon France overtook Britain's lead.

An equable temperament and strong nerves are essential, too, especially in the late stages when players sometimes let their emotions get the better of them. In Turin, for example, after a session with England's top pair, two U.S. players had to be separated by a bystander.

**H**ARDLY any world-championship bridge match is not attended by some sort of dispute or incident, and the players themselves are not above using a bit of legal gamesmanship on each other. On one occasion, Pietro Forquet, probably the best player on the vaunted Italian squad, saw Howard Schenken, his U.S. counterpart, at dinner. He went over to him, and in the manner of boxer flexing his muscles, said: "Watch out for Forquet tomorrow. I'm going to ruin you."

But Schenken is no stranger to this type of ploy. "I'm not afraid of you," he replied. "You've been playing very badly." This remark was far from the truth but it served the purpose of leaving Schenken "one up."

On another occasion, Italian expert Eugenio Chiardia became so angry upon hearing a kibitzer criticize his play during an intermission that he hurled his 120 pounds at the kibitzer. No bodily harm was inflicted, but the Italian captain decided Chiardia was not in a fit state to continue play, and benched him for the rest of the day. P.S.: Italy won.

On two occasions, after a European team had won a world championship, rumors were spread far and wide that some of the victors had used illegal, prearranged signals. These rumors were never substantiated, but they left a bad odor. The likelihood of players cheating at the level of international matches is extremely remote. But the hurling of accusations, though exceptional, is not out of character for bridge experts.

Sometimes a bridge player's ego will simply not permit him to admit that he was bested except through some kind of foul play. ◀

THE CANADIAN TRIALS BY BARON LEBOVIC

1964 MEN'S TEAM



GOLD



COHEN



HOWELL



FORBES



KEHELA



MURRAY

1964 WOMEN'S TEAM



BOWDEN



EASTO



PHILLIPS



MARK



SMITH



PIELSTICKER

Montrealers Sam Gold and Ralph Cohen capped a sparkling performance with a last round (14-1) victory over the highly touted Murray-Kehela combination to lead the field in the Canadian Men's Trials held at the Ascot "27" Motel, October 17-20, 1963. Runners up Dr. Ron Forbes and Jack Howell together with third place finishers Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela will make up the balance of the team to represent Canada in the 1964 Bridge Olympics.

There were some disappointments as well as certain surprisingly fine performances. In deference to those who fared badly it must be said that thirteen sessions of twenty-board matches over a four-day span proved too arduous a grind for those without any experience of this type.



SAM KEHELA HARRY COHEN ERIC MURRAY SAM GOLD

This was the scene between the above pairs on Saturday night as Kehela & Murray tried vainly to overtake Cohen & Gold, who at this time had a good lead.

The winners, Gold and Cohen, were well placed to qualify throughout the match. They gave little away and were quick to capitalize on their opponents' errors. Forbes and Howell started strongly, relaxed in the middle sessions, and finished with a surge; their match-point style proved to be particularly effective in this event and they performed quite well whenever they had to. Murray and Kehela were off their usual form but persevered on the strength of a five-session streak during which they gained 74 of a possible 75 victory points. By next May they all will have had a chance to practice and combine their styles, which should provide for Canada a formidable entry for the '64 Olympics. Al Lando was chosen non-playing captain.

The Women's Trials, played concurrently with the Mens', resulted in the following:

- 1st Bowden-Easto
- 2nd Phillips-Mark
- 3rd Smith-Pielsticker

# Bridge

## North of the Border

by Florence Osborn

Toronto, Ontario, has been the bridge capital of North America the past week as the scene of the American Contract Bridge League's Summer Nationals (July 24-Aug. 2). This is the first time the League has taken its National Championships out of the country; the step marks another stride in Canada's drive for international bridge prominence.

The move began in 1960 when Eric R. Murray, a 35-year-old Toronto trial lawyer, became the first Canadian director of the ACBL board, and the youngest. Two years later Murray, playing with Charles Coon, a Harvard graduate from Boston, finished first in our team trials and became the first player from out of the States to win a place on the U. S. international team. Playing coach of the team was Sammy Kehela, of Toronto. Murray and Kehela won our top pair event last year—the life master pairs—and I placed Kehela first on my list of the top 10 tournament players of 1963. Then, in the recent World Bridge Olympiad, Canada's team-of-six, led by the two Toronto stars, made a powerful showing in which they reached the semi-finals in a field of 29 nations, and came close to going all the way.

In addition to having an Eastern Canadian Bridge Conference with Western and Central Conferences on the way—Canada (as well as Mexico and Bermuda) is a full member of the ACBL, accounting for 7,500 of the League's membership of 150,000 tournament fans. Bridge

center of the country is Toronto, which with 30 life masters is probably topped only by New York and Los Angeles. Murray holds well over 4,000 master points. Every tournament held in Toronto beats the previous attendance record by at least 25 per cent: "compounding bridge," is what Al Lando, non-playing captain of Canada's Olympiad team and a Chartered Accountant, calls it.

In Toronto alone there are six clubs where both rubber bridge and duplicate are played, plus 21 smaller duplicate clubs which make up the Metropolitan Toronto Bridge Association, of which Lando is president.

Standard American, Kaplan-Sheinwold and Roth-Stone bidding are all popular in Canada, but the trend goes heavily toward Colonial Acol. Kehela brought over the Acol system (a British system which began as a reaction against the early approach-forcing style in which the bidding was developed with excessive slowness) from England, Murray colonized it and gave it its name in 1962, and the result is a smooth-working combination of Murray's natural standard bidding and Kehela's Acol.

Murray and Kehela use limit raises, pre-emptive jump raises of all overcalls, and strong jump overcalls. One of the bids they have incorporated into their system is the Roman two-diamond opening of the Italian team, in which two diamonds is a one-round force which shows either a 4-4-1 distribution with 17-20 high-card points, or

a 5-4-4-0 distribution with 16-20 high-card points. Two no-trump by responder asks for opener's short suit; thus, opener's other suits are known by inference.

Murray and Kehela are not only one of the strongest pairs in the world, but also one of the most colorful. Murray's dynamic table presence (he is a big broad-shouldered man and a former tennis champion), plus his British style, which is aggressive and free, makes him a difficult opponent to play against. He says he plays his best under pressure, and he attributes his success at bridge to the patience and understanding of his partners. Kehela, born in Baghdad in 1934, was reared in India, studied economics at the University of California and later lived in the West Indies and England before coming in 1959 to Toronto, where he has been a bridge teacher and coach. In 1962, during a bidding forum held at a Pittsburgh tournament, someone asked the moderator, Charles Goren: "With so many fine players in the U. S., why pick a Canadian (Kehela) to coach the U. S. team?" Oswald Jacoby, a member of the audience, asked Charlie's permission to reply and answered: "Any team with a chance to use Kehela's services who does not take advantage of it is crazy."

Playing with Murray and Kehela at the recent Olympiad were Sam Gold/Ralph Cohen and Dr. Ronald Forbes/Jack Howell, who had finished one-two in the Canadian international team trials. Gold, 55, is a math and physics graduate of McGill University who made bridge his vocation and is now a partner in Montreal's Linton Bridge Club. He is a veteran of 25 years of tournament competition. His partner, Cohen, 37, is a wool wholesaler from Montreal who started playing bridge when he was nine.

Gold and Cohen have a very loose style—a combination of Acol and Standard American—and bid a lot. Some of their calls show fewer high-card points than is customary: a one no-trump opening is made on 15-17, two no-trump on 20-22; a two no-trump response to an opening bid of one in a suit shows 11-13; while three no-trump shows 14-15.

(Continued on next page)



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# North of the Border

(Continued from page 65)

Dr. Forbes, 42, was born in Kingston and was Jamaica's leading bridge player before moving to Canada five years ago. He lives in Parry Sound, Ontario, where he is Regional Pathologist and Director of Laboratories. He and his partner call their bidding style the "Fish System" because Howell, a Toronto cost accountant, is an ex-fisherman.

The bidding of Dr. Forbes and Howell is very solid—Roth-Stonish. They have solid opening bids and very strict requirements for takeout doubles; if one of them doubles one spade, he must always have four hearts. They like short club and short diamond opening bids and will choose one with 4-4 in the majors, sometimes even 5-5. In response to a one no-trump opening, which shows 15-17 high-card points, they use Stayman responses of two clubs non-forcing and two diamonds forcing.

The six above players, led by the energetic and popular young Lando (their unanimous choice for non-playing captain), were the surprise of the Olympiad as an unbroken string of victories in their last nine qualifying matches put them in the Big Four of the semi-finals along with Italy, the U. S. and Great Britain, giving them the spot which had been expected to go to France (or perhaps Switzerland). En route they scored 7-0 blitzes over 11 of their 28 opponents, including powerful Australia, highly-regarded Poland and Venezuela, champions of South America. They also had five wins of six Victory Points to one, numbering the U. S. and France as victims. In the semi-final match against the U. S., the Canadians lost by a margin of 133 international match points to 117 and then in the finals, as Italy topped our players, Canada lost a narrow (108-97) match to Great Britain to finish fourth in the field of 29 teams.

Bright defense by Kehela and Murray saved a game at spades when they held the East-West cards shown in the diagram during Canada's Olympiad match against Jamaica (Canada won the match 7-0). Leslie McRae and Dudley Holness bid the North-South cards to four spades and Murray, West, opened the ace of diamonds rather than the customary king. (The Murray-Kehela style includes the lead of the ace from ace-king and the lead of the queen from ace-king-queen.) West switched to a club, taken

on the board with the ace, and declarer led a spade and finessed the queen, which Murray ducked, suggesting to declarer that the king was with East.

Holness re-entered dummy by ruffing the queen of diamonds, and now he could have made game by playing the ace and another spade to draw trumps, conceding a trick to the ace of hearts and losing only the two red aces and the trump king. But he saw two advantages of a second trump finesse through East. If East had started with three spades to the king, the second finesse would deprive the defenders of their trump

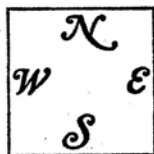
SOUTH DEALER—Neither Side Vulnerable

McRae

♠ 7 5 3  
♥ Q J 7 3  
♦ 5  
♣ A K Q 10 6

Murray

♠ K 9 8  
♥ 9 6 5 4  
♦ A K 8 3  
♣ 7 4



Kehela

♠ 10 2  
♥ A 10  
♦ J 10 9 7 6 2  
♣ J 8 3

Holness

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

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: A ♦.

trick, giving South an overtrick. More important, if East had started with four spades to the king, the second finesse would limit him to one trump trick for game, whereas the play of the spade ace might give him two trump tricks for down one.

Declarer therefore led a spade from the table and finessed the jack, but Murray produced the king and sent back a club, locking declarer in dummy with the king. Declarer tried to get out by leading the queen of hearts, planning to overtake it with the king and draw West's last trump, but Kehela rose with the heart ace and led a third round of clubs, ruffed by his partner for down one. Holness lost two aces, the trump king and a club ruff.

If Murray takes the first trump finesse and leads a club, declarer can win and draw trumps to take ten tricks. ♣

# BRIDGE

By Alan Truscott

**M**AJOR changes in the organization or scoring of competitive bridge rarely happen because the inertia of players and bureaucracies around the world is so hard to overcome.

Consider these three suggestions that have been made recently:

Eliminate all appeals committees. Have final decisions made by tournament directors, if necessary consult expert players.

In team play, eliminate the score for overtricks. This speeds up the play since it generates frequent claims. A result would be a small bonus for a player who reaches, for example, three hearts rather than two and makes nine tricks.

Change the scoring table and give 100 instead of 50 for making a vulnerable part-score. This would narrow the large gap between succeeding in a vulnerable game not bid in the other room, 10 imps, and a nonvulnerable game not bid in the other room, 6 imps.

All these suggestions were made by Sami Kehela of Toronto, whom many consider the greatest player never to win a world title. He has long been retired from tournament play, but 30 years ago he was formidable.

In the diagramed deal played in 1964, he held the South cards and played four hearts after West had contributed a pre-emptive overcall in

diamonds. The defense could have taken four immediate tricks, three in spades and one in diamonds. But this was not obvious, and after winning the opening diamond lead, East shifted to a trump. This gave Kehela an opportunity and he seized it.

He won cheaply in the dummy, led the club queen and finessed successfully. He then ruffed dummy's remaining diamond and led a low spade.

There was now no way to defeat the contract, although that is not obvious. Sooner or later, West will be endplayed on taking the spade ace. For example, if East wins the spade ten and leads a trump, South will lead a second spade. At which time a club lead from West will permit South to maneuver three spade discards from the dummy.

	<b>NORTH</b>	
	♠ 9 8 7 4 2	
	♥ A 10 7 6 5	
	♦ 7 6	
	♣ Q	
<b>WEST</b>		<b>EAST</b>
♠ A 5		♠ K J 10
♥ 3		♥ J 8 4
♦ Q J 10 5 4 3 2		♦ A 9 8
♣ 6 5 3		♣ K 9 7 4
	<b>SOUTH (D)</b>	
	♠ Q 6 3	
	♥ K Q 9 2	
	♦ K	
	♣ A J 10 8 2	

East and West were vulnerable. The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	2 ♦	Pass	Pass
Dbl.	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West led the diamond queen.