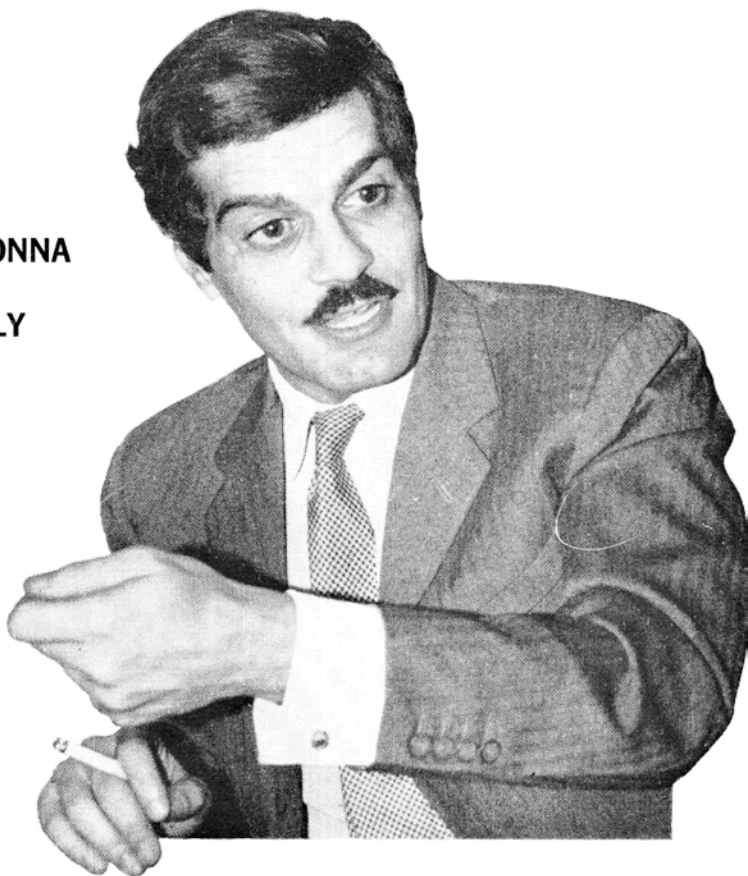


OMAR SHARIF

BRIDGE CIRCUS

FEATURING:

OMAR SHARIF
GIORGIO BELLADONNA
BENITO GAROZZO
CLAUDE DELMOULY
LEON YALLOUZE



Presenting

the OMAR SHARIF BRIDGE CIRCUS

featuring



SHARIF



BELLANDONNA



GAROZZO



DELMOULY



YALLOUZE

HOW THE CIRCUS WAS FORMED

Omar Sharif is a cinema star whose love for bridge has led to the formation of the first group of touring bridge professionals. In 1967 the "Circus" played matches at Rotterdam, Amsterdam, The Hague and Milan, against players of international status. Each match was carried to large audiences of spectators by means of vu-graph or bridge-a-rama equipment and all proved to be unqualified successes in every respect; good bridge, great entertainment and huge crowds.

Immediately plans were launched for a tour of North America to include Montreal, Toronto, Los Angeles, Dallas, New Orleans and New York. For the first time North American bridge buffs will have an opportunity to observe the Roman Club system in action, as demonstrated by a group of talented and enthusiastic exponents of the Italian bidding methods.

THE SHARIF TEAM

OMAR SHARIF, cinema star, is well-known for his outstanding performances in “Lawrence of Arabia” and “Dr. Zhivago” and his movie fame will be augmented with the release of “Funny Girl”, where he co-stars with Barbra Streisand and “The Che Guevera Story”, in which he will play the title role.

At the same time Sharif is quick becoming a bridge player of international repute. He has been competing internationally for several years (including the 1964 and 1968 World Bridge Olympiads) and is already well-known in bridge circles on two continents as a fine player and a staunch advocate of the Roman Club System.

The remainder of the Sharif team was best described by bridge columnist Tannah Hirsch in the current issue of “Popular Bridge” as follows:

“He (Sharif) has gathered about him a group of prodigious bridge talents: **Benito Garozzo** of Rome, whose spectacular card play over the last six years has made his name a synonym for bridge virtuosity; **Giorgio Belladonna**, star of many Italian bridge triumphs and the man who has Garozzo’s vote for the world’s best player — together one of the world’s greatest pairs; **Claude Delmouly**, who played on the French team that won the First World Team Olympiad in Turin in 1960, an immaculate card technician and a devastating opponent, as ruthless in play in defense as he is charming at and away from the table; and **Leon Yallouze**, winner of many French championships and, with Delmouly, winner of the recent Sunday Times International event, ahead of many of Europe’s great pairs (including) world champions Kreyns-Slavenburg.”

THE MONTREAL TEAM

The Montreal team won the North American inter-city championship by defeating Chicago at the 1967 Summer National Tournament and successfully defended their title by defeating New York at the 1968 Spring National Tournament. The team includes the following players:

SAM GOLD

DONALD PIAFSKY

FRED HOFFER

DAVID SALTSMAN

“BUDDY” MARSH

JOE SILVER

MAURICE PAUL — Non-Playing Captain

THE TORONTO TEAM

Each member of the Toronto squad has represented Canada in Olympic competition. In addition to this, Murray (three times) and Kehela (twice) have played for North America in the annual Bermuda Bowl World Championship matches. The team is comprised as follows:

ERIC MURRAY

BRUCE ELLIOTT

SAMMY KEHELA

BRUCE GOWDY

PERCY SHEARDOWN

BARON WOLF LEBOVIC — Non-Playing Captain

Omar Sharif leading team to play bridge

By PAUL KING

Omar Sharif is once again heading a team of warriors. But instead of taking on Mongol hordes, Roman legions or Russian revolutionaries as he has done in the movies, he's sweeping into Toronto next week to challenge Canada's four top bridge experts.

To bridge aficionados, Sharif is much more acclaimed as a champion card player than a cinema star; he was captain of Egypt's Olympic teams in 1964 and 1968. He is now commanding a team of four international masters on a North American tour of six cities.

Omar Sharif's Bridge Circus will play the Canadian Olympic team at the Inn on the Park ballroom on Aug. 8 and 9. The ballroom holds 1,000 people, and the public can attend. Matches will be played each day at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. The various hands will be projected on a huge overhead screen, and expert commentators will analyze the deals for the benefit of spectators.

Sharif's Circus toured Western Europe earlier this year playing teams in Holland, Italy and Britain and winning every game. This is its first time in North America. Sharif is sponsoring the tour himself and hopes, according to the Canadian team captain, Al Lando of Toronto, to raise enough money to cover hotel and travelling expenses.

"Sharif makes movies to make money," says Lando.



Omar Sharif

"He plays bridge to enjoy himself."

Sharif's team includes Giorgio Belladonna and Benito Garozza of Italy's famed Blue Team, winner in 11 of the past 12 world championships, and French internationalists Claude Delmouly and Leon Yallouze.

The Toronto team will feature Eric Murray, Sammy Kehela, Percy Sheardown and Bruce Elliott, all of whom represented Canada at the World Bridge Olympiad in Deauville, France, this year.

"We don't figure to beat them," says Mr. Lando, "but we're planning to give them a tough time."

Omar Sharif's bridge circus comes to town

Omar Sharif came to town yesterday to play bridge, and Toronto loved it.

Following a civic reception and a tour of City Hall at noon, the actor and his bridge "circus" headed for the Inn On The Park for the first of four challenge matches against Toronto's five top bridge stars — Eric Murray, Sammy Kehela, Percy Sheardown, Bruce Elliott and Bruce Gowdy.

Several hundred people, ranging from bridge aficionados to Sharif idolaters, turned out yesterday afternoon for the first of the four matches. They came to see Sharif, and to see the advent of big time bridge as a spectator sport.

Fresh from an exciting victory against Montreal (19-13 in victory points), Sharif had in his undefeated troupe 11-times world champions Giorgio Belladonna and Benito Garozzo of Italy, and French international stars Claude Delmouly and Leon Yallouze.

When the afternoon session began, Gowdy and Sheardown faced Delmouly and Yallouze in the closed room while the audience watched Kehela and Elliott take on Sharif and Belladonna in the open room via Vu-graph. (Murray and Kehela had left Minneapolis at 6 a.m. after winning the Spingold Trophy at the Summer Nationals.)

In a seesaw match, Toronto surged ahead on the final board to the applause of the crowd to win 57-52 in IMPs, 5-3 in victory points. Here is that final hand, one of two slam deals on which Toronto got the best of the circus.

Vulnerable: O. Dealer: West.

N (Sharif)

S Q 8 2

H 8 4 3

D Q 4 3

C K J 6 2

W (Kehela)

S 7 3

H A Q 10 7 5 2

D J 5

C Q 10 8

E (Elliott)

S A K J

H K 6

D A K 7

C A 9 7 5 3

S (Belladonna)

S 10 9 6 5 4

H J 9

D 10 9 8 6 2

C 4

The audience knew Delmouly and Yallouze had gone down one in seven hearts on the E-W cards in the closed room.

The auction developed like this in the open room:

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	2 Clubs	Pass
2 Hearts	Pass	2 No-trump	Pass
3 Hearts	Pass	3 No-trump	Pass
6 No-trump	Pass	Pass	Pass

A big cheer went up when Kehela finally bid six no-trump. When Belladonna led the nine of spades Elliott had 12 top tricks for a 14 IMP swing and the match.

In the evening session Murray and Kehela were both forced out of action because of fatigue, and Down Cowan took Kehela's place in the lineup.

In the closed room Cowan and Gowdy faced Delmouly and Sharif. The audience of about 500 watched Sheardown and Elliott play against Belladonna and Garozzo.

The circus played very well to win the second session by 17 IMPs to score six victory points against Toronto's two. With the total score now 9 - 7 for the circus, the two final sessions continue today and evening.



Ald. David Rotenberg, a serious student of bridge, has a couple of aces in his hand — but he'll need them to take on his opponent, Omar Sharif. The Hollywood actor, who is an accomplished bridge player, is in town for a series of challenge matches and visited City Hall yesterday, where he was promptly drawn into an impromptu game. He says his film roles are merely to finance his passion for bridge, the "greatest of games."



—Star photo by Norm James

THAT CONTINENTAL TOUCH: Hollywood star Omar Sharif kisses the hand of acting mayor Controller Margaret Campbell after being presented to her at City

Hall yesterday. Sharif is in Toronto with his Bridge Circus to play a series of challenge matches with Canadian players at the Inn on the Park motor hotel today.

Dr. Zhivago's Bridge Circus in lead

Movie star Omar Sharif's passion for bridge paid off last night as his Bridge Circus took a 9-7 lead over Metro players after two matches.

The circus, with Italian champions Giorgio Belladonna and Benito Garozzo, and French champion Leon Yallouze as well as Sharif, is challenging Metro players for two days before continuing a tour to Montreal, Los Angeles, Dallas, New Orleans and New York.

Sharif—the star of "Dr. Zhivago"—formed the circus eight months ago. Canadian international team captain Al Lando said Sharif did it because "he prefers playing bridge to making movies, but there's not enough money in it.

"It gives him an opportu-

nity to play with the very best," said Lando.

Sharif has played in two world Olympic bridge championships, in 1964 and this year, for the Egyptian team.

Belladonna and Garozzo have won 11 world championships in the last 12 years, said Lando. Their system of opening with a bid of one club if they have a good hand and using club bids to extend the bidding has been dubbed the Blue Team system.

Lando said Canadian and American teams are trying to adopt similar systems.

Playing for Toronto are Toronto's Sammy Kehala, who makes his living from bridge, Eric Murray, Percy Sheardown, Bruce Elliott and Donald Cowan and Bruce Gowdy from Ajax.

Kehala and Murray returned to Toronto yesterday after winning the American Contract Bridge Summer Nationals team of four championship in Minneapolis for the third time.

The Bridge Circus will play the Canadians again this afternoon and evening before leaving town.

Sharif said that although bridge used to be a game only for the wealthy, it is fast becoming more popular than poker.

There are an estimated 3,000,000 bridge players in Canada. "In America it's thought of as an industry," Sharif said.

Bridge

By PETER CRONIN

WITH Omar Sharif and his bridge circus two weeks removed from Toronto, now is a good time to attempt to make some kind of assessment of the success of the bridge show they put on.

In my opinion the show was an unqualified success. It was enjoyed and appreciated by people ranging from experts through kitchen bridge players to Sharif fans. Toronto lost of course, but it was an excitingly close match throughout.

Here is a good example both of the Italian bidding methods and of the type of excitement provided by a Vugraph bridge show. When the following deal appeared on the screen midway through the third match, the audience already knew that Toronto had bid and made six diamonds in the closed room.

The commentators pointed out that seven diamonds was a very good contract and the audience watched to see if Sharif and Delmouly would reach the grand slam.

Dir: S; Vul: E-W

N (Sharif)

♠ 2
♥ A Q J 3
♦ Q 10 9 5
♣ A Q 10 4

W (Kehala)

♠ Q J 9
♥ 10 9 5 4
♦ 6 4 2
♣ J 9 7

E (Murray)

♠ 10 8 6 5 4
♥ K 6 2
♦ 7 3
♣ 6 5 2

S (Delmouly)

♠ A K 7 3
♥ 8 7
♦ A K J 8
♣ K 8 3

The following auction then unfolded:

South	North
1 Club	1 No-trump
2 Diamonds	3 Diamonds
3 Spades	4 Clubs
4 Diamonds	4 Hearts
4 Spades	4 No-trump
5 Clubs	6 Clubs
6 Diamonds	7 Diamonds

The opening club bid showed at least 17 high card points and the no-trump response indicated four controls (2 aces). Diamonds were then agreed upon and the pair cue-bid to the grand slam. As you can see, declarer can ruff out spades, pull trumps and discard his losing heart on the 13th club.

Kehala, however, found the only lead to give the defence a chance, a low heart. Delmouly went into a huddle and the spectators were literally on the edge of their seats.

Declarer did not have the advantage of knowing that clubs split and thus had to decide at trick one whether to base his contract on a heart finesse or a club split, both about 50 percent.

Eventually, Delmouly finessed and Toronto gained 14 IMPs (+970) rather than losing 11 (-520). This was good bridge and exciting entertainment.