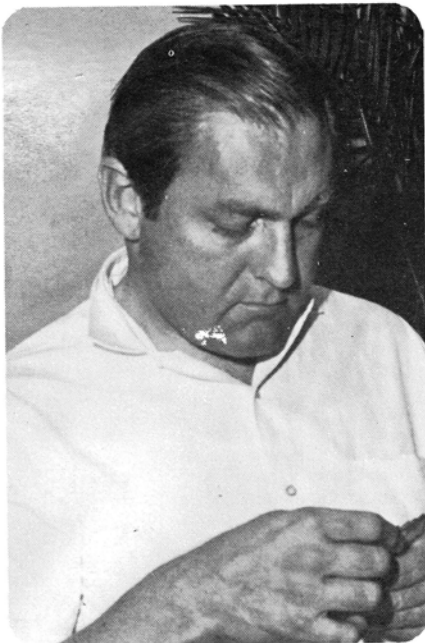


Canada's Murray and Kehela

By Canadian Press



Eric Murray

An oddly matched pair of Toronto bridge players have been instrumental in keeping Canada in the foreground of international bridge competition.

Sammy Kehela and Eric Murray have played together since 1959 and they make an unnerving combination at the bridge table.

Kehela, short, dark and a bit lazy, gives an impression of sleepy confidence and machine-like accuracy. Murray is fair, built like a football player, puffs enormous cigars and admits he doesn't mind at all if his clouds of smoke bother his opponents. A busy lawyer, "with far too many hobbies," he brings the style of a courtroom tactician to the bridge table.

"Eric has a bustling kind of game," says Kehela. "He makes more mistakes than I do, but tends to gum up the works and induce opponents to make errors."

Murray says Kehela is the "solid" player of the partnership and works out most of their theory.

"I like to stir things up a bit, produce a bit of action and play a bit of poker in the middle of the bridge game.

"I play the table. Sammy plays the percentage."

Murray, with another partner, was the first Canadian to play in the Bermuda Bowl, in 1962 when the North American team finished second. Kehela has been to the Bowl three times as a non-playing coach to advise the North American team.

They reached the top in the bridge world by routes as different as their personalities. Neither started playing bridge until he was at university, although both suspect their interest in the game can be traced to their parents.

Kehela's father used to spend hours playing whist, a forerunner of bridge.

"I guess I was fascinated by the game, because I can remember climbing down from my second-floor bedroom to watch them playing."

UNIVERSITY START

Sammy, a bachelor, was born in Baghdad. His Jewish family fled to India in 1941 after a narrow escape from a pogrom, during a German-inspired anti-Semitic revolution.

He first played bridge at the University of California, Berkeley, and started playing seriously in London, after dropping out of university because of poor health.

He found he could make a living teaching and playing and after two years in London, he came to Toronto.

Murray became a bridge player at McMaster University in his hometown, Hamilton. He says bridge is "the best game ever devised," but he is also an enthusiast for a flock of other sports and hobbies. He's a hockey and football fan, plays tennis, squash and badminton, fishes, skindives, collects stamps and breeds tropical fish.

The two use a style of bidding, which Murray dubbed Colonial Acol, after perfecting it in the 1950s while playing with Charles Coon. It's a compromise between the flexible British system, perfected by London's Acol Bridge Club, and the more rigid systems of North America.

"We play the least complicated system in North America today," Murray says. The basic advantage is that the player can adapt the bidding to peculiarities of his hand.

Kehela calls the rigid Italian bidding system "hidebound."

AGGRESSIVE STYLE

Apart from bidding, the Murray-Kehela style is generally aggressive.

"If we err it is in the bidding," according to Murray.

Kehela agrees and suggests Murray is the better bidder of the two. "But his chief attribute is his power of concentration and a fantastic desire to win."

Murray doesn't entirely agree with this measurement. He likes to think a lot of his success is due to his law training and knowledge of poker, which helped him develop a table "presence" that often unnerves opponents.

Both admit having more than their share of ego.

"It's a necessary quality for a good bridge player," Kehela says. "The only problem is that it can get out of hand and there are a few Cassius Clays in the bridge world."

The two are almost apart when it comes to social bridge. To Murray, bridge is the "deadliest sport in the world today."

"It requires the absolute maximum in concentration. Drop a trick and you can destroy yourself."

Little wonder he gets no enjoyment out of the social game; to him all good games are serious.

He likes to compare a bridge champion playing social bridge with tennis star Rod Laver "going out for a couple of mixed doubles at the local club."

"There just has to be decent competition."

NEED STAMINA

Kehela, on the other hand, still enjoys social bridge and says he isn't bothered much by playing with relative newcomers to the game. "Perhaps it's because I've taught the game so much."

Both men agree on the position of women in bridge. They doubt a woman will ever make the top rank, although they often excel.

As Kehela puts it: "At the very highest level they haven't the physical stamina, concentration or killer instinct that's needed."



Sammy Kehela

Marriage and husband-wife bridge partnership just isn't feasible, according to Kehela.

"It couldn't survive. You see, in most bridge partnerships there is a real hate-love relationship and sometimes you're simply not simpatico with your partner.

"Eric and I are very good friends but at key contests I just have to be away from him after awhile. We just seem to get on one another's nerves."

Both were asked whether one hand or play stands out above all others in their memories.

Murray recalled the 1961 competition for the Vanderbilt Cup, when he bid a contract of six hearts and was doubled. "In the other room they went down 800 points in the same contract, but I made it."

Kehela's recollections were a lot different. He doubts he'll ever forget a hand during the 1966 world tournament at St. Vincent, Italy.

"It was a straightforward hand which we quickly bid to three notrump. For some reason I must have blacked out for a moment. I went down one, when one of my pupils would have made an overtrick.

"I didn't sleep much that night."

Bridge has precision and awareness



Sam Kehela and his partner, Eric Murray, are ranked among the top 10 tournament bridge players in the world. They are unquestionably the best in Canada — they live in Toronto. They say it is a combination of competitive spirit, ego and lasting concentration that wins at tournament bridge, a card game mixing the precise science of chess and the bluff and table awareness of poker. (CP Photo)

By RON SUDLOW

TORONTO (CP) — Sam Kehela and Eric Murray live only a few blocks away from each other in this city of more than two million but they see each other only over a bridge table.

And the table is more likely to be in Stockholm, New York, London or Miami than in Toronto.

Murray and Kehela are unquestionably the top tournament bridge pair in Canada and probably among the first five in the world.

Their partnership has endured 15 years amid the tension of international competitions that would make basket cases of mere mortals who play the game.

Bridge partnerships at the national and international level have all the security of a Hollywood marriage.

Murray and Kehela say the secret of their success is never to see each other socially and never to talk to each other at the table.

Whenever either makes a bad bid or a bad play, "there's no discussion at the table whatsoever," says Murray.

"We have come to an understanding that there is value in a long-standing partnership. Misunderstandings are kept to an absolute minimum."

Game breeds tension

Kehela says if they met socially, "we'd get on each other's nerves."

Playing bridge can be dangerous. Kehela recalls one incident where two Americans had to be separated by bystanders when they nearly came to blows.

Murray says bridge "is an infectious game."

"It grabs people. It is so fascinating it gets a hold of people and destroys them."

Top tournament bridge, where the prizes are only trophies, "is not a ladies' tea party."

Murray recalls an episode in a Canadian tournament when one player clobbered his partner over

the head with the aluminum board that contains the duplicate bridge hands.

In another incident, when a player made the wrong opening lead, his partner called him "a moron, an idiot and a cretin."

The offending player admitted that yes, indeed, he was a moron, an idiot and a cretin.

"He also admitted he was somewhat sloppy and proceeded to dump the contents of an ashtray over his partner."

Practises law

Murray is a 45-year-old, well-heeled Toronto lawyer. A pillar of several establishment clubs, he's married to another lawyer and is active in law reform.

Kehela, 39, came to Canada in 1959 by way of Baghdad, London and Berkeley, Calif., and lives in a first-floor, one-bedroom apartment festooned with bound volumes of bridge magazines, trophies and a poster blow-up of Humphrey Bogart glowering over the dining table.

Kehela has no visible means of support. He just plays bridge.

Murray, in contrast, plays the game infrequently, parcelling out only a few weeks of the year to participate in top competitions.

Both will be busy in May. First it's the world pairs competition in the Canary Islands. They placed fifth of 128 pairs when the event was last held in 1970.

Tackle Blue Team

Then they go to Venice with the North America team put together by Dallas millionaire entrepreneur Ira Corn in the Bermuda Bowl — the game's World Series and Stanley Cup rolled into one.

The North Americans will be trying to oust Italy's awesome Blue Team which has yet to lose in world team competition.

Murray and Kehela have represented Canada in four team Olympiads. The team was fourth in 1964 and third in 1968 and 1972.

They also played on six-member teams that have won the North

American championship six times — twice on all-Canadian teams.

How good are they?

"To play winning bridge, you have to believe that you are the best," Murray says. Kehela is a little more modest.

"It is very difficult to rank bridge players. We're one of the top pairs in the world. But does that mean top 100 or top 10?"

"I'd say the top 10. That is more or less conceded."

Styles contrast

About the only thing they have in common at the bridge table is their cigars.

Murray is the mover and shaker in the bidding. Kehela provides the computer-like mind to analyse the hands.

"Sammy is one of the world's greatest technical players," says Murray.

"Eric's forte is bidding which is 90 per cent of the game," adds Kehela.

"I'm the pitcher and he's the catcher," says Murray. "I like to put my opponents under pressure."

"I like lots of action. If there's going to be a bad error, it will come from my side of the table."

Murray "fires a few spitballs," Kehela observes wryly.

Murray and Kehela say winning bridge is a combination of competitive spirit, ego and concentration — the latter being difficult to maintain over a 10-day tournament.

Ego is important, says Kehela, but it can't be the type where partners try to prove they are better than each other.

As for concentration, Murray can pick any of 25 deals he plays in an evening and reconstruct all four hands perfectly.

Once he was zeroed in on his hand and the bidding when the woman seated to his right asked "Are you not going to speak to me?"

It was his mother.

Bridge: A Toronto Player Is Ranked Among 6 Best Contestants

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

If a group of top experts were asked to name the best six players in North America in ranked order, there would be considerable disagreement about the top spot. But it is a safe bet that every list would include quiet, tenacious Sam Kehela of Toronto, who has been an outstanding performer since he settled in Canada as a very young man nearly two decades ago.

His partnership with Eric Murray, as ebullient as Kehela is reticent, has been the linchpin of Canadian international teams since 1960.

In the last three Olympiads, they have carried their team to the semifinal stage, and in two straight years they carried off the Spingold Team title with Canadian teammates in the face of powerful United States opposition. More recently they scored a convincing victory in the Deauville tournament, in which eight of the world's best pairs compete by invitation.

Kehela has no superiors and few equals in the art of playing a difficult dummy. Many of those who have doubled him in haste have repented at leisure, as South did on the diagramed deal from the Vanderbilt Knock-out Team Championship in St. Louis last month.

Not Easy to Reach

Three no-trump would have been an easy contract for North-South, but this was not easy to reach after East opened with a weak two-bid in diamonds. When this was passed around to Murray in the North seat, he made a take-out double. Kehela, in difficulty, tried two hearts, not so much because his hearts were stronger than his spades as because the cheapest three-card suit is usually the least evil in such a situation.

Murray saw no reason to look for any contract other than four hearts, and this provoked West to make a slightly greedy double. His trump length and strength, combined with a misfit in his partner's diamond suit, seemed to offer good defensive prospects, but Kehela was able to teach him a sharp lesson.

The opening diamond lead was won with the ace, and the heart seven was led at the second trick. Guided by

the double, South was ready to take a deep finesse. But as West had betrayed his strong trumps he decided he had better put up the ten.

The king won in dummy, and the declarer took the club ace and led the ten to his jack. He finessed the spade queen successfully, and after cashing one more club winner reached this position:

<p>WEST</p> <p>S K 10 6</p> <p>♥ Q J 5 2</p> <p>♦ —</p> <p>♣ —</p>	<p>EAST</p> <p>♠ J 9</p> <p>♥ —</p> <p>♦ K Q J 4 3</p> <p>♣ —</p>
<p>SOUTH</p> <p>♠ 8 7</p> <p>♥ 8 4</p> <p>♦ 9 6 5</p> <p>♣ —</p>	

The club queen was led and South discarded a spade. West ruffed and played the heart queen. The ace of hearts, the ace of spades and a spade ruff gave the declarer nine tricks, and the heart nine in dummy was a tenth. As Kehela was the first to admit he would not have made the game but for the clue provided by West's double.

Today's Hand

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

North and South were vulnerable. The bidding:

East	South	West	North
2♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl.
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl.	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West led the diamond seven.

CONTRACT BRIDGE

By B. JAY and STEVE BECKER

West dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ K Q J 9 2
 ♥ A K 2
 ♦ K J
 ♣ J 8 7

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

SOUTH
 ♠ A 7
 ♥ J 6 4 3
 ♦ Q 9 7 6 3
 ♣ Q 3

The bidding:
 West North East South
 Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 NT
 Pass 2 NT Pass 3 NT
 Opening lead — six of clubs.

This deal, played in an intercity tournament staged in Tokyo in 1983, occurred during a 16-board match between London and Montreal. At both tables, the final contract was three no-trump and the opening lead was a low club.

The British declarer at the first table won East's ten of clubs with the queen and played a low diamond towards dummy, hoping to either win the trick or, if the king lost to the ace, to find the clubs divided 4-4. But East took the king with the ace, returned a club, and the contract quickly went down one.

At the second table, the Canadian South, Sami Kehela, won the club lead and immediately cashed five spade tricks, maintaining his chance to find the clubs equally divided, but at the same time compelling the opponents to make what might prove to be embarrassing discards.

Kehela discarded a heart and two diamonds on dummy's spades, while West was forced to discard all three of his diamonds in order to retain all his clubs and hearts.

Gauging the situation perfectly, Kehela now cashed the ace of hearts and then exited from dummy with the eight of clubs, completely ignoring the K-J of diamonds. This method of play proved eminently successful, from declarer's point of view.

West took his four club tricks but found himself still on lead with the Q-8 of hearts. Dummy's last two cards, after discarding the K-J of diamonds, consisted of the K-2 of hearts, while declarer, who had discarded the Q-9-7 of diamonds, retained only the J-6 of hearts. East at this point had the ace of diamonds, but it had lost all its glittering value.

It did not matter

whether West next played the eight or the queen of hearts because, either way, Kehela would score the last two tricks and make the contract.

BRIDGE

James Jacoby

NORTH 12-10-04
 ♠ 8 7 6 2
 ♥ A
 ♦ K 7 6 3
 ♣ K J 9 8

WEST **EAST**
 ♠ J 5 ♠ A 10 1
 ♥ 10 8 7 6 5 4 ♥ K Q 9 3
 ♦ A ♦ 8 10 2
 ♣ A 10 8 4 ♣ Q 7 4 2

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

Vulnerable: Neither
 Dealer: East

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

Opening lead: ♠A

What are the qualities that make a great bridge partnership? I can't name them all, but high on the list would be knowing each other's tendencies, in both the bidding and the play.

Today's defenders were Eric Murray sitting West and Sammy Kehela sitting East. Their opposing declarer was Paul Soloway. All were competing in an international team event in Argentina some years ago.

You see the diagrammed bidding. Now for the play. After the ace of diamonds lead, Murray shifted to the heart eight, a card which from East's point of view was unusually high. After winning with the ace, declarer played a spade from dummy.

Kehela thought it unlikely that his partner would lead the diamond ace unless it was a singleton. In addition, partner's second lead of a high heart (the eight) rather than a low one suggested that he wanted to trump a diamond. Furthermore, it was well known that internationalist Soloway enjoyed surprising his opponents. What could be more surprising than to have a six-card side suit (diamonds) lurking in the bushes? Kehela went right up with the spade ace and gave a diamond ruff to West, whose club ace set the contract. Kehela knew his partner and his opponent.

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF

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Here's a chance to match your technique against Toronto's Sammy Kehela, one of the world's master technicians. Just cover the East-West hands with your thumbs and plan the play at six no trump after a diamond lead.

Note that Kehela carefully avoided playing in a suit contract. At a suit slam he might have been at the mercy of a break in his trump suit. At six no trump he might get

home if either major suit behaved kindly. Note that six spades requires an inspired guess in the trump suit, and that six hearts might fail if the defenders' hands were reversed.

Kehela won the diamond lead in dummy and cashed the king-ace of hearts. When West showed out on the second heart, declarer unblocked dummy's ten. He crossed to the table with the high diamond and took the marked heart finesse. After cashing the queen of

diamonds, he ran the heart suit. Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
 ♠ A K 10 9 7 3
 ♥ 10 6 5
 ♦ A K 10
 ♣ 3

WEST **EAST**
 ♠ J 8 6 2 ♠ 4
 ♥ 9 ♥ J 7 4 2
 ♦ J 9 8 7 ♦ 6 4 3
 ♣ A 9 6 4 ♣ Q J 10 8 7

SOUTH
 ♠ Q 5
 ♥ A K Q 8 3
 ♦ Q 5 2
 ♣ K 5 2

The bidding:
 North East South West
 1 ♣ Pass 2 ♥ Pass
 3 ♦ Pass 3 ♥ Pass
 4 ♥ Pass 4 NT Pass

5 ♥ Pass 6 NT Pass
 Pass Pass
 Opening lead: Nine of ♠.

A careless declarer might have discarded dummy's club in the hope of making an overtrick, but not Kehela. Since he needed only four spade tricks to make his slam, he discarded two of dummy's spades. West, meanwhile, was forced to come down to four spades and the ace of clubs.

Declarer cashed the queen of spades and queen of diamonds and, had he been gifted with second sight, he would have continued by finessing dummy's ten of spades. However, he made the normal play of a spade to the king.

BRIDGE

James Jacoby

NORTH 7-4-04
 ♠ K 3
 ♥ Q 8 1
 ♦ 8 8 4 2
 ♣ A K Q 5

WEST **EAST**
 ♠ A 8 7 1 ♠ Q 3 7 6 5
 ♥ 10 4 ♥ 9 5 3
 ♦ J 10 3 ♦ 8 7
 ♣ J 8 4 4 2 ♣ 10 8 7

SOUTH
 ♠ J 10 4
 ♥ A K J 7 6
 ♦ A K Q 5
 ♣ J

Vulnerable: Neither
 Dealer: South

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: ♣3

For excitement and glamour on the international bridge circuit, try Deauville, France, in July. For many years this resort has been the site for dramatic, star-studded bridge competition. Today's deal features Canada's long-time stellar pair, Sammy Kehela, North, and Eric Murray, South. The action took place several years ago, and suggesting our cast of characters was Omar Sharif, West.

Eric Murray has long been a champion of direct bidding. When his partner jump-raised hearts, he felt slam was there if North had a spade control. He made a very simple bid: five hearts! When you and your partner have bid three suits, a jump to five of the agreed-upon major suit has one specific meaning. It asks partner to bid six if he can stop the opponents from taking two tricks in the unbid suit. North carried on to six hearts, and it was now time for Omar Sharif to prove he could star away from the world of film.

Sharif knew the meaning of South's five-heart bid, and he was looking at the spade ace. North would not have accepted the slam invitation without a spade control. Maybe it was the guarded king. Without hesitation the two of spades was led. Who can blame South for playing low from dummy? After all, it is hardly automatic to lead away from an ace against a slam contract. When the slam was set, the applause from the audience in the viewing room told Sharif he had found stardom on another stage.

BRIDGE

by TERENCE REESE

You can't judge a book by its cover, as they say, and you can't judge a hand by its looks. This deal from the qualifying round of the Pairs Olympiad seems ordinary enough, but it led to many exciting adventures.

Dealer, West. Love all.

♠ 8 7 4 3
 ♥ A Q 10 6
 ♦ K 7 5
 ♣ 8 2

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

W **E**
S **N**

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

Joe Amsbury, editor of *Popular Bridge Monthly*, opened the West hand with an imaginative 1NT. After two passes South doubled. Never one to run away from danger, Amsbury passed, and so did North, anticipating an easy 500 or so. His lead? A spade!

At another table the Canadian champions, Murray and Kehela, were East-West. Playing the multi-coloured Two Diamonds, West opened Two Diamonds, signifying, as a rule, a weak Two bid in one of the majors. The orthodox response for East is Two Hearts, but he chose Two Spades, to confuse the opposition. South bid Three Clubs and North 3NT. Now a spade lead would have been splendid — but Murray chose a heart!

When Jean Besse, of Switzerland, was South, West opened with a normal Three Spades, East raised to Four Spades defensively, and Jean ventured Five Clubs.

West led a spade. South ruffed, drew trumps, and entered dummy to ruff another spade. After two more rounds of hearts the position was:

♠ 8
 ♥ A
 ♦ K 7 5
 ♣ —

♠ A Q 10 ♠ J
 ♥ — ♥ —
 ♦ J 4 ♦ A Q 9 6
 ♣ — ♣ —

W **E**
S **N**

♠ —
 ♥ —
 ♦ 10 8 3 2
 ♣ 9

After Ace of hearts and a spade ruff East was down to ♠A Q 9. South led the 8 and West correctly covered with the Jack, but declarer's ♠10 won the last trick. It is interesting to note that even if East's diamonds are A Q J x he cannot escape the end play: it is the 'one-suit squeeze' position.

Heart jack does the trick

By RAY LEE

Over the last 26 years, we have become used to Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela being associated with Canada's international bridge successes.

The recent Olympiad in New Orleans produced a tide of good results from new names and faces.

We had two pairs in the top 10 in the Open Pairs; one pair in the top 20 Women's Pairs; three pairs in the top 12 Mixed Pairs, and two teams in the top 10 in that event.

It was a tremendous showing, and one that places Canada firmly on the international bridge stage.

But while most of the attention focussed on Montreal's Kokish and Nagy, who all but won the World Pairs title, veterans Kehela and Murray were still turning in their usual world-class performance. It was rewarded finally by a 5th place finish in the Teams.

On this hand from the Open Pairs, Murray made the jack of hearts do tricks for him as declarer.

NORTH

♠ A 10 9 8 2
♥ K
♦ A 7 6 5
♣ 10 7 5

WEST

♠ Q 4 3
♥ A 9 8 7 5
♦ J 10
♣ K 9 2

EAST

♠ 5
♥ Q 10 6 3
♦ Q 9 4 3
♣ Q 8 4 3

SOUTH

♠ K J 7 6
♥ J 4 2
♦ K 8 2
♣ A J 6

After an initial pass by East, Kehela opened the South hand one club. West overcalled one heart, and Murray bid one spade.

Now East, at equal vulnerability, found a call of four hearts, and Murray found himself under severe pressure after two passes.

After some thought, he elected to bid four spades.

The defence led a heart to the ace, and the jack of diamonds was returned. At first sight, there seem to be two clubs to lose, a diamond, and a heart and the queen of spades to find!

Unperturbed, Murray won the diamond king, cashed the spade king, and then passed the six. Now

came the ace of spades and a low diamond.

When West had to win the ten, the situation for which declarer was playing had come about. If West led a club, Murray would have only one club loser.

Actually, West tried a heart, and now declarer used his heart jack to dispose of both club losers.

He pitched a club on this heart, East winning the queen — and the jack was set up for the discard of the other club.

BRIDGE

Boris Shapiro

Dates to note for bridge aficionados in the London area are January 24-27 when *The Sunday Times* International Pairs Championship will be played at the Hyde Park Hotel. Tickets for the sessions (Thursday evening, Friday evening, Saturday afternoon and evening, Sunday afternoon) are available in advance from MSW Promotions, 27 Catherine Street, London, WC2E 8JG.

This event has achieved world-wide fame as the prestige pairs competition of the season. I shall be resuming my partnership with Jean Besse of Switzerland and among the other 16 famous pairs will be Garrozo and Franco of Italy, the Olympiad champions (and holders of *The Sunday Times*), Chagas and Assumpção of Brazil, previous winner Billy Eisenberg of the USA, playing with David Barah of Venezuela, and J. Caine and M. Granovetter of the USA. As usual, there will be no lack of action!

Although it has reappeared recently in the literature, the following hand played by Canadian Sammy Kehela in *The Sunday Times* is well worth reproducing. Neither he nor his partner are known as cautious bidders so it was no surprise that they wound their way to a highly

optimistic six-hearts contract. Let us be fair — if you take a look at the North-South cards it is a fairly awful contract and a sight of the East-West cards does nothing to encourage you. Nevertheless, Sammy came to 12 tricks after a spade lead.

He won the opening lead and played off the Ace and King of trumps. His emotions must have been mixed when both opponents followed suit — the good news; but the Queen did not fall — the bad news. One thing was absolutely certain; he needed the diamond finesse to be right. The Queen of diamonds was covered by the King and Ace. It looked all too easy to follow up with a club finesse but Kehela spotted that he had extra chances. First he played off dummy's remaining top spade and ruffed a spade in hand. Then he cashed the rest of the winning diamonds, throwing a club from hand.

As you can see, West was not keen to ruff this for he would then be left on lead with nothing but clubs to play. Instead he discarded but declarer, giving himself every possible chance, got off lead with his last trump. He still had the club finesse in reserve but as the cards lay West was end-played — he had to lead a club away from his King and present South with his 12th trick. It was a well-played hand (possibly not too well bid?) but there was nothing that the defenders could do as the cards lay. In case there are any more hands like this, why not come along to *The Sunday Times* Pairs and see some of the action for yourself? One of the attractions will be Terence Reese commenting on a key match of Bridgerama during every session.

A new book that will appeal to most tastes is *Play Better Bridge* by Rixi Markus. Attractive presentation, interesting material — and only £3.95 (Octopus Books).

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

Aggressive bidding helped Canadians at match

Canada enjoys a most prestigious position in international bridge. Having finished in the top four in three of the last four World Team Olympiads, we are generally considered one of the more powerful bridge countries in the world.

Much of this success can be attributed to the exciting pair of Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela.

Never ones to underbid, their aggressive bidding paid off in the following hand from the 1972 World Team Olympiads.

North dealer.
Both vulnerable.

NORTH (Kehela)

♠ 8 7 3 2
♥ K Q 10 5 3 2
♦ A 10
♣ 6

WEST

♠ K 6 4
♥ 9 8
♦ K 9 6 4
♣ A K 10 4

EAST

♠ Q 5
♥ A 6 4
♦ J 5
♣ J 9 8 7 3 2

SOUTH (Murray)

♠ A J 10 9
♥ J 7
♦ Q 8 7 3 2
♣ Q 5

The bidding:

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

Opening lead: King of clubs

Murray's third hand one spade opening bid had three things going for it. It made it more difficult for the opponents to bid (pre-emptive), suggested a lead if the opponents ended up playing the hand, and thirdly, suggested a part-score contract.

The bid certainly made Kehela's hand look powerful. His two-club bid was artificial; the Drury convention, which asked if the third-hand opener was made on full values.

Murray's two diamond response was also conventional, indicating sub-minimal values for an opening bid.

Despite the knowledge that Eric's opening bid was weak, Sammy's hand looked so good for a spade contract, he jumped



TED HORNING
Canadian
Bridge

directly to four spades; and there they were with a combined total of 19 High Card points.

West led the King of clubs, and shifted to the four of diamonds at trick two. Murray passed this around to his Queen and immediately led the heart seven to dummy's Queen. This was allowed to win and a low spade was played from the dummy. When East played low, Murray finessed the nine.

West won this trick with his King, but was now powerless to defeat the contract. He actually led another diamond, but Eric won this and led a second trump towards his hand. When the Queen appeared, he won it with the Ace and drew the last outstanding trump. He next played the Jack of hearts, carefully overtaking it with dummy's King. East took his Ace, but there were no more tricks available to the defense.

Like many aggressive bid contracts, there was a line of defense to defeat it. East missed a chance to use a suit preference signal. By playing an unusually high club at trick one, the Jack, he would have asked partner to play the higher ranking of the other two suits, in this case, a heart.

A switch to hearts at trick two will defeat the contract if East holds off winning the first heart lead. Declarer would still play trumps, but when West wins the King, he then leads a second heart. East wins this and returns his last heart. Declarer must trump this or West will (for the fourth defensive trick).

This line of defense prevents declarer from obtaining four diamond discards on dummy's long heart suit. With only three discards, Eric would have to play diamonds himself, thereby losing a diamond trick as well as one trick in each of the other suits.