

# Bridge players seek world title

By RAY LEE

The North American trials to decide who will represent this continent in the 1974 Bermuda Bowl Championships (the annual world bridge championships) will be held in Milwaukee, Wis., Oct. 26 to 30.

Competing in this event are the winners of the four major national team championships sponsored by the American Contract Bridge League—the Spingold, Vanderbilt, Reisinger, and Grand National (the Morehead).

Undoubtedly the favorites will be the new-look Dallas Aces, who lost the Bermuda Bowl to Italy this year after winning it twice. Their nucleus is Bobby Wolff, Bob Goldman, Bob Hamman, and Mark Blumenthal, competing as holders of the Vanderbilt Trophy, and they will be joined by Toronto's international pair, Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela.

A few weeks ago, a press announcement of the join-up was denied here in Toronto by Kehela. It turned out that nobody had remembered to ask him if he wanted to play. All that appears to be smoothed out now, and the way is clear for the Canadians to have a good shot at the world title they have been chasing for so many years.

Eric Murray claims to have lost more world titles than any other player, and tells this story against himself quite proudly. At a recent closing banquet after a world championship, somebody noticed that Mur-

ray was joining in the singing for all the national anthems.

"Look," he said to his neighbor. "He knows all the words."

"Of course," was the reply. "Do you know how many times he's been here?"

Their toughest opposition in the trials is expected to come from the Spingold champions, led by Eddie Kantar and ex-Ace Billy Eisenberg. But the Toronto-Dallas team should win, and have an excellent chance of taking the bowl away from the Italians.

A world title would give Murray and Kehela the qualifications they need to hold the highest rank the World Bridge Federation bestows: Grand Master. They already have far more than enough World Master points, but must win a championship to gain the title.

## Bridge: Aces Remain to Be Tested In World Match Next Year

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

The Aces were not tested severely in the international playoff matches in Milwaukee this week. Their two victories, by 106 international match points in the semifinal and by 90 points in the final, reveal the extent to which they outclassed their opponents.

Whether the reconstructed Aces team will be any more successful next year against the Italian Blue Team than its predecessors have been remains to be seen.

Their prospects have certainly been somewhat improved by the recruitment of one of the world's greatest partnerships, Eric Murray and Sam Kehela of Toronto, who were in splendid form this week. On the diagrammed deal, Murray brought home a close game that failed in the replay.

Few experts would choose to overcall one diamond vulnerable with the East hand over one club, but the bid served a lead-directing purpose. If doubled, one diamond could have been defeated by three tricks for a penalty of 800, but it is seldom practicable to penalize a one-level overcall, so the risk was not great.

### A Climb to 4 Spades

North-South then climbed to four spades, the best available game contract with or without the diamond overcall. West naturally led the diamond ten, and South won the ace. As the sequel demonstrated, a duck would have been inferior.

Murray played hearts immediately and ruffed the third round with the spade six in dummy. He then played clubs, discarding a diamond loser and ruffing the third round safely in his hand. Next he ruffed his last heart with the spade jack.

If East had discarded, South would have been able to play a club winner and discard his remaining dia-

NORTH  
 ♠ J6  
 ♥ A7  
 ♦ 653  
 ♣ AK5432

WEST (D)  
 ♠ Q43  
 ♥ Q1043  
 ♦ 1094  
 ♣ 876

EAST  
 ♠ A82  
 ♥ 852  
 ♦ KQJ2  
 ♣ Q109

SOUTH  
 ♠ K10975  
 ♥ KJ96  
 ♦ A87  
 ♣ J

Both sides were vulnerable.  
 The bidding:  
 West North East South  
 Pass 1 ♣ 1 ♦ 1 ♠  
 Pass 2 ♣ Pass 2 ♥  
 Pass 2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠  
 Pass Pass Pass

West led the diamond ten.

mond with advantage. East, therefore, overruffed with the ace, and cashed a diamond winner to reach this position:

NORTH  
 ♠ —  
 ♥ —  
 ♦ 6  
 ♣ 543

WEST  
 ♠ Q43  
 ♥ —  
 ♦ 9  
 ♣ —

EAST  
 ♠ 82  
 ♥ —  
 ♦ QJ  
 ♣ —

SOUTH  
 ♠ K1097  
 ♥ —  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ —

South knew that West held the spade queen and would win a trick with that card. The only problem was the spade eight, and it seemed likely that West had begun with Q 8 x x, since East's bid of one diamond presumably showed a five-card suit.

So Murray ruffed the next diamond lead with the nine, discovering the true diamond division, and led the spade ten to make the game. The same play would have succeeded if West had held, as anticipated, the Q 8 x x of trumps.

# Toronto pair in world bridge

By RAY LEE

As expected, the Dallas Aces, including Toronto's Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela, will represent North America in the 1974 World Team Bridge Championships for the Bermuda Bowl.

They competed in the playoffs as Vanderbilt Cup holders, against the winners of the Spingold, the Reisinger and the Grand National team trophies.

The playoff was a knock-out event, and the shape of things to come was apparent in the first two sessions. Playing the Neisinger champions, Murray and Kehela steered their team to a steady 20 Imperial Match Point lead after the first session, then sat out the second. After the second session, the Aces were down 40. Eventually, they won fairly easily, however, by more than 100 points.

The final was similar—good steady sessions alternating with disasters for the American pairs, who played uncertainly throughout. It is, after all, unnerving, to build up a 128-IMP lead and see it cut in half over sixteen boards.

Even the optimistic Murray was despondent about his team's chances against the powerful Italians next year. The bright spot was his own and his partner's performance, which was excellent.

When partner takes a long time to make a bid or pass, one is ethically bound

to take only clear-cut action thereafter, so as to avoid taking advantage of the hesitation. But what if no action is clear-cut?

Playing against the New York Precision pair, Peter Weichsel and Alan Sontag, Murray held

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

Left-hand opponent opened one diamond, which could only be a two-card suit, and Kehela took a long time to pass. When right-hand opponent also passed, Murray was in the hot seat. What to do?

Many players would pass this hand, with or without the hesitation, and this was sure to bring in a good plus score, as the opponents were vulnerable. As Murray put it, they knew seven rooms away that Kehela had diamonds!

Given a choice, however, Murray would always rather bid than pass, and he felt his normal action would be to make a take-out double. This, of course, would give the opponents a chance to escape to a better spot, but he still felt it was the only correct course.

Virtue was rewarded when opener, after some thought, passed the double. Kehela passed happily, and right-hand opponent decided to sit for it.

Straightforward defence held declarer to two tricks, and the penalty was 1,400.

## BRIDGE

By Jacoby and Son

NORTH 21  
 ♠ 72  
 ♥ 10 6 4  
 ♦ A 10 9 7 6 5 3  
 ♣ Q

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

SOUTH  
 ♠ K Q J 4  
 ♥ K J 8 5  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ J 10 7 6 2

Neither vulnerable

West North East South  
 Redble Pass Pass 1♥  
 Double Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead—4♣

a spade. Eric won with the ace and led a trump whereupon Sammy cashed the ace and queen and led a third trump. South won in his own hand and led a club toward dummy's queen and right here is where Sammy separated the men from the boys. A lesser player would have let the club go whereupon there would have been no way left to beat one heart, but Sammy hopped up with his king and thought for a while.

Then he led the only card that would enable him to beat the contract. He played his low trump.

South's only choice was to cash his good spades and concede the last three tricks for down one.

If you don't think that Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela of Toronto are one of the best pairs in the world just look at this quiet defense. They were sort of fixed on the bidding.

North's pass of one diamond redoubled was for business. Eric sitting East didn't care. He would have made an overtrick if allowed to play there, but South ran to one heart. Sammy doubled and opened the four of diamonds.

South rose with dummy's ace, discarded a club and led

# Deal the Aces in again

North America's chances of recapturing the world bridge team championship when the battle for the Bermuda Bowl gets under way in Italy next May got a big boost in Milwaukee last week. Ira Corn's Aces, considerably strengthened by the recent addition of Canada's top stars, Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela of Toronto, breezed through the American playoffs, easily beating the three other 1972-73 national team champions who were competing for the honor of representing us in 1974. The Aces, who won this year's Vanderbilt Cup without the aid of Murray and Kehela, first took their semifinal match by more than 100 international match points, eliminating the young team led by Steve Goldberg that had captured the Reisinger event last fall. Then they sailed through the final against A. E. (Bud) Reinhold's Spingold titlists to a 90-IMP victory.

Indeed, the Aces were in complete command throughout the playoffs—except for one quarter near the end in which they gave the Reinhold rooters some momentary hopes of a miracle. Earlier, Reinhold's team—which had added San Francisco's Kyle Larsen to its Spingold roster of Larry Cohen, Dr. Richard Katz, Eddie Kantar and former Ace Billy Eisenberg—had overwhelmed Billy Seamon's Floridians, winners of the Grand National, a new event played for the first time this year in which all members of each team must be from the same geographical area. Thus there was little doubt that the two strongest teams had reached the playoff finals, or that the better—and by far the more experienced—of the finalists had won.

This will be the Aces' fifth consecutive appearance in world-title play. Bob Goldman, Bob Hamman and Bob Wolff remain from the original team that twice won the Bermuda Bowl during the years (1970 and 1971) in which Italy's then 12-time world-champion Blue Team was "retired," and lost an Olympiad when the Blues came out of retirement in 1972. Mark Blumenthal joined them early this year in another losing effort in Brazil against an Italian team that included three of the Blues. And now, heavily reinforced by Murray and Kehela, they will have another crack at some of the Blues; the Italian squad has not yet been announced but will most likely once again include Giorgio Belladonna, Benito Garozzo and Pietro Forquet, unquestionably three of the most accomplished bridge players in the world.

In Milwaukee the Aces showed the kind of form they will need to beat their archrivals. They dashed off to a 76-IMP lead in the first 32 deals of the final, thanks in no small part to the hand shown below.

Against Eisenberg's contract of two hearts doubled, the defense scored its three side-suit aces, plus four trump tricks. It might have been worse, but the declarer eventually got a diamond trick and held his loss to minus-300.

Prior to the replay on Vu-Graph, panel commentators pointed out that the Reinhold team might still gain on the deal if its East-West pair happened to bid three no trump and make it, but that the Aces could also add to their swing if they set three no trump via an opening club lead. As it happened, Aces Wolff and Hamman, playing North-South against Cohen and Katz, did even better than that.

The initial bidding was the same as that shown in the diagram, but after Katz

Neither side vulnerable  
West dealer

|                      |                      |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| NORTH                |                      |                   |                   |
| ♠ J 5                |                      |                   |                   |
| ♥ J 9 6 5 4 2        |                      |                   |                   |
| ♦ K                  |                      |                   |                   |
| ♣ Q 5 4 2            |                      |                   |                   |
| WEST                 |                      | EAST              |                   |
| ♠ Q 10 7 3           | ♥ K 10 8             | ♠ A 2             | ♥ A Q 7 3         |
| ♦ Q 7 3 2            | ♣ J 6                | ♦ A 9 6 5 4       | ♣ A 8             |
| SOUTH                |                      |                   |                   |
| ♠ K 9 8 6 4          |                      |                   |                   |
| ♥ —                  |                      |                   |                   |
| ♦ J 10 8             |                      |                   |                   |
| ♣ K 10 9 7 3         |                      |                   |                   |
| WEST<br>(Blumenthal) | NORTH<br>(Eisenberg) | EAST<br>(Goldman) | SOUTH<br>(Kantar) |
| PASS                 | PASS                 | 1♦                | 1♠                |
| 1 NT                 | 2♥                   | DBL.              | PASS              |
| PASS                 | PASS                 |                   | PASS              |

Opening lead: ace of spades

doubled two hearts, Hamman (South) rescued with three clubs, and East doubled again, albeit with slightly less enthusiasm. East was even more unhappy when his partner opened the 8 of hearts and declarer ruffed away his ace. A diamond to dummy's king forced East's second ace and he began to worry that South might eventually establish his spades. So to cut down on declarer's entries, East led a second heart to further shorten South's trumps. South ruffed and led the 10 of diamonds, covered by the queen and ruffed in dummy. A low spade lead next forced East to grab his spade ace lest dummy's remaining spade be discarded on a good diamond. At this point a diamond continuation would have caused declarer some trouble, but East persisted in the shortening process, leading a third heart for South to ruff.

With only king-10 of trumps in his hand, but the queen and two small trumps in dummy, Hamman led the king of clubs and Katz had a chance to set the contract with a most unusual play. The idea of refusing to win this trick would seem mad to most players, and even the commentators did not immediately see the effectiveness of such a move. But in fact if Katz had ducked, he would have scuttled the contract. Instead, he won with the ace and returned a spade. Now Hamman was home. He grabbed his spade king, led his last trump to dummy's queen and surrendered a heart trick. One trump and two hearts remained in dummy to win the last three tricks and raise the Aces' combined total to 770 points on the deal for a gain of 13 IMPs.

At the halfway mark of the final the Aces' lead had soared to 126 IMPs. But the Reinhold team was not yet through. To the accompaniment of claps of approval from the hometown crowd (Katz and Cohen started their bridge careers in Milwaukee, and Reinhold is from Wilmette, Ill.), the underdogs put on a sensational spurt, blanking the Aces for 20 consecutive deals and slicing their lead to 57 IMPs with 32 boards still to play. The hand shown next contributed 13 IMPs to the rally and demonstrated excellent partnership defense.

With no diamond bid by South to forewarn him, West led that suit in the closed room. Katz won and returned the king of spades. When this was ducked, declarer next forced out the king of diamonds, and West shifted to a heart. Dummy's

Both sides vulnerable  
West dealer

|                  |                  |                  |                 |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| NORTH            |                  |                  |                 |
| ♠ Q J 6 5 4      |                  |                  |                 |
| ♥ A Q            |                  |                  |                 |
| ♦ 8 5            |                  |                  |                 |
| ♣ A 9 7 3        |                  |                  |                 |
| WEST             |                  | EAST             |                 |
| ♠ 10 8 7         | ♥ 8 4            | ♠ A 9 3 2        | ♥ K J 9 7 6     |
| ♦ K 9 7 3        | ♣ Q 5 4 2        | ♦ 4 2            | ♣ J 6           |
| SOUTH            |                  |                  |                 |
| ♠ K              |                  |                  |                 |
| ♥ 10 5 3 2       |                  |                  |                 |
| ♦ A Q J 10 6     |                  |                  |                 |
| ♣ K 10 8         |                  |                  |                 |
| WEST<br>(Murray) | NORTH<br>(Cohen) | EAST<br>(Kehela) | SOUTH<br>(Katz) |
| PASS             | 1♣               | PASS             | 1 NT            |
| PASS             | 2♣               | PASS             | 3 NT            |
| PASS             | PASS             | PASS             |                 |

Opening lead: 3 of diamonds

queen lost to the king, and East's heart continuation knocked out the ace. But the heart shift had come too late to help the defense. Declarer led dummy's queen of spades to establish a second trick in that suit, while he still held the heart 10

as a stopper in his hand. Murry and Kehela could thus collect only two hearts, a spade and a diamond, and Katz made his game.

In the replay South bid diamonds before arriving at three no trump, so Eisenberg (West) knew there was no future in leading that suit. Instead he opened a heart, and dummy's queen fell to the king. Kantar's heart return knocked out the ace and Wolff, the declarer, led a diamond for an apparent winning finesse as West ducked. The king of spades was led, and it was now Kantar's turn to duck. Next came the 10 of clubs, passed to East's jack, and East returned a low spade that allowed West's 10 to force dummy's jack. Now Wolff repeated the diamond finesse, but the earlier ducks had made a dead duck of the contract. West took the king and led a spade through dummy's queen to let East collect two spade tricks and the jack of hearts for a two-trick set and a 200-point penalty—a net of 800 for the Reinhold team on the combined result.

In the course of this 128-deal final there were several oddities. On one hand the Aces reached a grand slam in just two bids—one by each partner—and made it. With the same hand, their opponents bid and bid, yet stopped at six. On another deal the Aces bid a slam lacking two aces—and went down. But in making it to the world championship for the fifth successive year, they did put on an impressive performance.

What will happen in Italy next May? The fact that the North American zone is to be represented by players including Canada will be popular with our friends abroad, who have resented the appearance of two wholly United States teams following the Aces' previous victories. It will be even more popular here if it helps to beat the revamped but still undefeated Blues and bring back the Bermuda Bowl. Should that transpire, we will be defending the bowl in 1975 in Bermuda, where the world championship started a quarter century ago. We won that first one. Maybe it is a good omen. **END**

# Bridge: North Americans Fail to Gain Over Italians in World Play

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

Special to The New York Times

VENICE, Italy, May 26 — North America just failed to overtake the world champion Italians in the final qualifying round of world championship bridge team play here last night. As a result, the Aces meet Brazil in one semifinal, while the Italians in the other face the Indonesians, who finished strongly to take over fourth position from a tiring French foursome.

There seems little doubt that the Aces will once again meet Italy in the final tomorrow. They begin against Brazil with a 25-point advantage, based on the qualifying-round results, while the Italians carry over 32 points against Indonesia.

The 10th-round results were: North America beat France 19-1; Italy beat Brazil 12-8; Indonesia beat New Zealand 20 to minus 5.

The final qualifying standings were: Italy 149; North America 148; Brazil 111; Indonesia 82; France 71; New Zealand 16.

## Bidding Opens Slowly

The diagramed deal from the ninth qualifying round was perhaps the most dramatic of the qualifying round so far. Italy, fighting for first place, encountered Indonesia, trying to capture fourth.

The bidding began slowly, but gathered momentum when it became clear that both sides had a double fit—North-South in the black suits and East-West in the red suits. Finally, at the six-level, Benito Garozzo with the North cards made the winning decision to bid six spades over six hearts.

East should perhaps have taken out insurance against disaster by bidding seven hearts, a contract that would succeed in the unlikely event that South failed to lead the spade ace. However, East thought his hand offered sufficient defense to a slam. He was proved wrong.

There was a double-dummy defense available—a diamond lead to the ace and a club return for a ruff—but the Manoppo brothers for Indonesia, not unnaturally failed to find it. The opening lead was a heart, and Belladonna as South simply ruffed in dummy, drew trumps, and cashed six club tricks to make the slam.

## Slam Is Lost

In the replay, Indonesia again misjudged and doubled the Italian pair, Arturo Franco and Soldano deFalco in six hearts. This was unbeatable, and an overtrick was made when South led his singleton diamond rather than a spade. The total score to Italy was 2,740, worth 21 international match points—the biggest single profit of the championships.

In the other two matches there were large swings also.

New Zealand, like the Italians, reached six spades, but Goldman for the Aces found the winning defense of an opening diamond lead and Blumenthal cooperated by returning a club to beat the slam one trick.

However, New Zealand gained 16 international match points in any case, for they were doubled in six hearts for 1,310 in the replay. At this point New Zealand led in the match by 33 points,

## Today's Hand

NORTH

♠ K 7 5

♥ —

♦ 10 8 6 5

♣ A Q 10 5 4 2

WEST

♠ 10 9 8 3

♥ Q 10 9 7

♦ K Q 7 4 2

♣ —

EAST

♠ 6

♥ A K 6 5 4 3 2

♦ A J 9

♣ J 9

SOUTH (D)

♠ A Q J 4 2

♥ J 8

♦ 3

♣ K 8 7 6 3

North and South were vulnerable. The bidding:

| South | West | North  | East |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| 1 ♠   | 2 ♦  | 3 ♣    | 3 ♦  |
| 4 ♣   | 4 ♥  | 4 N.T. | 5 ♦  |
| Pass  | Pass | 5 ♠    | Pass |
| 6 ♣   | 6 ♥  | 6 ♠    | Pass |
| Pass  | Pass |        |      |

West led the heart seven.

but the Aces fought back to lose 9-11. The moral of this hand, and of others of this type, is: Never let the opponents play the hand.

In the third match, France was allowed to play the East-West cards in five hearts, scoring 480, and gained nine international match points when the replay led to a contract of six spades doubled. This failed by one trick when Chagas found the winning diamond lead and Assumpcao cooperated by returning a club for the ruff.

# Bridge: Italians and Aces Open Play In World Championship Finals

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

Special to The New York Times

VENICE, May 27—The Italian world champions got off to a good start this afternoon defending their title against the Aces, and led after the first 48 deals by 47 international match points.

The first of two unusual incidents occurred on the second deal when an official put a board on the table in the wrong position and the players looked at the cards. A deal that had already been played in the closed room therefore had to be canceled, and the American North player, technically responsible under the rules, was fined 3 international match points. This outweighed the 2 point lead with which the Americans began the match, based on the qualifying results.

The second episode, on the 19th deal, was serious for the Italians. Benito Bianchi accidentally pulled out a heart when playing to a diamond lead. The heart became a penalty card, and he and his partner, Pietro Forquet, were required to play a heart when he gained the lead.

As a result, Bob Goldman made a game which would otherwise have failed. The 11-point gain to the Americans put them into the lead temporarily, but the Italians then moved ahead on a series of part-score deals, and made two game contracts that failed when the Americans attempted them.

In the play-off match for third position, Brazil led Indonesia at the half-way mark by 40 international match points.

The most dramatic deal in the first session of play seemed to promise a big gain for the Americans. In the closed room, Sam Kehela opened the bidding as East with one diamond and Forquet overcalled two clubs. Eric Murray made a dashing leap to four spades, a contract that would have failed by two tricks and might have been doubled. However, Bianchi as North continued to five clubs, which Murray doubled when it came around to him.

The defense took three diamond tricks, and East played a fourth diamond. South now had to judge the club position and misguessed. He

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| NORTH            |             |
| ♠ A              |             |
| ♥ A 8 6 5 4      |             |
| ♦ 9 3 2          |             |
| ♣ 10 6 5 3       |             |
| WEST             |             |
| ♠ J 10 9 8 7 6 2 | ♠ 5 4 3     |
| ♥ 10 7 3         | ♥ Q J 2     |
| ♦ 10             | ♦ A K Q 7 6 |
| ♣ K J            | ♣ 8 7       |
| SOUTH            |             |
| ♠ K Q            |             |
| ♥ K 9            |             |
| ♦ J 8 5 4        |             |
| ♣ A Q 9 4 2      |             |

Both sides were vulnerable. The bidding:  
East South West North  
1 ♦ 1 N.T. 3 ♠ 3 N.T.  
Pass Pass Pass  
West led the spade jack.

played for East to have one of the club honors for his opening bid, and the result was down three tricks for a penalty of 800.

When the hand was replayed on Vugraph in front of a large and excitable Italian audience, Bob Belladonna contented himself with a jump to three spades, and North's bid of three no-trump ended the auction.

The club suit was again the key to the situation. After a spade lead Wolff, like Forquet, assumed that East held one of the club honors to justify his opening. He ran the club ten at the second trick, a play that would have brought home the contract if West had held a small singleton. But West won with the jack and persevered with spades.

South entered dummy with a heart lead to take another club finesse and when this lost the defense took the rest of the tricks. The last spade lead from West squeezed South, who could not keep the heart king and the guard against East's diamonds. Down six tricks meant 600 points for Italy, but left the Americans with a modest profit of 5 international match points.

# Bridge: World Team Championship Won Again by Italian Team

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

Special to The New York Times

VENICE, Italy, May 28—The great Italian team won the world team championship here this afternoon, its 15th victory since 1957, but only after the American Aces gave them a considerable fright.

With 16 boards remaining to be played, the Italians led by only 17 international match points, but they held on in a tense final session to win by 29 international match points, 195 to 166.

Giorgio Belladonna and Benito Garozzo were a tower of strength for the winners. Missing a slam in the final session was virtually their only error in 96 deals.

They were well supported by Pietro Forquet and Benito Bianchi. The Italian third pair, Arturo Franco and Soldano de Falco, did not play in the final and do not receive the title of world champion.

For the Americans, the two anchor pairs, Bob Wolff and Bob Hamman of Dallas, and Eric Murray and Sam Kehela of Toronto, played extremely well, and would have won against any other team in the world.

## Play Below Best Form

Bob Goldman of Dallas and Mark Blumenthal of Kansas City, Mo., were below their best form in the 32 deals they played yesterday.

One of the most difficult hands of the final match found both sides at fault in the bidding. But as the Italians underbid and the Americans overbid, it was the defending champions who showed a profit. Both pairs were playing a strong club system, and the question was whether North should open one club, counting his considerable distributional strength as compensation for his shortage of high-card points.

Forquet for Italy thought not, and opened with one diamond. Bianchi responded modestly with one heart, and Forquet jumped to three diamonds. With the misfit in mind, Bianchi contented himself with three no-trump. This was a brilliant decision in a sense, since six no-trump was not a sound contract. But a good six-contract was available in either black suit, neither of which was bid.

It was certainly a difficult hand, and the Americans went too far in the opposite direction. They also failed to bid either of the black suits in which a slam could be made. Hamman's response of two diamonds showed six controls and the partnership was headed for the heights.

North bid his diamonds twice, and South used Blackwood. When he found that his partner held two aces and two kings, he judged that 13

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

North and South were vulnerable. The bidding:

|      |       |      |        |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| West | North | East | South  |
| Pass | 1 ♣   | Pass | 2 ♦    |
| Pass | 3 ♦   | Pass | 3 ♥    |
| Pass | 4 ♦   | Pass | 4 N.T. |
| Pass | 5 ♥   | Pass | 5 N.T. |
| Pass | 6 ♥   | Pass | 7 N.T. |
| Pass | Pass  | Pass | Pass   |

West led the club seven.

tricks could be found in no-trump. As the hand was a misfit and North's values were distributional, the result was a virtually impossible contract.

After an opening club lead, Hamman did well to escape for down one. He won the club lead in his hand, crossed to dummy with a club lead and cashed two top diamonds and the other club winner. A doubleton queen-jack of diamonds would have given him a chance, but this miracle did not materialize.

He led a spade from dummy, and East put up the nine. South won and cashed his winners in hearts and clubs. East was reduced to three spades and a heart winner, so the spade ace was led and the ten unblocked from dummy. Then a heart lead endplayed East and South made two spade tricks at the finish. Italy gained 13 international match points.

# Bridge: Aces' Fine Play Frightens Italians Heading to Victory

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

Special to The New York Times

VENICE, Italy, May 29—American hopes of defeating the great Italian Blue Team and capturing the world team title were disappointed once again yesterday, but not before the Aces gave their great rivals a considerable fright.

The comfortable lead of 48 international match points, with which the Italians began the final 32 deals, dwindled to five points after 10 deals, but the defending champions held on grimly and won by 29 points. This was the closest the Americans have come to beating the Blue Team since 1963.

The match seemed to substantiate the European theory that Giorgio Belladonna and Benito Garozzo can play with any teammates and win. In 95 deals, they made only one serious error—a missed slam.

The two American pairs, on whom Ira Corn, the non-playing captain, relied almost throughout, were also in great form. Bob Hamman and Bob Wolff of Dallas and Eric Murray and Sam Kehela of Toronto were in fine form and played better than any other American representative have done against the Blue Team in recent years.

No doubt the Aces will try again next year, with the same two pairs as the nucleus of their effort. But before they can resume the fight in Bermuda in January, they will need to win the American playoffs, which is no easy task.

Belladonna received prolonged applause from the large Italian audience watching on Vugraph Sunday night. Playing in the semi-final against Indonesia, he played one of the best hands of the championship—and also one of the slowest.

The one-club opening bid by Garozzo was Precision, artificial and strong. The response of one spade was positive, showing at least a five-card suit. The jump rebid to three spades by North was a rare action, and Belladonna took seven or eight minutes to consider it.

The vugraph commentator, Mike Ledeen, had time to send for a copy of the Italian Precision book and explain

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

North and South were vulnerable. The bidding:

|       |      |       |      |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| North | East | South | West |
| 1 ♣   | Pass | 1 ♠   | Pass |
| 3 ♠   | Pass | 4 ♣   | Pass |
| 4 ♦   | Pass | 4 ♥   | Pass |
| 4 ♠   | Pass | 5 ♣   | Pass |
| 5 ♥   | Pass | 6 ♠   | Pass |
| Pass  | Pass | Pass  | Pass |

West led the heart seven.

the bid to the audience as follows: spade support, but a minimum balanced hand that has no desire to take control. South must take charge if a slam is in prospect.

A series of cue-bids followed, and Belladonna finally took the plunge and bid six spades.

He found the play no easier than the bidding. After a heart lead, he was faced with a sure heart loser and a guess in the trump suit. After considerable thought, he found a line of play that avoided the guess in the trump suit.

The queen, king and ace of hearts were played on the first trick, and a heart was led to the jack. A heart was discarded on the club ace and a club was ruffed. Next declarer took the diamond king, the diamond ace and ruffed a diamond. Another club ruff and another diamond ruff left this position:

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| NORTH    |       |
| ♠ A      |       |
| ♥ 8 6    |       |
| ♦ —      |       |
| ♣ 8      |       |
| WEST     |       |
| ♠ Q 7 4  | ♠ 3 2 |
| ♥ —      | ♥ 10  |
| ♦ —      | ♦ —   |
| ♣ J      | ♣ K   |
| SOUTH    |       |
| ♠ K 10 8 |       |
| ♥ 9      |       |
| ♦ —      |       |
| ♣ —      |       |

The spade was cashed, a club was ruffed, and the spade king was cashed. East's heart winner and West's spade winner combined to take the last trick.

Sad to say, this virtuoso performance gained no points.

In the replay, the Indonesians reached six hearts and made it by the simple process of guessing the location of the spade queen.

# Bridge: Study of the Final in Venice Shows High-Standard Play

By ALAN TRUSCOTT

The 96-deal final of the world team championship in Venice this week was fully worthy of the occasion. A study of the errors committed suggests that the standard was as high as it has ever been in a Bermuda Bowl final.

The most effective pair was Giorgio Belladonna and Benito Garozzo of Italy, but the two leading American partnerships, Bob Wolff and Bob Hamman of Dallas, and Eric Murray and Sam Kehela of Toronto, were not far behind.

The second Italian pair, Pietro Forquet and Benito Bianchi, must get a slightly lower rating: Forquet is as accurate as ever, but Bianchi is not quite as talented as his more famous teammates.

Murray and Kehela were in great form throughout the eight days of qualifying, semifinal and final play. On the diagramed deal, Murray smoothly overcame a bad trump break, while his teammates pushed the Italians a level too high in the replay.

## Only One Bid

Belladonna opened the West hand with one diamond, and his side did no more bidding. Kehela's take-out double, as North, encouraged Murray to jump to two spades, since there was a strong probability of a good fit. North had no doubt about going to game, but was not sure which game to try. His cue-bid of three diamonds located the heart fit, and led to four hearts.

Looking at the North-South cards, four hearts seems easy. On a good day, which this was not, you might find both black kings well-placed, and make 13

tricks. The opening diamond lead was won in dummy, and the ace of hearts was led, revealing the bad trump break.

Now the plan was to make East ruff, so that his trumps could be drawn safely. Murray was quite willing to lose one spade trick, one diamond trick and one heart trick. He took a spade finesse and West won — a hold-up would have made no difference.

West next led a low diamond, knowing from the play at trick one that his partner had the queen. East did the best he could by winning and playing a third round of diamonds, attempting to weaken the declarer's trumps.

This gave a ruff-and-sluff, and Murray had the answer ready. He discarded a club and ruffed with the heart king in dummy, preserving the eight. Then he continued spades, waiting for East to ruff. After the second spade lead the position was:

NORTH  
 ♠ 10  
 ♥ Q8  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ A Q 7 2

|          |            |
|----------|------------|
| WEST     | EAST       |
| ♠ 7      | ♠ —        |
| ♥ —      | ♥ 10 7 5 3 |
| ♦ KJ     | ♦ 10       |
| ♣ KJ 9 6 | ♣ 4 3      |

SOUTH  
 ♠ J 9 8  
 ♥ J 9 6  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ 10

The spade jack was led, and if East had ruffed South would have been in control. A trump return would have been won with the queen, and the eight would have been led to pick up the trumps with a finesse. A club return would have had the same re-

NORTH  
 ♠ Q 10 5  
 ♥ A K Q 8  
 ♦ A 2  
 ♣ A Q 7 2

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

SOUTH  
 ♠ A J 9 8 3  
 ♥ J 9 6 4  
 ♦ 8 7  
 ♣ 10 8

Both sides were vulnerable.  
 The bidding:

|      |       |      |       |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1 ♦  | Dbl.  | Pass | 2 ♠   |
| Pass | 3 ♦   | Pass | 3 ♥   |
| Pass | 4 ♥   | Pass | Pass  |
| Pass |       |      |       |

West led the diamond three.

sult, and a diamond return would have allowed South to ruff in dummy, cash the club ace and cross-ruff.

In view of this, East chose to discard a club, and discard another club on the next round of spades. This did him no good, and when the fifth spade arrived he finally ruffed. Whether he returned a trump or his last diamond, South had the rest of the tricks for a score of 620.

The Italians were well-served during the championships by Garozzo's Super-Precision System, but this hand revealed a slight weakness. West's opening bid was the nebulous diamond, often made on a short diamond suit, and East could not therefore afford to raise.

In the replay, Wolff raised to two diamonds, South made a cue-bid of three diamonds, and Hamman bid a brisk five diamonds. This could have been down 500, a worthwhile save against 620, but North not unnaturally went to five hearts.

Unluckily for him, this could not be made, and in practice he made only nine tricks, giving North America 13 international match points.



# Minor problem

An unhappy orphan, largely neglected by teachers and text-books alike, is the game contract in a minor-suit. The beginner planning to play in a game contract is advised to select a major suit or no-trump. "When should I play in five clubs or five diamonds?" he asks, and gets the answer "never." One should never use the word "never" in bridge generalizations, which is itself a statement for logicians to ponder over.

If one suit is completely exposed, the no-trump contract must obviously be rejected. But if the opponents have no suit they can run immediately, the decision may be very difficult. The experts in the world championship team final in Venice in May faced this problem on two consecutive deals.

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

After an opening bid from South, the most desirable contract on these hands is clearly five diamonds, preferably played by East. This contract succeeds whenever South has the heart ace, which is likely, or North has the spade king, which is unlikely—always provided, of course, that the declarer avoids the loss of a trump trick.

Neither team solved this problem. The Italians rested cautiously in three diamonds, while the Americans played three no-trump and made nine tricks since the opposing clubs were obligingly split four-four.

On the very next deal Eric Murray and Sam Kehela of Toronto reached five clubs as shown. This time three no-trump would have been easy and five clubs was precarious. In general the 11-trick contract should only be preferred if there are at least nine cards in the potential trump suit in the combined hands. Here

|                                       |             |               |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| <b>NORTH</b>                          |             |               |             |
| ♠ 10 8                                |             |               |             |
| ♥ 7 4 3 2                             |             |               |             |
| ♦ A Q J 9 5                           |             |               |             |
| ♣ A Q                                 |             |               |             |
| <b>WEST</b>                           |             | <b>EAST</b>   |             |
| ♠ K Q 9 5 4 3                         |             | ♠ 6           |             |
| ♥ 10                                  |             | ♥ A Q J 9 8 5 |             |
| ♦ 10 8 3                              |             | ♦ K 6 4 2     |             |
| ♣ 10 4 3                              |             | ♣ 6 2         |             |
| <b>SOUTH (D)</b>                      |             |               |             |
| ♠ A J 7 2                             |             |               |             |
| ♥ K 6                                 |             |               |             |
| ♦ 7                                   |             |               |             |
| ♣ K J 9 8 7 5                         |             |               |             |
| <b>THE BIDDING:</b>                   |             |               |             |
| <i>East and West were vulnerable.</i> |             |               |             |
| <b>SOUTH</b>                          | <b>WEST</b> | <b>NORTH</b>  | <b>EAST</b> |
| 1 ♣                                   | Pass        | 1 ♦           | 1 ♥         |
| 1 ♠                                   | Pass        | 2 ♥           | Dbl.        |
| 3 ♣                                   | Pass        | 4 ♣           | Pass        |
| 5 ♣                                   | Pass        | Pass          | Pass        |
| <i>West led the heart ten.</i>        |             |               |             |

there were only eight trump.

The first few actions were clearcut, and then at his second turn North bid two hearts, a cue-bid announcing a desire to be in game but some uncertainty about the right suit. South completed a picture of his distribution by bidding three clubs and North raised. A further cue-bid of three hearts from North might have been preferable, in which case South would have shown his heart stopper by bidding three no-trump.

Kehela played well to make 11 tricks, but he could have been defeated. The defense began with a heart to the ace and a heart ruff. West followed with the spade king, and the ace won. Now the only hope was to make use of dummy's diamonds to dispose of the losing spades.

Trump entries were needed to dummy, so diamonds had to be attacked at once. East's bidding suggested that he held the king, so South was on reasonably firm ground in leading to the ace and taking a ruffing finesse. The problem came at the next trick, after the queen had won and South

had disposed of one of his spade losers.

South had to assume that West held the diamond ten but had to guess whether it would drop on the next round. He guessed right by reflecting that East would very probably have covered the diamond queen with the king if he had begun with a three-card holding. So the diamond jack was led and covered with the king. South ruffed, noted with pleasure the appearance of West's ten, and drew trumps ending in dummy. The nine-five of diamonds were now available for two spade discards, and five clubs was made.

East-West could have capitalized on the North-South decision to play five clubs by brilliant defense. Strangely enough, the contract would have been doomed to fail if East has shifted to the spade six at the second trick, or if West had discarded a diamond instead of ruffing the heart return. West's third trump was vitally needed to stop South from making effective use of dummy's diamonds. ■

Italy, the host country and defending titlist at the 20th World Bridge Team Championship, allowed its challengers a glimpse of the Bermuda Bowl, but it was only a brief one. At a victory banquet in Venice's posh Lido Casino following the tournament last week, the coveted trophy was once again claimed by the Italians. Giorgio Belladonna, Benito Garozzo and Pietro Forquet, all members of Italy's famed Blue Team, had proved in the final that a hand that includes three Blues is enough to beat four Aces and a pair of Canadians, which is what North America's bridge forces had pinned their hopes on.

This is Italy's 12th Bermuda Bowl victory and 15th world title since the Blue Team began competing in 1957. France won the World Team Olympiad in 1960, and in 1970 and 1971, when no member of the Blue Team played, North America's Aces brought home the bowl. Although this year's Italian victory came by the comparatively low margin of 29 international match points, one can only wonder when—if ever—the seemingly unbeatable Blues will begin to lose their finesse. Belladonna, Garozzo and Forquet gave a scintillating performance, aided only in part by Benito Bianchi, Soldano de Falco and Arturo Franco.

Six teams entered the double round robin that began this year's tournament. For three of them the outcome of this five-day grind was virtually a foregone conclusion. Italy, North America and Brazil needed only to go through the motions to qualify for the semifinals. On the other hand, New Zealand, making its bow as the representative of the recently created Australasian zone of the World Bridge Federation, did what could be expected of a team with no previous world championship experience—it finished last. So the only question was whether Indonesia, the Far East champion, or France, representing Europe because Italy was appearing as the defender, would gain the fourth position. Indonesia succeeded only to lose heavily to Italy in the semifinals, while North America easily defeated Brazil. So, just as it has in all but three of the last 15 world championships, the battle for the bowl came down to Italy vs. North America—or in this case, Aces Bobby Wolff, Bob Hamman, Bobby Goldman and Mark Blumenthal reinforced by Canadian stars Eric Murray and Sammy Kehela.

## No way to beat the Blues

**Four Aces and two top Canadians couldn't do it, even though only half—albeit the stronger half—of Italy's distinguished Blue Team played**

Going into the 96-deal final, the hopes of nonplaying captain Ira Corn were high. His team had beaten Italy in one of its two round-robin matches, giving North America a two-point advantage to carry into the final. But that very slight edge was more than erased on the first deal when the Italians won six IMPs. For a while the match remained close, but then Italy began forging the "comfortable" 48-IMP lead it held before the last 32-deal session. That was when Wolff-Hamman, winners of the 1974 World Open Pair Championship, and Murray-Kehela caught fire. The three Blues plus Bianchi, who had been playing throughout the final—de Falco and Franco sat it out—failed to score a single IMP on the next 10 boards as the North Americans staged a 43-point blitz, cutting the Italians' lead to a precarious five. Onlookers wondered if the time had come when Italy could no longer win with only three of its stars.

But the gates were slammed shut as the Blues once again displayed the superior slam bidding that has distinguished their performances for 10, these many years. In the end, their final margin of 29 points was a clear, if not so overwhelming, mark of victory.

The standard of play on both sides was high. However, the brilliant exploits of the world champions have been set forth so often before that it may not be amiss to chronicle a hand that was amusing—at least to the large majority of Italians watching the play via Vu-Graph. When the following deal appeared on the screen, Italian rooters were gloomily aware that Forquet and Bianchi had taken a phantom sacrifice, going down 800 points at five clubs doubled against Murray-Kehela's four-spade contract, which could not have been made. This minus score appeared to augur a handsome swing for the North Americans, even if Wolff, one of the world's leading players, went down a trick

at three no trump. But things happened.

With only four top tricks in the major suits, Wolff needed five club tricks to bring home his contract. East had opened the bidding; West had made a weak bid based on a long suit. So Wolff elected to finesse the 10 of clubs after winning the first spade. This lost to the jack and a spade continuation knocked out declarer's last stopper. Dummy was entered with the ace of hearts and the club finesse was repeated. It was a play that was called for by the bidding, but it was not exactly a success. Belladonna, with his virtual bust, wound up collecting

*Both sides vulnerable  
East dealer*

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

|                   |                  |                      |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| EAST<br>(Garozzo) | SOUTH<br>(Wolff) | WEST<br>(Belladonna) | NORTH<br>(Hamman) |
| 1 ♦<br>PASS       | 1 NT<br>PASS     | 3 ♠<br>PASS          | 3 NT              |

*Opening lead: jack of spades*

seven tricks against three no trump. East's top diamonds took three more and the 800-point loss was reduced to a net deficit of only 200 as South went down six!

Later on, the usually conservative Forquet, playing East on the deal shown on the next page, let the opponents escape from a trap and lost 790 points instead of collecting a quiet 200 against four hearts not doubled as the North American East-West pair had done in the closed room. Sammy Kehela, East at the other

*continued*