

Canadian tour of South Africa proved to be a huge success

After more than two years of planning, a project that had always seemed "pie in the sky" was launched in December, 1982.

As many of you are probably aware, South Africa had been barred from the last World Team Olympiad in Biarritz by the World Bridge Federation. Too many member nations, it was feared, would refuse to participate if South Africa were permitted to attend in any official capacity.

Well, if South Africa could no longer send players to international events, Julius Butkow, president of the South Africa Bridge Federation (SABF), was determined to bring international calibre bridge to his country.

And so he did. First a large group of British tourists visited the country in October, playing as they toured, staying in hotels and being treated to lavish hospitality.

Six city tour

In December, a small group of Canadians was invited to play a six-city tour of exhibition matches and multiple teams events, staying with South African families and exploring the country in style.

This was the opportunity of a lifetime for Sami Kehela, George Mittelman, Dianna Gordon, Peter Nagy and me, and we were delighted to accept the SABF's offer.

We played three exhibition matches and a multiple teams in Johannesburg, losing one match to the top SA side by 4 IMPs, but winning the other events.

The multi-teams covered six sessions, where we met 25 teams in seven-board matches, scored as a combination of IMPs-Victory Points and total points-board a match. Very interesting and worth trying here. The event was sponsored by a major company, Protea, and offered lovely prizes.

From Johannesburg we emplaned for the coast and made three stops in Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban before returning to Johannesburg for bridge and sightseeing.

We won all our matches in Port Elizabeth, nine in all (although we were outscored in the multi-teams by some very keen locals), and both exhibitions in East London,

Bridge

ERIC KOKISH



before falling on tough times in Durban, also known as "Durbs." There we lost by 19 IMPs over 24-boards to Petra Mansell (one of the world's top women players) and her team.

Easy to miss

The following evening we lost the multi-team on the very last round, somewhat unluckily. Today's deal is from that multi-teams.

Sami Kehela was South and George Mittelman was North and they conducted an improvised Acol sequence to a good contract: 6NT. At the other table, North-South had reached 4 spades and made an overtrick, the bad spade break seeming to be fatal to the success of any higher venture in spades. But Kehela, fortunately for us, was not in spades, but notrump.

He won the diamond lead in dummy and crossed to the heart ace. When the nine dropped, he played the king of hearts and unlocked dummy's ten, West discarding a club. Now a diamond to dummy and a heart finesse to the eight picked up East's jack. Declarer ran the hearts as West parted with a diamond, a club and another diamond.

A greedy declarer would discard the club from dummy and hope to score all the spades, but Kehela is one of the world's great players because he never does that sort of thing. No, he kept the club in dummy and threw a couple of spades, since he required only four spade tricks for his contract.

When he cashed the diamond queen, West threw another club. Would Kehela now guess the spades? No, he played queen of spades and a spade to the king.

Dummy was down to ace-ten of spades and that silly club. West held jack-small of spades and the club ace. Declarer played a club and collected his two spade tricks from West in the very end. So easy to miss if you don't think ahead.

In fact, Kehela was outstanding throughout the tour, thrilling large crowds wherever we went. Kehela-Mittelman won a special pair game in Jo'burg as well. We did well in Pretoria, crushing a pretty good team on a night when everything went our way.

In Capetown, we won narrowly over their best team but coasted in two other exhibition matches. It was tougher in the multi-teams but we eventually prevailed there too.

Bridge notes

There's a Sectional next weekend in Ottawa, Jan. 20 to 23, at the RA Centre, Riverside Drive 0-99, 100+ Pairs on Thursday at 8 p.m.; Mixed at 2 p.m.; Men's and Ladies at 8 p.m.; Friday: Open Pairs 1:30 and 0-500, unlimited Pairs at 7:30 Saturday, Swiss at noon and TBA Sunday. Call Wayne Perrin at 226-4451 in Nepean for details.

If you're going to attend a Regional or two this year, please consider Bermuda Jan. 29 to Feb. 6. It's the best tournament anywhere.

BOTH VULNERABLE NORTH DEALS

NORTH

♠ A K 10 9 7 3
♥ 10 6 5
♦ A K 10
♣ 3

WEST

♠ J 8 6 2
♥ 9
♦ J 9 8 7
♣ A 9 6 4

EAST

♠ 4
♥ J 7 4 2
♦ 6 4 3
♣ 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
1S	P	2H	P
3D	P	3H	P
4H	P	4NT	P
5H	P	6NT	P
P	P		

OPENING LEAD: Diamond nine

Gazette - Jan 15/83

North vs. South

The burning issue currently in world bridge administration is this: Should South Africa be permitted to compete in the World Team Olympiad, scheduled for Seattle, Wash., in October 1984?

The basic problem, of course, is apartheid, the social and legal system which permits a white minority to dominate a black majority. The rest of the world regards this with distaste, but what should be done about it in a bridge context is debatable.

Many governments, largely from the Third World, object to competing against South Africa. When it takes the form of barring head-to-head confrontations, the situation can be managed by putting the two countries into different groups. But the governments now tend to ban participation if South Africa competes at all.

The President of the World Bridge Federation, Jaime Ortiz-Patino of Switzerland, recently proposed a bylaw change which would permit South Africa, or some other country, to be excluded on any particular occasion.

He lobbied the Board of the American Contract Bridge League at its July meeting in New Orleans, and was rebuffed by an almost unanimous vote against the change. The directors were influenced mainly by a desire for the game to be apolitical. But they may also have taken into account that South Africa, a member in good standing since the birth of the world organization, is already barred effectively from playing three years of the four-year world championship and that its bridge organization is multi-racial, with Indians particularly prominent.

The fate of the bylaw proposal, which needs a 2/3 majority, remains in doubt. It will be voted on in Stockholm late this month; and if it fails, Mr. Ortiz-Patino predicts that 20 countries will absent themselves from the Seattle Championships.

Since 1980, when they competed in the world championships in Valkenburg, Netherlands, the South Africans have had to be content to play against unofficial touring groups.

One of these was a Canadian quintet last December, which included Sam Kehela, Eric Kokish, Peter Nagy, George Mittelman and Dianna Gordon. In their first match, against the top-ranked Johannesburg women's team, the diagramed deal proved decisive.

The South African North-South arrived safely in five diamonds, and made exactly 11 tricks. The Canadian North-South, Kehela and Mittelman, pushed ambitiously to six diamonds as shown. Since there is an unavoidable heart loser, the declarer must avoid a trump loser. But even with a favorable trump position, it is far from easy to bring in 12 tricks.

Cover up the East-West hands, and consider how you would play after a trump lead. It is a fair bet that 99 players out of 100 would go down in the slam.

South can count six tricks in the black suits and can do nothing with hearts. He needs six trump tricks,

NORTH(D)			
♠ J98			
♥ QJ652			
♦ K643			
♣ K			
WEST		EAST	
♠ 43		♠ 10765	
♥ K1043		♥ A87	
♦ 105		♦ Q92	
♣ Q10752		♣ J98	
SOUTH			
♠ AKQ2			
♥ 9			
♦ AJ87			
♣ A643			

East and West were vulnerable. The bidding:

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

West led the diamond five.

which can be achieved by ruffing two club losers in the dummy.

Suppose South sets about this task routinely. He plays low from dummy, and wins the trump queen with the ace. He then leads to the club king, and can succeed, double-dummy, by surrendering a heart. In practice he is more likely to cross to the spade ace and ruff a club. He can enter his hand with a spade lead and ruff another club, reaching this position:

NORTH			
♠ J			
♥ QJ652			
♦ K			
♣ —			
WEST		EAST	
♠ —		♠ 107	
♥ K1043		♥ A87	
♦ 10		♦ 92	
♣ Q10		♣ —	
SOUTH			
♠ Q2			
♥ 9			
♦ J87			
♣ A			

South has enough tricks, but cannot disentangle them. He can cash the diamond king and the spade jack, but when he leads a heart, East can duck. West can win and play a club for the setting ruff.

Mittelman sidestepped this problem by a key play at the first trick. Confident that West would not lead from the trump queen, he won the first trick with dummy's king, preserving a vital entry to his hand.

Next he cashed the club king, finessed the trump jack and ruffed a club. He then used one spade entry to ruff another club and the other to draw the missing trump. When he unblocked the spade jack and surrendered a heart, he could claim the last three tricks with a trump, a spade winner and the club ace.

The Canadians won the match by 21 points, but if Mittelman had failed in his aggressive slam contract the result would have been an exact tie. ■

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF

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Neither vulnerable. North deals

It is hard to believe that it is almost 30 years since Sammy Kehela, long a resident of Toronto, burst upon the British bridge scene. Over the years, he has achieved a reputation as one of the world's great technicians. South Africans had the op-

portunity to admire his skill during the recent tour of that country by a Canadian team. As this hand proves, he did not disappoint them.

At both tables the contract was four spades, and both Wests got off to the lead of the ace of diamonds. The Canadian defender continued with a diamond to the queen and king. Declarer led a trump to the king, and it was all over — he could no longer

NORTH

♠ K 6 3

♥ A K Q

♦ 2

♣ A K 8 7 5 4

WEST

♠ A J 9 4

♥ J 10 3 2

♦ A 8 7

♣ 9 3

EAST

♠ 7

♥ 9 8 7 5 4

♦ Q 10 9 4

♣ 10 6 2

SOUTH

♠ Q 10 8 5 2

♥ 6

♦ K J 6 5 3

♣ Q J

The bidding:

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

Opening lead: Ace of ♦.

avoid losing three trump tricks for down one.

Against Kehela, West shifted to a heart at trick two, won in dummy. Kehela realized that he could afford to lose two trump tricks, so he kept his options open by

leading a trump to the queen. West won the ace and shifted to a club.

For an expert technician, the hand was plain sailing. Kehela won the club in hand and led a low spade. West followed with the four and declarer called for dummy's six! When that held, he simply started running dummy's clubs from the top. West could ruff whenever he wished, but declarer would win any return and simply draw the last trump, ending on the table. Dummy's remaining high clubs took care of declarer's diamond losers. The defenders came to only two trump tricks and a diamond.

What if the six of trumps had lost to the nine? Declarer would then have won any return and drawn the jack of trumps with the king, holding his losers to the same three tricks.