

Volume 6, Issue 12
May 7, 2012

UNITED STATES BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

“Trials” and Tribulations

Congratulations Team Nickell



From left: Jeff Meckstroth, Eric Rodwell, Zia, Ralph Katz, Nick Nickell, Eric Kokish (coach), Bob Hamman



Second place:

From left: John Diamond, Brad Moss, Fred Gitelman, Jeff Hampson, Brian Platnick

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In Seeding Order

"You miss 100 percent of the shots you never take." -Wayne Gretzy

Nickell	Frank Nickell, Capt Robert Hamman Jeff Meckstroth	Ralph Katz Zia Mahmood Eric Rodwell
Bye to Rnd of 8		
Diamond	John Diamond, Capt Eric Greco Brad Moss	Brian Platnick Geoff Hampson Fred Gitelman
Bye to Rnd of 8		
Fleisher	Martin Fleisher, Capt Bobby Levin Chip Martel	Michael Kamil Steve Weinstein Lew Stansby
Bye to Rnd of 16		
Gordon	Mark Gordon, Capt Alan Sontag Ron Rubin	Pratap Rajadhyaksha David Berkowitz Matthew Granovetter
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Mahaffey	Jim Mahaffey, Capt Mike Passell Sam Lev	Michael Seamon Marc Jacobus Jacek Pszczola
Milner	Reese Milner, Capt Hemant Lall Justin Lall	John Kranyak Gavin Wolpert Kevin Bathurst
Levine	Michael Levine, Capt Peter Weichsel Dennis Clerkin	Dennis McGarry Russell Ekeblad Jerry Clerkin
Lee	Roger Lee, Capt Steve Garner	Nikolay Demirev Howard Weinstein
Falk	Allan Falk, Capt Mark Dahl Lloyd Arvedon	Doug Doub Peter Friedland John McLaughlin
Robinson	Steve Robinson, Capt Fred Stewart Mark Feldman	Peter Boyd Kit Woolsey Bill Pollack
Chan	Lapt Chan, Capt Christal Henner	Uday Ivatury Sheri Winestock
Rogoff	Bruce Rogoff, Capt Jeff Aker	Josh Parker Brady Richter
Weinstein	Jonathan Weinstein, Capt Franco Baseggio Jiang Gu	David Yang Andrew Stark Xiaodong Shi
Becker	Drew Becker, Capt Jeffrey Miller Stephen McConnell	Howard Liu William Wickham Phil Warden
Robbins	Larry Robbins, Capt Jon Sorkin	Jeffry Mandell Joseph Stokes

Down to the Wire...

Board 61
 Dealer: N
 All Vul.

♠ K852
 ♥ AQ93
 ♦ 2
 ♣ KQ43

♠ T7
 ♥ T86
 ♦ KJ76
 ♣ J652

♠ AQJ94
 ♥ KJ
 ♦ A943
 ♣ A9

♠ 63
 ♥ 7542
 ♦ QT85
 ♣ T87



Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Hampson	Hamman	Greco	Zia
	1C	Double	Pass
1D	Double	1S	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Rodwell	Moss	Meckstroth	Gitelman
	1C	Double	Pass
1D	Pass	2C	Pass
2D	Pass	2S	Pass
2NT	Pass	3D	Pass
3S	Pass	3NT	Pass
5D	All Pass		

The first board out of the box and there was blood shed.

In the Open Room, Hampson and Greco bids easily to 3NT and made four when Hamman chose the somewhat obscure lead of the heart queen. Hampson won dummy's king and had the suit double stopped. He played ace of diamonds and a diamond to the jack, Hamman discarding a small club.

Hampson tried the ten of spades and it held. He continued with a spade to the nine and followed that with the ace. Dummy's jack of spades was won by Hamman's king. Hamman cashed the ace of hearts, led the nine of hearts and Hampson claimed ten tricks.

At the other table, Meckstroth apparently showed doubt about NT when he bid 3D. Rodwell wasn't too confident himself and less so if Meck had doubt. Backing up his thinking, Rodwell jumped to five diamonds and played it there.

Moss led the club king and no matter what he did, Rodwell faced a club loser, a diamond loser, and a heart loser.

The result: 12 IMPs for Diamond

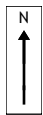
Sally's husband! Ready to head home I am sure!



Board 91
 Dealer: S
 None Vul.

♠ 92
 ♥ 84
 ♦ K8754
 ♣ A873

♠ AT763
 ♥ 65
 ♦ QT
 ♣ Q942



♠ KJ854
 ♥ K93
 ♦ J32
 ♣ J5

♠ Q
 ♥ AQJT72
 ♦ A96
 ♣ KT6

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Diamond	Rodwell	Platnick	Meckstroth
1S	Double	3S	4H
All Pass			

Open Room

Zia	Hampson	Hamman	Greco
			1C
1S	2D	4S	Pass
Pass	Double (forced)	Pass	5H
All Pass			

Again, the first board of the set (this time the third set) is a double digit swing!

Diamond and Platnick stopped wisely in three spades, and when Meck bid four hearts, they let him play it there. The only possible score worse than game making would be four spades, losing two hearts, two diamonds, and two clubs ... and the match was too close to risk that.

But... were they wise or weren't they?

Meckstroth and Rodwell scored up four hearts with an overtrick after Diamond led a trump.

At the other table, Zia and Hamman pulled out all the stops. Hamman jumped to four spades over two diamonds. It went Pass, Pass, Double, but now Greco bid five hearts showing the weakest hand where five hearts looked like it had a play.

Zia led the ace of spades and a second spade, ruffed by declarer. Greco led a diamond to the king and a heart to the ten. He cashed the heart ace and gave Hamman his king. Hamman returned a diamond, setting up his jack and Greco conceded down one, losing a diamond, a heart and a spade.

The result: 11 IMPs to Nickell



Donna's husband... also ready to head home I am sure!!

Minnesota USBF Regional (Mon – Sun)

Co-sponsored by Unit 103 and Unit 178 -- Sanction #R1210087



October 8-14, 2012
Holiday Inn St. Paul East , 2201 Burns Ave.



Time	9:15 am Tuesday – Saturday 10 am Sunday	1:30 pm	7:00 pm
Mon. 10/8			KO #1 (1 st session of 4) Stratified Charity Pairs I/N Single Session Charity Pairs (0-5 mps free)
Tues. 10/9	KO #1 (2 nd session of 4) Morning Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #1 (3 rd session of 4) KO #2 (1 st session of 4) Open Pairs (0-2000, 2000+) Gold Rush Pairs (0-300, 300-750) Afternoon Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #1 (final) KO #2 (2 nd session of 4) Open Pairs (0-2000, 2000+) Gold Rush Pairs (0-300, 300-750) Evening Side Game Series Single Session Swiss Team I/N Single Session
Wed. 10/10	Morning Swiss #1 (1 st session) Choice Pairs (play any 2 of 3) Morning Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #2 (3 rd session of 4) KO #3 (1 st session of 4) Choice Pairs (play any 2 of 3) Afternoon Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #2 (final) KO #3 (2 nd session of 4) Choice Pairs (play any 2 of 3) Evening Side Game Series Single Session Swiss Team I/N Single Session
Thurs 10/11	Morning Swiss #1 (2 nd session) Morning Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #3 (3 rd session of 4) KO #4 (1 st session of 4) Open IMP Pairs (0-2000, 2000+) Gold Rush Pairs (0-300, 300-750) Afternoon Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #3 (final) KO #4 (2 nd session of 4) Open IMP Pairs (0-2000, 2000+) Gold Rush Pairs (0-300, 300-750) Evening Side Game Series Single Session Swiss Team I/N Single Session
Fri 10/12	Morning Swiss #2 (1 st Session) Choice Pairs (play 2 of 3) Morning Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #4 (3 rd session of 4) KO #5 (1 st session of 4) Choice Pairs (play 2 of 3) Afternoon Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #4 (final) KO #5 (2 nd session of 4) Choice Pairs (play 2 of 3) Evening Side Game Series Single Session Swiss Team I/N Single Session
Sat 10/13	Morning Swiss #2 (2 nd Session) Morning Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #5 (3 rd session of 4) Compact KO (1 st session) Open Pairs (0-2000, 2000+) Gold Rush Pairs (0-300, 300-750) Afternoon Side Game Series I/N Single Session	KO #5 (final) Compact KO (final) Open Pairs (0-2000, 2000+) Gold Rush Pairs (0-300, 300-750) Evening Side Game Series Single Session Swiss Team I/N Single Session
Sun 10/14 10 am	Roger Anderson Aide-de-camp Stratiflighted Swiss Teams play through Flight A/AX (3000+ and 0-3000) Strats B/C/D (1000-2000. 500-1000. 0-500)		

KO= 4 session Knockout Team Games CKO= 2 session Compact Knockout Team Games
 Strats/Brackets are determined by the average of the pair's or team's MPs.

Patti Stuhlman, Co-chair pstuhlman123@comcast.net 952-829-7382
 Sue Jackson, Unit 178 Co-Chair sjackson@smumn.edu 651-636-4446

Minnesota USBF Regional (Mon- Sun)

Co-sponsored by Unit 103 and Unit 178 Sanction # R1210087

October 8-14, 2012



Site: Holiday Inn St. Paul East

2201 Burns Ave. (Exit I-94 at McKnight Road-- turn south to Burns Ave – hotel is on corner of Burns Ave. and McKnight Road) , St. Paul, MN 55119 , 651-731-2220

Room Rates: \$90 single/double - \$110 Junior Suite - \$135 Innovation Suite

www.holidaymn.com

Reserve rooms by Sept. 10, 2012 (by phone 651-731-2220 or on the web)

Free Parking -- Free Coffee –Free Lunches– Dinner Shuttle for out of town guests

Entries: \$12/session for ACBL Members; \$9/session for single session I/N games; \$6/session for students under 25 with proper ID (non ACBL members and unpaid members: \$2 more per session)

Flights: Stratified Events: A: 2000+ B: 750-2000 C: 0-750 (based on pair's MP average)
Stratiflighted Teams (Sunday) A: unlimited A/X 0-3000 B: 1000-2000 C: 500-1000 D: 0-500
I/N Strats: 0-50, 50-100, 100-200, 200-300

All Knockouts are bracketed

KO = 4 session Knockout Team game CKO = 2 session Compact Knockout Team game

Intermediate - Newcomer Program (0-300)

Monday 7:00 pm (Free for 0-5 master points)

Tues. through Saturday 9:15 am 1:30, 7:00 single session pairs

Sunday Swiss Team 10 am and TBA (approx 1:45 pm)

I/N Strats: 0-50, 50-100, 100-200, 200-300

A separate 0-49 section will be played if there are sufficient tables for a game.

Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday afternoon and evening play in the Gold Rush Pairs (\$12/session)

Partnerships: Call or email Maureen Weiman at 603-882-9424 or jhnsnmaur@aol.com

(Do not call once the tournament has started.)

Go to the partnership desk at the hotel 45 minutes before game time.)

Hospitality: Free coffee; Free lunches; Dinner shuttle for out of town guests

Special Events: Lecture Series 12:45-1:15 pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday

Gold Point Events:

Consult the director for criteria to earn gold points. (Two or more session events)

Choice Pairs; Stratified Pairs; Gold Rush Pairs

Four-session KOs and two- session Compact Knockouts (CKO)

Morning Side Game Series (must play in 2 morning sessions to be eligible for gold points)

Afternoon Side Game Series (must play in 2 afternoon sessions to be eligible for gold points)

Evening Side Game Series (must play in 2 evening sessions to be eligible for gold points)

Sunday Stratiflighted Swiss Team play-through

Board 103
 Dealer: S
 All Vul.

♠ AT ♥ KT82 ♦ T3 ♣ A8654	♠ Q32 ♥ 643 ♦ K9652 ♣ Q9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> N ↑ </div>	♠ J986 ♥ A97 ♦ QJ87 ♣ K3
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♠ K754
 ♥ QJ5
 ♦ A4
 ♣ JT72

Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Diamond	Rodwell	Platnick	Meckstroth
Pass	1NT	All Pass	1D (Precision)

Open Room			
Zia	Hampson	Hamman	Greco
All Pass			1D (Precision)

Funny how both tables are playing the nebulous diamond opening and one chooses to pass 1D with a 7 count and five diamonds (certainly not unreasonable logic with partner limited to 16 HCP) ... and the other bid the “normal” 1NT.

One no-trump made after an unfortunate lead from J986 of spades. Declarer won the queen in hand and led a club won by Platnick’s king. Platnick continued spades and declarer ducked in dummy to Diamond’s now stiff ace.

Diamond led a heart to Platnick’s ace and Platnick continued with the nine of hearts to the queen in dummy, ducked by partner to keep communication open. A club was led from dummy to Diamonds ace and Diamond cashed his two good hearts. Rodwell claimed his seven tricks and they moved on to the next board.

In the other room, things were more exciting... and they could have been even more exciting than they were. Zia led ace of spades and a spade to dummy’s queen against one diamond. Greco led a diamond to the ace and a diamond to the king. He played the diamond five off dummy, Hamman winning with the jack while Greco pitched a spade and Zia pitched a club.

Hamman cashed his diamond queen while Greco and Zia both pitched clubs. The S8 went to declarer’s king and a club was led to the queen and king. Hamman led a heart to Zia’s king and Zia continued the suit to Hamman’s ace. Hamman played a club to the ace and Greco claimed six tricks... contract failing by a trick.

The result: 5 IMPs to Nickell

Had Hamman led the jack of spades when he won the diamond king, declarer would have been squeezed and the hand would have been even more interesting. If Greco sheds a club, Zia’s A6 are good. If Greco throws a heart, Zia and Hamman can collect their three heart tricks.

It seems trivial for one extra down trick, however, everyone’s vulnerable and in a close match like this one, every IMP counts.



Board 108
 Dealer:W
 N/S Vul.

♠ AQ865
 ♥ 6532
 ♦ A962
 ♣

♠ J9
 ♥ 94
 ♦ Q543
 ♣ 98532

♠ K73
 ♥ AKT
 ♦ T7
 ♣ AJT76

♠ T42
 ♥ QJ87
 ♦ KJ8
 ♣ KO4



Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Hampson	Rodwell	Greco	Meckstroth
1S	Pass	2C	Pass
Pass	Double	Pass	2H
All Pass			

Open Room			
Zia	Moss	Hamman	Gitelman
Pass	1S	1NT	Double
Redouble (clubs)	Pass	2C	3NT
All Pass			

Yes, Hampson really did open the West hand one spade. He's down in the match (albeit not an insurmountable amount) with only twelve boards to play.

Two hearts made four in the Closed Room and Meckstroth made the comment, "Well, Geoffrey is certainly not going down without a fight!"

Hampson retorted, "How many more times do I get to be dealer at favorable?"

Hampson led the jack of spades to the queen and king. Greco returned a spade and Meck won the ace in dummy. The ace and king of trump were cleared, declarer losing only one spade and two hearts for +170. At the time, he might have thought he lost 10 IMPs ... however...

In the Open Room, Gitelman and Moss completely missed their eight card major suit fit, choosing to play in 3NT.

Zia led the eight of clubs to the ten and king, dummy pitching a heart. Gitelman played a spade to the ace and a diamond ducked around to the jack and queen. Zia continued clubs to declarer's queen, Hamman once again ducking. Gitelman cashed the king of diamonds and led a diamond to the ace, Hamman pitching the heart ten.

Gitelman cashed the nine of diamonds, and led the five of hearts off dummy. Hamman won the king and Gitelman conceded down three for -300.

The result: 10 IMPs to Nickell



Board 114
 Dealer: E
 N/S Vul.

♠ AKQJ87
 ♥ QJ5
 ♦ 3
 ♣ QJ3

♠
 ♥ A6
 ♦ T986
 ♣ AKT8542



♠ 9
 ♥ KT9432
 ♦ AJ754
 ♣ 7

♠ T65432
 ♥ 87
 ♦ KQ2
 ♣ 96

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Zia	Moss	Hamman	Gitelman
		2H	Pass
4C (nat/forc)	Pass	4D	Double
Pass	Pass	5C	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

Closed Room

Hampson	Rodwell	Greco	Meckstroth
		3H	Pass
5C	All Pass		

It is interesting that spades were not bid at either table. Of course, the vulnerability is a killer for North/South. Still, most pairs bid their 12 card major suit fits at least once during an auction.

East/West can make four hearts, five diamonds, or five clubs.

Hamman could even have passed four diamonds doubled in the Open Room and likely wrapped up five losing only two diamonds.

Five clubs doubled played great for Zia. Moss led the king of spades and Zia ruffed it. Zia played ace of clubs, king of clubs, ace of hearts and a heart to dummy's king. He ruffed a heart in hand and claimed 12 tricks for +650.

At the other table, Hampson, in a much simpler auction, played five hearts singled. He made only five for +400.

The result: 6 IMPs to Nickell

