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UNITED STATES BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

# “Trials” and Tribulations

## Congratulations USA2!

| # | TEAM     | TOTAL | 1-15 | 16-30 | 31-45 | 46-60 | 61-75 | 76-90 | Penalties |
|---|----------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| 2 | Fleisher | 194   | 26   | 70    | 37    | 13    | 22    | 26    |           |
| 3 | Nickell  | 146   | 32   | 4     | 28    | 24    | 35    | 23    |           |

## USA2: Team Fleisher



Great going for Team Fleisher!  
Off to Bali: Chris Willenken, Michael Rosenberg, Zia, Marty Fleisher, Chip Martel and Michael Kamil

### Howie Gets the Last Word ...

Can't chat very long, gotta run off to dinner.  
Jack's gotta buy 'cause again I'm the winner!  
Thanks Fleisher team... you did as you vowed.  
You made Jack a loser while "Doing" me proud!

**Howie Doing**

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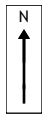
**Webmaster**  
Kitty Cooper

# Approaching the Finish Line...

Board 37  
Dealer: N  
N/S Vul.

♠ A765  
♥ Q  
♦ 64  
♣ AKJ842

♠ T94  
♥ KJ72  
♦ A732  
♣ 76



♠ QJ2  
♥ 94  
♦ Q985  
♣ Q953

♠ K83  
♥ AT8653  
♦ KJT  
♣ T

| West     | North    | East | South |
|----------|----------|------|-------|
| Nickell  | Fleisher | Katz | Kamil |
|          | 1C       | Pass | 1D    |
| Pass     | 1S       | Pass | 2D    |
| Pass     | 3C       | Pass | 3NT   |
| All pass |          |      |       |

| Willenken | Meckstroth                      | Rosenberg | Rodwell |
|-----------|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|
|           | 2C (Precision: 6+ clubs, 10-15) | Pass      | 3H      |
| Pass      | 4H                              | All pass  |         |

Nickell led the ten of spades against 3NT. Kamil won in hand and played the ten of clubs to the jack and queen. Katz continued spades to Nickell's nine. Nickell led his last spade, won in dummy with the ace. Kamil played ace of clubs, king of clubs, realizing the poor split. He cashed the thirteenth spade and took the queen of hearts to his ace in hand. He played the ten of hearts to Nickell's jack.

Nick cashed his heart king and still had the ace of diamonds for a one trick set.

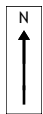
In the other room, Willenken led the same spade ten against 4H. Rodwell won in dummy and led the diamond four to the jack and ace. The spade four was returned to the jack and king and the ten of clubs was led to the king and ace, Rodwell pitching his eight of spades. The diamond finesse was repeated and a small heart was led toward the queen, Willenken rising with the king. A spade was ruffed by declarer. Rodwell cashed the heart ace and claimed ten tricks.

12 IMPs to Nickell

Board 41  
Dealer: N  
E/W Vul.

♠ T  
♥ QJ862  
♦ 54  
♣ KT653

♠ QJ7  
♥ A9743  
♦ AKJ7  
♣ J



♠ A8432  
♥ K  
♦ 832  
♣ A982

♠ K965  
♥ T5  
♦ QT96  
♣ Q74

| Willenken | Meckstroth | Rosenberg     | Rodwell |
|-----------|------------|---------------|---------|
|           | 2H         | Pass          | Pass    |
| 2NT       | Pass       | 3H (transfer) | Pass    |
| 4S        | All pass   |               |         |

| Nickell  | Fleisher   | Katz | Kamil |
|----------|------------|------|-------|
|          | 2D (multi) | Pass | 2H    |
| All pass |            |      |       |

Here is an example of how effective multi 2D can be.

West has a tough problem over the 2H response. In most multi defenses, double would be takeout of hearts. Nickell could have bid a natural 2NT but he had less than perfect shape and his values are minimum. Nickell likely hoped Katz could re-open... or Fleisher would correct to spades so he would have a second chance. Interestingly, of course, if North had opened a natural 2H and the E/W hands were reversed, East would have a similar problem.

Katz made the comment after the hand, "I'm sorry. I could go for my life."

At the other table, Willenken bid a simple 2NT in balancing seat after Meckstroth's 2H opening bid. Rosenberg transferred and with three trump and maximum values, Chris jumped to the cold spade game, making five.

11 IMPs to Fleisher

Board 42  
Dealer: E  
All Vul.

♠ K  
♥ 8432  
♦ AQ64  
♣ J873

♠ A7652  
♥ K9  
♦ KJT3  
♣ T2



♠ T98  
♥ QT76  
♦ 9872  
♣ Q5

♠ QJ43  
♥ AJ5  
♦ 5  
♣ AK964

|           |            |           |  |
|-----------|------------|-----------|--|
| West      | North      | East      | South                                    |
| Willenken | Meckstroth | Rosenberg | Rodwell                                  |
|           |            | Pass      | 2D (3 suited with short diamonds, 11-15) |
| Pass      | 2H         | Pass      | 2S                                       |
| Pass      | 3C         | All pass  |  |

|          |          |      |       |
|----------|----------|------|-------|
| Nickell  | Fleisher | Katz | Kamil |
|          |          | Pass | 1C    |
| 1S       | Double   | Pass | 2C    |
| Pass     | 3C       | Pass | 3NT   |
| All pass |          |      |       |

It isn't often that one of the most aggressive bidding pairs in the world misses a 25 HCP 3NT. Three clubs was easy with clubs 2-2 in the opponents' hands and the diamond king inside. Meckstroth took 11 tricks for +150.

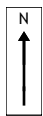
Kamil and Fleisher had a vanilla auction. When Fleisher raised 2C to 3C, Kamil had just enough to accept. Again, with the clubs 2-2 and diamond king inside, all routes lead to success. Kamil took ten tricks for +630.

10 IMP's to Fleisher

Board 46  
Dealer: E  
None Vul.

♠ 43  
♥ J7632  
♦ A85  
♣ A54

♠ AJ7  
♥ T85  
♦ KJ6  
♣ T876



♠ KQ8  
♥ 94  
♦ Q972  
♣ J932

♠ T9652  
♥ AKQ  
♦ T43  
♣ KQ

|            |           |          |           |
|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Meckstroth | Rosenberg | Rodwell  | Willenken |
|            |           | Pass     | 1S        |
| Pass       | 1NT       | All pass |           |

|      |                   |          |             |
|------|-------------------|----------|-------------|
| Zia  | Levin             | Martel   | S Weinstein |
|      |                   | Pass     | 1S          |
| Pass | 1NT               | Pass     | 2C          |
| Pass | 2D (shows hearts) | Pass     | 3H          |
| Pass | 4H                | All pass |             |

Rosenberg and Willenken play a semi-forcing NT. Considering that, Willenken's pass is spot-on. He has exactly 14 HCP and a bad five card spade suit. 1NT made three clubs, one diamond and five hearts. Lucky lie of the cards to bring home the game.

In the other room, Weinstein and Levin play a forcing NT. Weinstein dutifully bid two clubs on his doubleton (the preferred method among experts these days). Levin bid 2D over 2C showing hearts.

Weinstein bid 3H and Levin raised to the game.

Zia led a small heart. Weinstein won in hand and cashed the queen and king of clubs. He ran the diamond ten to the queen with East. Martel exited a club and Weinstein ditched a small diamond. A heart to the ace and a diamond to the ace were next. A diamond was ruffed with declarer's high trump in hand and a spade to the jack followed. The ace of spades was cashed and ten tricks were claimed.

Note, of course, that Zia could have found a diamond lead from KJ6 to defeat the contract

Nice bidding by Levin and Weinstein.

7 IMPs to Nickell

## Thanks for Supporting the 2013 United States Bridge Championship from George Jacobs, USBF President

This year, like years in the past, the Championship was very successful. We want to thank the local volunteers for their great efforts toward hospitality at the site. You were fantastic. Lisa Berkowitz and Molly O'Neill did a yeoman's job as first timers in this position.

Thanks to Jan Martel, Joe Stokes and their squad of VuGraph operators for bringing us the tournament live and in person! Jan has been doing this for so many years we sometimes take her for granted and we don't mean to do that.

Thanks to Peggy Kaplan for photographing the tournament. The pictures on Facebook, on the website and in the Daily Bulletins have been excellent.

Thanks to Suzi Subeck for putting out the Daily Bulletins ... and thanks to Suzi and Stan for making the trip to Orlando for two days to cover the Round Robin phase so the reading audience could see the hands as they happen in timely fashion.

Thanks to Solly and Chris for providing their usual top rate director service.

Thanks to the Rob Gordon and his Appeals Committee for being available when we needed them... and for being there even when we did not.

And mostly, thanks to all of you for watching online, for promoting bridge and just playing the game we all love. Don't miss our Seniors and Women's Championships coming up in a few weeks!

See you all then.

George

Board 86

Dealer: E

E/W Vul.

♠ K  
♥ 74  
♦ AKJ6432  
♣ 865

♠ 962

♥ AKT952

♦

♣ AT94



♠ A854

♥ J6

♦ QT987

♣ Q2

♠ QJT73

♥ Q83

♦ 5

♣ KJ73

| West     | North | East   | South       |
|----------|-------|--------|-------------|
| Zia      | Levin | Martel | S Weinstein |
|          |       | Pass   | Pass        |
| 1H       | 3H    | Pass   | 3NT         |
| All pass |       |        |             |

| West       | North     | East    | South     |
|------------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| Meckstroth | Rosenberg | Rodwell | Willenken |
|            |           | Pass    | Pass      |
| 1H         | 2D        | Pass    | 2S        |
| Double     | 3D        | Double  | All Pass  |

Levin came up with an incredibly effective psych on this hand. His suit wasn't solid and he had no other suit stopped. He just wanted to play 3D unmolested. When his partner bid 3NT, he figured no double, no trouble ... and he was correct.

At the other table, a normal auction led to opponents to 3DX down four for -800.

At Levin's table, 3NT went light only two.  
12 badly needed IMPs for Nickell

# The Hand of the Tournament... More Than a Backwash Squeeze

Board 71  
Dealer: S  
All Vul.

♠ AJ874  
♥ 84  
♦ J  
♣ J8654

♠ 52  
♥ AT93  
♦ KQT743  
♣ A



♠ J752  
♥ A5  
♦ KQT9732

♠ KQT963  
♥ KQ6  
♦ 9862  
♣

| West     | North    | East  | South       |
|----------|----------|-------|-------------|
| Fleisher | Levin    | Kamil | S Weinstein |
|          |          |       | 1S          |
| 2D       | 4S       | 5C    | 5S          |
| Double   | All pass |       |             |

| Meckstroth | Rosenberg | Rodwell | Willenken |
|------------|-----------|---------|-----------|
|            |           |         | 1S        |
| Double     | 4S        | 5C      | 5S        |
| Double     | Pass      | 6C      | All pass  |

Board 71 from today's USA2 final match presented declarer with the opportunity to make an amazing play. Steve Weinstein played in 5S doubled, while his teammates played in an unlucky 6C contract (A heart lead combined with 5-0 clubs was too much to handle).

Fleisher led the ace of clubs against 5SX. Weinstein ruffed and played a diamond. Fleisher won and played a trump (an initial trump lead would always defeat 5S). Weinstein won in dummy and played a heart, hoping for the ace of hearts to be in the East hand. This lost to West and a second trump was returned, defeating the contract.

Look what happens if Weinstein decides that the ace of hearts is offside. Instead of playing on hearts, he trumps a club, trumps a diamond, trumps another club and trumps another diamond. At trick eight he trumps a club and West is caught in the Backwash. His last six cards are: S:5 H:AT9 D:KT. If he pitches a diamond, declarer can ruff a diamond, ruff a club and lead the king of hearts to develop his eleventh trick.

Similarly, West can't pitch his trump. So West must discard a heart, the five card end position is:

♠ AJ  
♥ 84  
♦  
♣ J

♠ 5  
♥ AT  
♦ KT  
♣

♠ J75  
♥ KQ  
♦  
♣

♠ K  
♥ KQ6  
♦ 9  
♣

Now declarer plays the heart king, West must win and exit a spade to stop the cross-ruff. Declarer wins the spade in dummy and cashes the last spade. East pitches a club on the trump return. But, he has no answer to the ultimate trump. He can discard a club and dummy's jack will be good, or he can discard a heart and declarer takes the last two tricks with the queen and six of hearts.