



Around the world with 52 cards

by Migry Zur Campanile

A mild winter is one of the great pluses that come with living in sun-soaked Tel Aviv, and it is often quite a shock to realize how much more severe the climate can get elsewhere in months like January or February, especially for someone like me who puts on a woolly jumper whenever the temperature drops below 25 Celsius. That is why just before traveling to Utrecht, Holland, where I was invited to take part in the White House teams tournament, I found myself scanning nervously the weather forecasts predicting below-zero temperatures, and I resolved to take drastic steps.

After a thorough search in the local telephone directory I finally located what I was looking for: a shop specializing in outfitting travelers to destinations with extreme weather conditions. I easily found the shop and a very helpful sales assistant with whom I soon became quite friendly, so much so that when I got to the cash till to pay for my purchases she offered to lend me guides from the well stocked shop library and to assist me with whatever extra info I needed for my expedition: Did I plan to tour the Siberian outback or was I part of an Arctic expedition? When I told her my real destination, she looked at me in disbelief and then turned away repressing an ill-concealed giggle. No matter, I knew that I was now fully equipped to brave the worse that mid-February Dutch weather could throw at me.

When we arrived in Holland, I quickly put on my weather battle gear only to find out that it seemed to be very, very . . . warm! The temperature was a sweltering +8 Celsius, which felt to me like +38 and forced me back to the hotel for a quick change of clothes among the merriment of my teammates, who had been traveling light with wind-jackets and jeans. Still the nice weather meant that we could take full advantage of our first day off in Utrecht.

I love Holland with its beautiful and varied architecture, its canals, and its peacefully multicultural heritage. Utrecht is a great show-case of everything that makes this country so appealing without the massive crowds of Amsterdam.

Utrecht is much smaller and more compact than the Dutch capital, and walking its streets is sheer delight. The main pedestrian area is about a square mile, a maze of twisty paved brick roads that encircle the Oudegracht, a charming canal, lined with shops at street level, while the restaurants are situated several meters below along the quays.

Utrecht's main tourist hotspot is the Dom Plein and its colorful outdoor cafes, dominated by the huge presence of the Dom Tower at the northern edge of the Museum Quarter, which might as well be called "Museum Half," because it makes up half the city.

After a pause at a nice outdoor café, we went on to explore some of the outer districts, finding a few interesting points along the way. The one I liked the most is the Lombok district, just a few hundred yards northwest of the train station. Lombok is where much of Utrecht's ethnic diversity can be found in the shape of stores and restaurants featuring cuisines and goods from as far away as Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey, and Suriname. That is where we finished our day, sampling our first "Rijstaffel" (literally "Rice table" in Dutch), a dish that originates from Indonesia (once the Dutch East Indies) and has eventually become as popular in Holland as Indian Curry is in England. The real Rijstafel consists of up to 30 dishes and the idea is to slowly move up on the spicy scale — from bland satay to hellishly hot curries with a lot in between, served buffet style at the table. Painfully aware of our bridge commitments the following day and unwilling to risk taking on the full Rijstaffel, we opted for a mini version, called Nasi Rames, which to us seemed just as tasty. It started with a small dish of raw vegetables, marinated in rice vinegar, followed by a number of other dishes.

The following morning we made our way to the tournament venue along streets blanketed by the heavy overnight snow-fall. It was my turn now to smile at my woefully under-dressed teammates and to generously offer to share some of my Arctic gear.

The White House tournament is a very compact event, which matches a very high level of play with an extremely friendly atmosphere.

The 32 teams taking part are divided in four groups of eight, playing each other in matches of eight boards with the top four qualifying to the final A and the rest di-

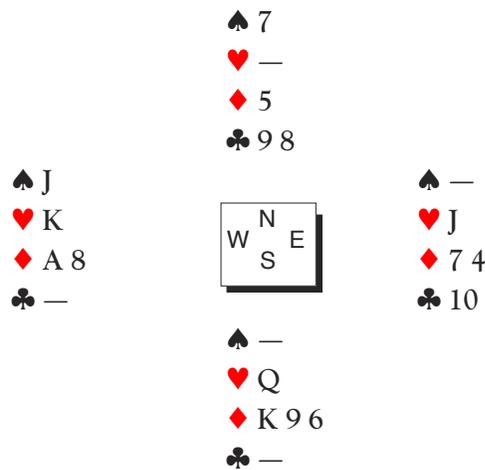
vided in two consolation finals. We finished third in our group and in the match against another top ranked Dutch team this interesting board came up:

North dealer All vul	North ♠ A K 7 4 ♥ — ♦ 5 3 2 ♣ 9 8 6 5 3 2	
West	♠ J 10 8 3 2 ♥ K 10 5 4 2 ♦ A 8 ♣ K	East
	South ♠ Q 6 ♥ A Q 7 6 ♦ K Q J 9 6 ♣ J 7	

West	North	East	South
Doron Y.	Wintermans	Israel Y.	Tammens
—	pass	pass	1 ♦
2 ♦	3 ♦	3 ♥	4 ♦
4 ♥	5 ♦	double	(all pass)

At our table, against Michael Barel and me, the contract was 3♥ making East-West. Our teammates, the Yadlin brothers, were in for a much wilder ride, and when the Dutch North decided not to take chances over 4♥ and pushed on to 5♦, Israel Yadlin put out the red card and Doron did well to lead his stiff ♣K. Israel overtook that with the ace, cashed the ♣Q and continued with a third club. Tammens ruffed with the ♦J while West pitched a heart.

Declarer continued with the ♥A, ruffed a heart, played a spade to the queen, ruffed another heart, cashed the ♠A and tabled the ♠K. Israel inserted his trump ten, and South overruffed with the ♦Q reaching this position:

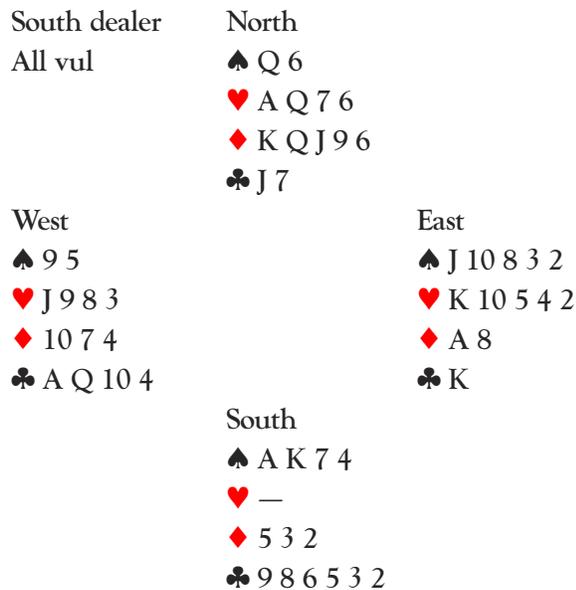


declarer played the last spade from dummy and Israel ruffed with the ♦7. Tammens overruffed with the ♦9 and played the ♦K hoping to squash the ♦8 under the ace. No such luck, two down and a fine +500. Would you have ever guessed at the start that West's ♦8 would eventually be promoted as the second undertrick? As Jan van Cleef wrote in the event's *Bulletin*: "This filial defensive cooperation led to a trump promotion – rather a trump slomotion!"

Next a fourth heart was played, which was ruffed with dummy's last trump. Now

This very hand was the scene for some more interesting action in another match:

The board is rotated for easy reading:



by Nystrom, they stopped vulnerable in the 4-2 spade fit, a blatant infraction of David Burn's Law of Total Trumps: "When you are declarer, the total number of trumps held by your side should be greater than the total number of trumps held by your opponents."

However, as the unforgettable Alfred Sheinwold used to say: "One advantage of awful bidding is that you get very good practice at playing hopeless contracts." Jansma must clearly have had his share of misfortunes during his successful international career and was not about to give up so early on this one!

		Nystrom	
Jansma		North	East
South	West		
pass	pass	1 NT	pass
2 ♣	pass	2 ♥	pass
2 ♠	(all pass)		

West was soon off to the normal lead of a trump taken by the queen in dummy. Next came the ♦K to East's ace. East continued with the ♣K and then another trump to Jansma's ace. Declarer now cashed ♠K (West pitching the ♣A), crossed to dummy with a diamond and made the ingenious sneaky play of a low heart. When East hopped up with the king, Jansma ruffed, played another diamond and claimed nine tricks. A case of "the play is mightier than the law"?

Opening lead: ♠9

The one-night-stand partnership of Jansma-Nystrom looked to have hit the rocks when, after an off-shape 1NT opening