

The New York Times

Bridge

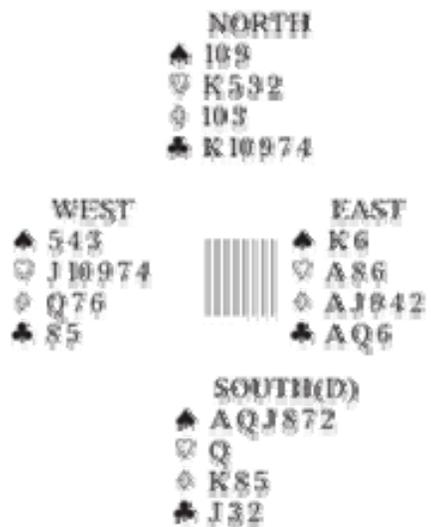
With a Timely Trump Lead, Thwarting Declarer's Plans

By PHILLIP ALDER

Published: February 18, 2008

The 13th NEC Cup Bridge Festival ended on Sunday in Yokohama, Japan. For the fourth time in five years, Israel won, its team being Migry Zur Campanile, Michael Barel and Doron and Israel Yadlin, who are brothers.

The 39 teams played eight 20-board rounds in a Swiss teams format to select eight quarterfinalists. The quarterfinals and semifinals were over 40 boards, and the final was 64 boards. In the final Israel defeated a team called the Latin, with Diego Brenner from Brazil, Frankie Frontaura from Argentina and Federico and Gonzalo Goded, who are father and son, from Spain. The diagramed deal featured probably the best defense during the five days of play. It was Board 13 of the quarterfinals.



Both sides were vulnerable.

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	1N.T.	Dbl.
2♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

West led the club eight.

East's double in the diagramed deal was not for penalty; it was takeout of spades, the opener's suit. Campanile, who now lives in New York, led her club eight. Barel took two tricks in the suit and gave his partner a club ruff. What happened next?

At every other table where this position was reached, West shifted to a heart, which was not good enough. When East won with his ace and switched to a trump, declarer ran that to dummy; cashed the heart king, pitching a diamond; and led a diamond toward his king. If East took his heart ace and shifted to diamonds, South won with his king and ruffed a diamond on the board. And when East ducked his heart ace, declarer played a low spade to force a dummy entry for a diamond lead toward his king. Campanile, realizing that declarer had three diamonds and would be going for a ruff on the board, shifted to a trump. Then Barel did his part by playing his low spade, not the king.

Now the contract was dead.

Whatever declarer did, East, when in with the heart ace or diamond ace, would lead back his spade king, killing the diamond ruff and keeping declarer away from the heart king.