

Around the World with 52 Cards

by Migry Zur Campanile



The 1999 edition of the European Championships was held in Malta, a colorful archipelago at the center of the Mediterranean Sea with a wealth of heritage. Thanks to its key location at the crossroads of maritime routes between many ancient civilizations, Malta has had a rich history serving as host, often unwilling, to prehistoric temple builders, seafaring Phoenicians, the traveler Apostle Paul all the way to the Knights of St John, Napoleon and British royalty!

Its capital, La Valletta, is a magnificent fortified city, with streets that sweep up and down a huge hill towards the vast expanse of the harbor. During the fortnight we spent in neighboring St Julians, where the tournament was played, we didn't visit any of the churches or museums, but instead walked all around the city. Everywhere we went there were taxi-drivers offering us "half-price" tours of the city in carriages drawn by horses, but we preferred to travel on foot and stop and stare at the



many wonderful sights which would surprise us at each turn of the narrow winding streets.

The most popular destination in Malta is its neighboring island of Gozo, where most of the British tourists reside. They are attracted by the rare mix of a sun-soaked island and many tangible signs of a rich British tradition. Due to the island having been under British rule for a century-and-a-half, one often comes across the characteristic

English style red-letter boxes and phone booths, which stand bright against the sandy yellow of the local limestone. Another unusual tradition left in place by the British rule is that Maltese cars drive on the left.

Or as one local put it, "we drive on the left...and on the right, and in the middle of the road!"

One of the positive side-effects of having the tournament in a relatively small town like Saint Julian was that most of the teams decided to stay in or very near the playing

venue and that meant that I got to spend time with many interesting new people. Among them was one of the great stars of Polish bridge in the 80's, Julian Klukowski.

Klukowski was a member of the Polish team that won the European Championships in 1981 and 1989, thanks also to players like Frenkiel, Przybora, Szymanowski

and the new rising stars of Martens, Balicki, and Zmudzinski. In Malta he was part of a strong Polish Senior team and showed everyone how much we can still learn. Let's see how well you can do in this 6♠ contract that Klukowski declared in the match against Norway.

There was no opposition bidding:

	North
	♠ A K J 7
	♥ A 6 5
	♦ 10 2
	♣ A J 4 3
♠ 5	
	South (Klukowski)
	♠ Q 10 6 4 2
	♥ Q 9
	♦ A K 4
	♣ K 5 2

Opening lead: ♠5

I guess most of you will reject the pedestrian lines based on a club finesse or clubs 3-3. If they were to succeed, I would not have published the hand at all!

Now you may decide to try a heart to the queen and then, were that to fail, go back to the club finesse. Sorry, not good enough... you get a C- for that.

A better option would be to draw trumps (they break 2-2) and then play the ♦A-K (East surprisingly discards a heart on the second diamond), then ruff the third one, while East discards a club.

What do you make of the hand now?

Well, a top player like Klukowski had no problem placing at least five clubs with East, as no sane person would discard a club from a shorter holding, instead of another heart.* That meant East started with a 2-5-1-5 or, less likely, a 2-4-1-6 shape. Following this assumption the Polish champion found a great line to bring home his contract.

How did he continue?

Let's have a look at all 52 cards:

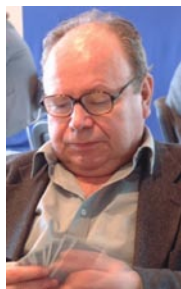
*Perhaps against a player like Klukowski, a brilliant East should pitch a club from four of them! — editor

In Depth

The club-suit combo in the hand above is classic. The normal line of play for three club tricks is to play the ♣A, ♣K and a third club toward the remaining ♣J-4. This produces three club tricks whenever the queen is with West, or when the queen is with East singleton, doubleton or tripleton. But Klukowski played the suit to be divided 5-1, with the queen offside.

	North				
	♠ A K J 7		♠ —		♠ —
	♥ A 6 5		♥ A 6		♥ K J
	♦ 10 2		♦ —		♦ —
	♣ A J 4 3		♣ A J 4 3		♣ Q 9 8 7
West		East			
♠ 5 3		♠ 9 8			
♥ 4 3 2		♥ K J 10 8 7			
♦ Q J 8 7 6 5 3		♦ 9			
♣ 10		♣ Q 9 8 7 6			
	South (Klukowski)				
	♠ Q 10 6 4 2				
	♥ Q 9				
	♦ A K 4				
	♣ K 5 2				

This is the position we have reached after declarer played two more rounds of spades:



Julian Klukowski

Klukowski played the last spade (discarding a heart from dummy) and East was well and truly fixed. East couldn't discard a club, else declarer simply gives up a club, setting up a club trick. So East pitched the ♥J. Declarer now cashed the ♥A and claimed when the ♥K dropped. Note, however, that if West started with the ♥K, declarer was still OK. He comes back to the ♣K and ducks a club to East, endplaying him in clubs. East was squeezed in this position even if he held two little hearts! A great effort by a Grand Old Man of Polish bridge!

Forcing Passes (part 4)

by Eddie Kantar



Forcing Passes after a One-over-One Response

This month let's look at some more forcing passes. Remember, forcing passes are very useful — they allow one partner to pass to show that his hand has no clear-cut action one way or the other (double or bid), and the other partner can now make an intelligent decision. In this article, we'll see

when a forcing-pass sequence is in effect after one player opens and his partner makes a one-over-one response.

Suppose opener invites game and responder accepts. A forcing-pass sequence is in effect.