World Bridge Tour
THIS IS HOW WE PLAY

Online Contract Bridge League

OCBL JOURNAL

Issue N. 23. Tuesday, 26 January, 2021

OCBL OPEN LEAGUE

ROUND 7. 21.30 CET / 15.30 EST

GROUP A

English Juniors	VS	Aus 1
Black	VS	Skeidar
Bridge42	VS	Goodman
Moss	VS	Ireland
Goded	VS	Mikadinho
Turkish Delight	VS	Skalman

GROUP B

Sugi	VS	Harris
Fredin	VS	Salvo
Lupoveloce	VS	Ferguson
Lebowitz	VS	Orca
Denmark	VS	Bishel
Fasting	VS	France Sud

GROUP C

Palma	VS	Alexander
Norwegian Amazones	VS	BridgeScanner
Leslie	VS	McIceberg
VUGRAPH De Botton	VS	Seligman
Koeppel	VS	Amateurs
Amalgamated	VS	De Michelis

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OCBL Open League: Round 7

The seventh round of the OCBL Open League will be played today.
The vugraph match will also be broadcast on Twitch!
Today's commentators are Liam Milne and Magnus Olafsson (pictured above).
Enjoy the show by connecting to the WBT Twitch channel
at 21.30 CET / 15.30 EST:
https://www.twitch.tv/worldbridgetour

Send us your up-to-date pic, please!

Christian Bakke, Norway

It has been a long time since many of us last met and we are doing our best to make your online Bridge experience as valuable as we can.

Obviously when producing Bridge articles it is necessary
to use photos from the archives, as the last international face-to-face Bridge event was held several months ago (the 2020 Winter Games in Monaco).

Since online play is at the moment our new 'present', we would like to represent it as it is! So if you can please send us a picture (can be a selfie) of yourself playing online Bridge. **Let your Bridge friends see you in the present**!

You can send the pic to: info@ocbl.org

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OCBL UPCOMING EVENTS

OCBL FEBRUARY CUP
1 - 5 February 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/februarycup/

FEBRUARY OPEN TEAMS
15 - 19 February 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/februaryot/

MARCH OPEN TEAMS
8 - 11 March 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/marchot/

OCBL MARCH CUP
22 - 26 March 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/marchcup/

OCBL OPEN LEAGUE
30 March - 16 May 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/openleague2/

OCBL MIXED LEAGUE
27 March - 9 May 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/mixedleague2/

OCBL APRIL CUP
5 - 9 April 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/aprilcup/

APRIL OPEN TEAMS
19 - 23 April 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/aprilot/

OCBL MAY CUP
3 - 7 May 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/maycup/

MAY OPEN TEAMS
31 May - 4 June 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/mayot/

OCBL JUNE CUP
14 - 18 June 2021
Info: https://ocbl.org/junecup/

About the OCBL Events:

OCBL OPEN LEAGUE
Play 3 days a week:
Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday
at 21.30 CET (15.30 EST)
Qualification + Knockout

OCBL MIXED LEAGUE
Play 2 days a week:
Saturday and Sunday
at 17.00 CET (11.00 EST)
Qualification + Knockout

OCBL CUP
Play 5 days
Qualification + Knockout

OCBL OPEN TEAMS
Play 5 days (4 in March)
Qualification + Swiss A

The Labours of Hercules
The Erymanthian Boar

by **Mark Horton**

Hercules fourth task was to capture a dangerous boar. He was advised to drive it into the snow, which provides me with a tenuous link to our tournament, which is taking place in the winter months.

Board 9. Dealer North. EW Vul.

	♠ Q 2 ♡ A J ♢ A K 10 7 6 5 3 ♣ Q 5	
♠ K 10 7 6 ♡ K 8 5 ♢ J 8 ♣ A K 8 3		

West	North	East	South
—	2♡*	Dble	Pass
3♡*	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♢	Pass	4♡	Pass
4NT*	Pass	5♡*	Pass
5NT*	Pass	6♣*	Pass
7♢	Pass	Pass	Dble*
All Pass			

2♡	5♡ plus 4♣/♢, 0-9
4NT	Intended as RKCB for ♢
5♡	2 key cards, no ♢Q
5NT	Grand slam try
6♣	♣K
Dble	Normally first suit bid by dummy

Hercules and the Erymanthian Boar mid-17th century pic: courtesy of metmuseum.org/

This confused auction saw North lead the ♣J. Declarer won with the queen and settled down to the diamonds, reaching this position:

	♠ Q 2 ♡ A J ♢ 3 ♣ 5	
♠ — ♡ K 8 5 ♢ — ♣ A K 8		

When the last diamond was played North discarded a heart and its work having been done the ♣8 went from dummy, South pitching the ♠J. Declarer crossed to dummy with the ♣K and cashed the ace, squeezing South in the majors for +2330 and 13 IMPs against the 6NT recorded at the other table.

Hercules flanked by the author and his grandson Laurie Ashworth in the Quarry, Shrewsbury

This was the situation when the last diamond was cashed:

	♠ — ♡ 7 6 4 ♢ — ♣ 10 9 7	
♠ Q 2 ♡ A J ♢ 3 ♣ 5		♠ — ♡ K 8 5 ♢ — ♣ A K 8
	♠ A J ♡ Q 10 9 ♢ — ♣ 4	

This was the full layout:

	♠ 4 ♡ 7 6 4 3 2 ♢ 4 2 ♣ J 10 9 7 2	
♠ Q 2 ♡ A J ♢ AK10765 3 ♣ Q 5		♠ K 10 7 6 ♡ K 8 5 ♢ J 8 ♣ A K 8 3
	♠ A J 9 8 5 3 ♡ Q 10 9 ♢ Q 9 ♣ 6 4	

This dramatic deal is from the match between The Juniors and Tilly in Round 7 of the OCBL January Cup. Canada's John Dong was the successful declarer, his partner being Bo Han (Bruce) Zhu. Their opponents were Israel's Dan Israeli and Aran Warszawski.

Interview with Benito Garozzo

We had the honour to count Benito Garozzo among the players of the OCBL January Open Teams last week. With the kind permission of the ACBL, we republish this interview written by Francesca Canali. It was published in the Daily Bulletins during last San Diego NABC.

Benito Garozzo, also known as "the living legend," is one of the most famous and loved bridge champions in the world. The star of the Italian Blue Team turned 93 in September.

How did you start playing bridge?

I was born in Naples, but my family was living in Cairo, Egypt.

Then, one summer I was sent to spend the holidays in Italy. Ten days after my arrival, the Second World War broke out. Ships were not traveling to Africa anymore, so I was stuck in Italy, where I stayed with my sister and brother-in-law. We did not know how to play bridge, till one day an uncle came with a book of Ely Culbertson dated 1935. My sister was the only English speaker among us and she translated the rules for us. Soon bridge became the only hobby of the house!

After the war, I went back to Egypt and started playing at the local bridge club, where I met great players. I improved my cardplay using Autobridge, and ended up in the news for the first time: an Egyptian newspaper described me as a promising talent.

How did you become a member of the Italian Blue Team?

The Blue Team had already won three world titles when, in 1961, I was suddenly called, just 10 days before the start of the championship. Pietro Forquet's partner had an unexpected work commitment. I replied with this telegram:

"Thank you for the desired invitation and I confirm my enthusiastic participation. Stop. Best wishes. Stop."

When, 56 years later, my partner and I were called on for the Italian National Team for the 2017 World Championships, we sent the Italian Bridge Federation these same exact words. The only difference is that this time it was by email!

In 1961, I was to play with Pietro Forquet. I almost did not know him and we had never played together before.

We had only 10 days to build up a partnership, so each afternoon we met at Forquet's place with Eugenio Chiaradia, who helped us to train. We used to remove the 2s, 3s and 4s from the deck, deal the cards and bid. I had always used a natural system, so I had to learn the Neapolitan Club in few days starting from zero.

Anyway we were a complementary partnership: I was very aggressive, while Pietro was extremely solid and never taking risks.

We were awarded as the best partnership of the championship and we won the Bermuda Bowl.

Just like 56 years before, the invitation to play on the 2017 Open team came at the very last minute. I took a photo with Giovanni Donati, the youngest player on the team, aged 19. I put in his hands the Bermuda Bowl that I had won in 1961 and told him: "This is your first world championship and I wish that you can win it, like it has happened to me!"

Unfortunately we did not win and I know it was mainly because of my partner and me.

Giovanni Donati and Benito Garozzo hold the 1961 Bermuda Bowl.

I am very happy that I had this opportunity. I think nobody will hit the record of playing in an Open event for the national team at 90 years old!

You have invented many bidding systems…

Thanks to computers, everybody improved in card play. Nowadays, results are achieved during bidding, especially in competition.

The bidding system gives a 5-10 percent average advantage, which seems not much, but if you think that we have lost world championships by 2 or 3 IMPs, you can see how big a difference bidding methods can make.

At the beginning of my career, I only played natural. When they taught me the Neapolitan Club, I became very much interested in bidding systems. Together with Giorgio Belladonna I invented the New Roman Club and the the Lancia Club. The Dutch Bridge Federation hired me to give lessons to their Open and Women's teams, so I invented a specific system for them: the Volmac.

Soon after, I invented the system that I am still playing. I created it for my beloved Lea Dupont, who had come to Italy to improve her bridge and had found an Italian partner. They did not know the Strong Club, so I decided to build up a good system on natural bases for them and I invented GAR. **[**Ed: the system takes its name from the first letters of Benito's last name.**]**

At the top of my career, a Chinese player contacted me and hired me to play Precision. He has asked me if I was up to developing Super Precision, and so I did.

Now I have another system in mind, a kind of "half-strong Club," which will be disclosed in my new book, together with many other conventions that can be included in any bidding system. The book will also include a part on leads: many hands will be presented to the best players in the world and they will explain how they would lead and why.

You have had many bridge partners in your life.

Yes, and I want to say that my successes are especially due to the fact that I have always played with very strong players: Forquet, Belladonna, Arturo Franco, Lorenzo Lauria, Dano De Falco, Vito Pittalà and many others.

The new generation of bridge players is extremely talented.

The future of bridge is guaranteed. Among the young ones, I am very impressed by Agustin Madala.

As for me, I will keep playing for all my life, but when I realize that my level is not satisfying anymore, I will stop playing in public. I will retire and play only online, probably hiding behind a pseudonym.

Facts about Benito Garozzo

- ♠ He was born on Sept. 5, 1927 in Naples.
- ♠ He was married to Lea Dupont from the U.S.
- ♠ He lived in Florida from 1987 to 2012, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1994.
- ♠ He has a daughter, Silvana, a son, Fulvio, and two grown grandchildren. He is looking forward to his next achievement: becoming a great-grandfather!
- ♠ In 1964, he opened a jewelry store in Rome, next to the famous Trevi's fountain. Called Monna Lisa, it is now managed by his daughter and son.
- ♠ He is a passionate golfer.
- ♠ In 2011, aged 84, he was proudly able to bid in 10 different bidding systems.
- ♠ In his career he won 10 Bermuda Bowls, three World Bridge Games (past Bridge Olympiads), five European Championships, two European Open Championships, four NABC titles, a Gemini Cup, dozens of Italian titles and countless national and international events.
- ♠ In 2017 he was elected to the European Bridge League Hall of Fame.
- ♠ In 2017 he was named *Personality of the Year* by the International Bridge Press Association.
- ♠ He has written 11 books and is currently working on the 12th.
- ♠ He has trained the Dutch and Italian national teams.

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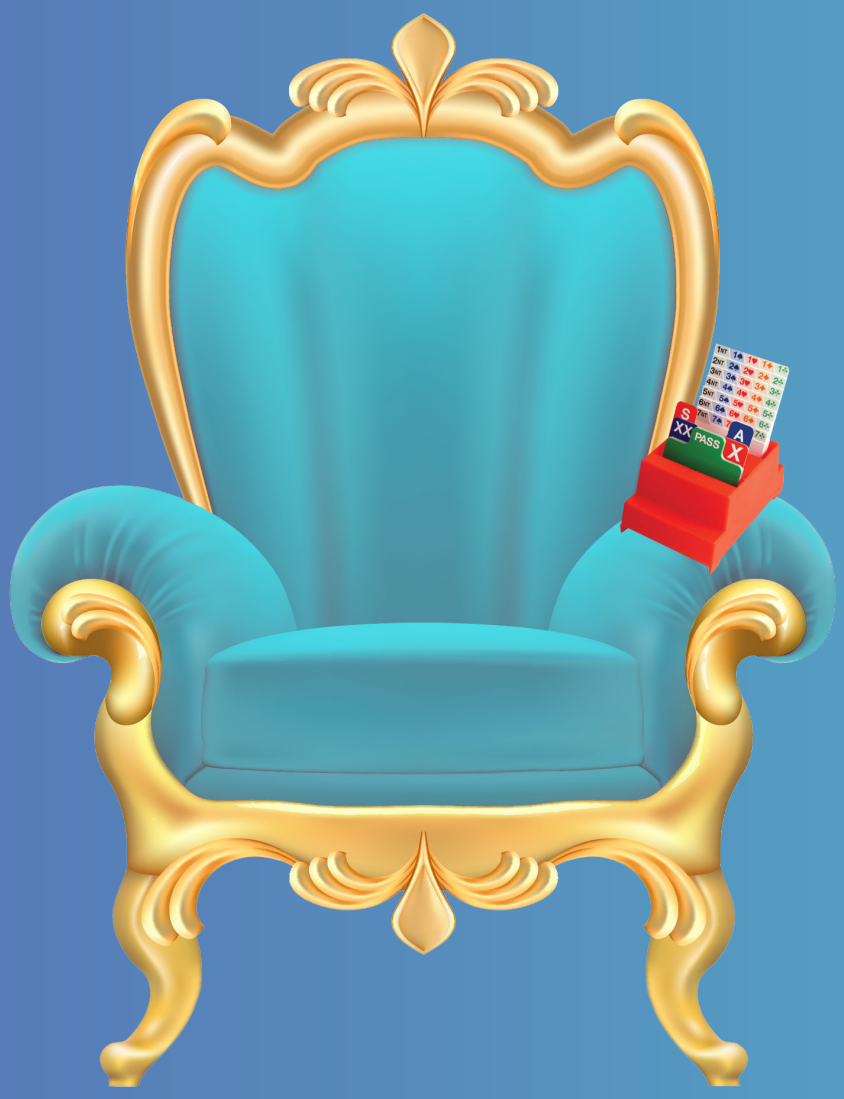

Qualification + Swiss A

Upcoming OCBL Open Teams:

FEBRUARY OPEN TEAMS
15 - 19 February 2021

MARCH OPEN TEAMS
8 - 11 March 2021

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19 - 23 April 2021

MAY OPEN TEAMS
31 May - 4 June 2021

Info and pre-registration: WWW.OCBL.ORG