

IBPA AWARDS - YOUTH

The International Bridge Press Association (IBPA) Awards, the Oscars of Bridge, have taken to promoting young stars in a big way, by having a special category for them - **YOUTH**. The monies involved are \$ 5000 for the Winners and \$ 2500 for the writer. A welcome sweetener indeed.

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Biting The Bait

Alexi Aalto, Finland (Defence)

(Kees Tammens, Netherlands)

Christophe Oursel, the French coach, reported a pretty coup executed by Aleksii Aalto of the Finnish Youngsters team.

France Vs Finland

Board 7. Dealer South. Both Vul.

| | | | |
|------------|---------------|-------------|--|
| | ♠ K 10 8 | | |
| | ♥ 7 6 | | |
| | ♦ K Q J 4 | | |
| | ♣ A K 7 5 | | |
| ♠ A 3 | | ♠ J 6 | |
| ♥ Q 8 3 | | ♥ K J 9 5 2 | |
| ♦ 9 5 3 2 | | ♦ A 10 8 7 | |
| ♣ J 10 9 3 | | ♣ Q 6 | |
| | ♠ Q 9 7 5 4 2 | | |
| | ♥ A 10 4 | | |
| | ♦ 6 | | |
| | ♣ 8 4 2 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------------|------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Sammalisto | Fragola | Aalto | Dufrene |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| Pass | 1♣ | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 1NT ¹ | Pass | 2♣ ² |
| Pass | 2♠ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 4♠ | Pass | Pass |

1. 15-17

2. Check-back Stayman

West led the jack of clubs. Declarer won with the ace and continued with the queen of diamonds to the ace, followed by the queen of clubs to the king. Declarer disposed of his losing club on the king of diamonds and carried on with a low spade to the queen and ace. West played the ten of clubs, North following suit, and East... ?

Without any hesitation, Aalto discarded a heart! If he had ruffed, the deal would have been over. A losing heart would have disappeared on that trick and the other heart would have gone on the jack of diamonds. However, after Aalto's defence, declarer had a tricky decision in the trump suit. When he played a spade to the ten, East made his trump trick after all, with a heart still to come, for down one.

That defence won Finland 12 IMPs.

(Not ruffing with the jack, created a losing option for the declarer. Alexi was duly rewarded, when declarer bit the bait, and finessed West for the Spade jack-Ed)

Promoting Oneself

Julien Bernard France (Defence)

(Venit, Vidit, Vincit' - Kees Tammens, Netherlands)

On the following deal, Julien Bernard of France found an excellent defence to defeat a four-heart game contract.

Dealer North. Neither Vul.

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|------------|--|
| | ♠ A K Q J 3 | | |
| | ♥ — | | |
| | ♦ 9 8 | | |
| | ♣ A 9 8 7 5 3 | | |
| ♠ 10 7 6 5 | | ♠ 9 8 2 | |
| ♥ K 8 6 | | ♥ 10 7 5 | |
| ♦ A J 7 6 2 | | ♦ Q 10 5 3 | |
| ♣ 2 | | ♣ K Q 6 | |
| | ♠ 4 | | |
| | ♥ A Q J 9 4 3 2 | | |
| | ♦ K 4 | | |
| | ♣ J 10 4 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | 1♣ | Pass | 4♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Bernard, West, led his singleton club. Declarer took the ace of clubs and three top spades to dispose of the two clubs from South. Declarer had arrived at an interesting moment – should he play a diamond from dummy to the king, or the jack of spades to see what happens? The latter was the winning move: East ruffs with the ten of hearts and South overruffs with the jack and plays the ace and queen of hearts for the loss of just one trump trick and two diamonds. In real life, declarer played a diamond to his king; West won with the ace and crossed to East's queen of diamonds for a club play. Declarer ruffed with the nine of hearts and West rightfully discarded a diamond. Declarer played the ace and queen of hearts to West's king. Bernard exited with his last spade, and when East was able to produce the ten of hearts, that card uppercut the jack of hearts to promote the eight in West for down one.

(Julien, got the spot cards in trumps spot on, when, his partner duly produced the heart ten, thereby promoting a trick for himself with the lowly eight of trumps. Tres Bon!-Ed)

Table Presence / A Woman's Instinct
Clementsson, Sweden (Declarer Play)
(Mark Horton U.K.)

Board 3. Dealer South. EW Vul.

| | |
|--|--|
| ♠ 8 ♥ Q J 9 5 2 ♦ 9 6 4 ♣ J 9 6 4 ♠ A 9 ♥ A K 7 6 ♦ K J ♣ A 7 5 3 2 | ♠ K Q 5 4 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ A Q 10 2 ♣ K 8 ♠ J 10 7 6 3 ♥ 10 4 ♦ 8 7 5 3 ♣ Q 10 |
|--|--|

| West | North | East | South |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|----------|
| Ekenberg | Karakolev | Clementsson | Mitovska |
| — | — | — | Pass |
| 2♣ ¹ | Pass | 2♥ ² | Pass |
| 2♠ ³ | Pass | 2NT ⁴ | Pass |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♦ | Pass |
| 3♥ | Pass | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♣ | Pass | 4♦ | Pass |
| 4♥ | Pass | 4NT ⁵ | Pass |
| 5♦ ⁶ | Pass | 6NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

1. 20-21 balanced or game forcing
2. 4+ spades
3. Balanced
4. Enquiry
5. RKCB
6. 0 or 3 key cards

Two spades accepted the spade transfer and showed a balanced hand in context. A series of natural bids at the three level, control-bids at the four level and Roman Key Card Blackwood led to the superior slam.

South led the ten of hearts. Declarer won with dummy's ace, overtook the jack of diamonds with the queen and played the two of spades. When South followed with the three, declarer put in dummy's nine(!) and had 12 tricks. This was the only table where a slam was made. I daresay that, at the other tables, declarer started with two rounds of spades, intending to claim as long as the suit was no worse than 4-2, and then fell back on a 3-3 club break. That was probably declarer's intention here, but I am informed that she noticed an almost imperceptible flicker when she played the spade. Even had the nine of spades lost to the ten or jack, Clementsson would have been no worse off than the other declarers.

At the other table, declarer won the heart lead, cashed the

ace of spades and led another, getting the bad news; minus 100 and minus 17 IMPs.

Following In The Footsteps
Kevin Rosenberg, USA, (Defence)
(Hurts So Good - John Hurd, USA)

Although it is always nice to be able to have played the deals where the great plays occur, sometimes you can receive more of a challenge when you don't know the deals. Take this board from the final of the Platinum Pairs...

Board 8. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

| | |
|--|--|
| ♠ A Q 8 3 ♥ J 5 2 ♦ K Q 4 3 ♣ A 10 ♠ J 10 ♥ K 10 8 7 6 ♦ A 10 7 6 ♣ K 7 | |
|--|--|

Here, you reach four hearts from the South seat:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| — | — | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 2♥ | Pass | 2NT |
| Pass | 3♦ | Pass | 3♥ |
| Pass | 3♠ | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

South showed his 2=5=4=2 shape and admitted that he would cooperate with a slam venture over three spades, rejected by North. As declarer, you win the club lead in dummy and have to decide how to play trumps. At the table, declarer, Hurd, led a low heart from the board, took the queen with the king, then ran the eight of hearts. This was the full deal:

| | |
|---|---|
| ♠ A Q 8 3 ♥ J 5 2 ♦ K Q 4 3 ♣ A 10 ♠ K 9 7 6 4 ♥ 4 3 ♦ 9 8 5 ♣ 9 4 3 | ♠ 5 2 ♥ A Q 9 ♦ J 2 ♣ Q J 8 6 5 2 ♠ J 10 ♥ K 10 8 7 6 ♦ A 10 7 6 ♣ K 7 |
|---|---|

When Kevin Rosenberg made the nine, he not only had a brilliancy prize entry, but the admiration of his opponents, Hurd and Jeff Meckstroth, and partner David Gold!
(Kevin is the son of the legendary bridge player, Mike Rosenberg)

Gr8 To Be Eight Tuana Altun, Turkey (Defence) (Süleyman Kolata, Istanbul)

At the 20th Iskenderun Bridge Festival Hatay, Turkey, you are playing in the Swiss Teams and hold this hand:

Board 30. Dealer East. Neither Vul.

♠ Q 8 5
♥ A
♦ J 7 6 5 4 3
♣ 7 5 4

The bidding has gone:

| West | North | East | South |
|-------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Tuana | Sinan | Toygar T. | Mehmet Ali |
| Altun | Seyfittinoglu | Altun | Kuru |
| — | — | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 2♣ | Pass | 3♣ |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | 6♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

What do you lead?

The killing lead was found by Tuana Altun, an eight-year-old girl playing with her brother, Toygar Tuncay Altun.

Tuana led a club. Then, when she regained the lead with the ace of hearts, she led another club. Her brother ruffed the second club to put the contract one down.

This was the full deal:

| | |
|--|--|
| ♠ Q 8 5 ♥ A ♦ J 7 6 5 4 3 ♣ 7 5 4 | ♠ 9 7 2 ♥ Q 9 3 ♦ A K Q ♣ Q 10 8 6 ♠ J 10 6 4 ♥ 10 7 5 2 ♦ 10 9 8 2 ♣ J ♠ A K 3 ♥ K J 8 6 4 ♦ — ♣ A K 9 3 2 |
|--|--|

That represented an 11-IMP gain for their team.

When her dad asked Tuana about her lead and continuation of a club after winning with her ace of hearts, Tuana replied: "I knew from the bidding that the opponents held a lot of clubs. I thought my partner was likely to ruff the first trick. He did not ruff the first trick, but I was sure he was going to ruff on the second round, so I played another club without hesitation."

(Guess it's Gr8 to be 8-Ed)

Esoteric And Exotic Spinkhuisen & Mendes, Netherlands (Bidding) (Aarnout Helmich, Netherlands)

Perhaps the best-known player in the tournament is the Dutch junior, Guillermo Pedro Herman Maria Mendes de León, Guy to his friends.

At most tables, the bidding went Pass-Pass-One Club-Pass-One Heart-Pass-Two Notrump-Pass-Three Notrump-All Pass. No West could find any other bid than three notrump, because three clubs wouldn't have been natural. However, Mendes and his partner Thibo Sprinkhausen showed that, with some esoteric agreements, bidding slams can be much easier.

Round 5. Board 12. Dealer West. NS Vul.

| | |
|---|---|
| ♠ Q J 8 ♥ 7 5 4 ♦ Q 8 7 5 4 ♣ 8 4 ♠ 2 ♥ 10 9 6 2 ♦ K 2 ♣ A J 9 7 6 2 | ♠ A 7 5 4 ♥ A K ♦ A 9 6 ♣ K 10 5 3 ♠ K 10 9 6 3 ♥ Q J 8 3 ♦ J 10 3 ♣ Q |
|---|---|

| West | North | East | South |
|------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| Sprinkhuisen | | Mendes de León | |
| Pass | Pass | 1♣ ¹ | Pass |
| 1♥ ² | Pass | 2♦ ³ | Pass |
| 2NT ⁴ | Pass | 3♣ ⁵ | Pass |
| 3♠ ⁶ | Pass | 4♦ ⁷ | Pass |
| 4♠ ⁸ | Pass | 4NT ⁹ | Pass |
| 5♦ ¹⁰ | Pass | 5♠ ¹¹ | Pass |
| 6♦ ¹² | Pass | 7♣ ¹³ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

1. 2+ clubs, forcing
2. 7+ HCP, natural, could have longer diamonds
3. Either (i) 18-20 balanced or (ii) natural (16+)
4. 4 hearts and 6 clubs/diamonds
5. Relay
6. 4 hearts and 6 clubs
7. Club slam try (4}would have agreed hearts)
8. Spade control, no heart control
9. Asks for key cards
10. 1 key card
11. Grand slam try, stronger than 5NT
12. King of diamonds
13. This should be easy

Mendes knew it would be an excellent grand, as he could ruff dummy's heart losers in hand. A well-deserved 14 IMPs to the Netherlands when the other table ended up in three notrump.

(A finely tuned partnership, they knew their onions and tulips.-Ed)