

10th Arab Nations Championship

13-17 Nov. 2024

1st Jeddah International Bridge Festival

15-20 Nov. 2024

Bulletin 01

Thursday, 14 November 2024

Editor: Brian Senior

EGYPT (OPEN) AND TUNISIA (WOMEN) LEAD THE WAY

The Egyptian Open team leads the way by over a match at the end of day one. Indeed, the gap between Egypt and second-placed UAE is greater than that between UAE and bottom of the rankings Saudi Arabia.

It should come as no surprise then that three of the top four in the cumulative Butler rankings are members of the Egyptian Open team – Ahmed Nayer, Mohamed A Hahdy, and Abdelrahman Mosaad.

The odd one out in the top four of the Butler rankings is a member of the Tunisian Women’s team, Jalila Ghodbahn. Which leads us neatly to the top of the Women’s team ranking, which sees Tunisia just ahead of Morocco. There is nearly a full match between Morocco and third-placed Egypt.

Of course, we are only 40% of the way through the round robin stage, so there is till plenty of time for all of this to change.

RANKING (PROVISIONAL)

1	88.7	Egypt (Open)
2	64.59	UAE (Open)
3	62.6	Morocco (Open)
4	52.14	Jordan (Open)
5	46.81	Kuwait (Open)
6	45.16	Saudi Arabia (Open)


1	84.11	Tunisia (Women)
2	83.06	Morocco (Women)
3	64.61	(Egypt (Women
4	60	(UAE (Women
5	55.26	Saudi Arabia (Women)
6	43.98	Palestine (Women)
7	40.98	(Jordan (Women

SOME PICS FROM YESTERDAY...



YESTERDAY'S QUIZ - SOLUTION

Dealer South. None Vul.

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

South plays in 6cx after an uncontested auction and West leads the four of hearts. You win the ace of hearts, pitching a diamond from hand,

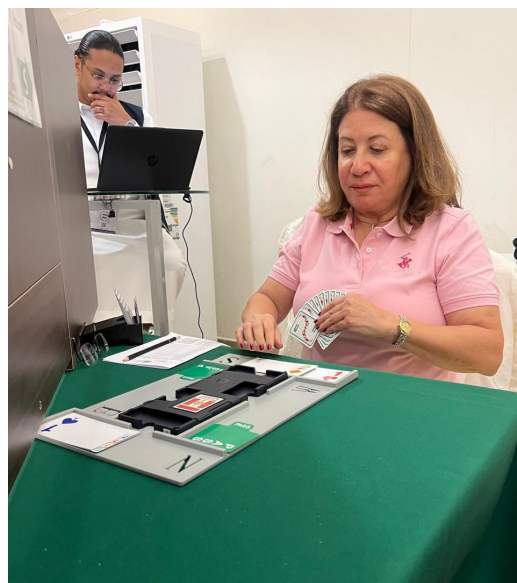
You need to establish the spades and there are a number of combined black-suit layouts where it is correct to start on spades before drawing trumps, so you play ace and another spade. East wins the king, West following low both times, and returns the nine

of clubs. You intend to play on spades next so win in hand to leave open the possibility of over-ruffing with the jack should West be out of spades. West follows with the six.

There is no benefit to drawing a second round of trumps yet so you lead a spade and West follows with the ten. You should ruff low. The only time when ruffing high is necessary is when East is about to over-ruff, but then you can never succeed as ruffing with the jack merely delays the inevitable – you still need to take another spade ruff.

On the actual layout, your low ruff scores, so you cash the ace of diamonds, ruff a heart back to hand and ruff another spade. Another ruff back to hand allows you to draw the remaining trumps and cash your winners.

Had it been West who was short in spades, he might have ruffed in front of dummy on the third round. You would now over-ruff, cross to hand with a ruff and lead a fourth spade. If clubs were two-two, you would be able to take this ruff in peace and make your contract. If West held two spades and three clubs then there was no winning line.




OPEN ROUND 2 – EGYPT V JORDAN

BBO was not properly up and running for Round One of the championships so we begin our coverage with Round Two, and the Open series match between Egypt and Jordan.

The match began with an E/W partscore.

Board 9. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

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

Both Wests became declarer after North had opened 1♣ and rebid 1NT over West's 1♠ overcall. North led a heart, South winning and continuing the suit to declarer's ace.


For Egypt, Fatima found the way home with eight tricks – the BBO record unfortunately does not provide details.

For Jordan, Aaida won the second heart and played ace then queen of spades. North, Nayer, won the king and cashed the jack, then got out with a low diamond. Aaida won the king and tried a club to the queen. That lost to the ace and the jack came back to dummy's king. Declarer could come to hand easily enough but a diamond towards dummy was won by the ace and a club came back, leaving the ♦Q stranded in dummy and declarer with a heart loser at the end for down one and -100; 5 IMPs to Egypt.

Declarer could have succeeded by coming to hand with a heart instead of leading a club to the queen. This way the ♣K would still have been in dummy as an entry to the ♦Q. Also, earlier in the play, declarer could have simply played the ♥Q at trick three, accepting that it would be ruffed but that this would be with a natural trump trick, and the fourth heart could then be ruffed in dummy. In other words, with two minor-suit ace to be lost, declarer could afford to lose

two spades and one heart, but not two spades and two hearts.

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Aaida	Nayer	Sakher	Mosad
1♠	Dble	2♠	Pass
Pass	Dble	Rdbl	2NT
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	Pass	Dble	All Pass

Mosad's 2NT looks as though he intended it to be Lebensohl, but it was taken as two places to play and the four-four heart fit was found. Sakher was delighted with this development and doubled, no doubt with thoughts of collecting a large penalty.

Aaida led ace, queen, and a third spade, which Mosad ruffed. He led a heart up at trick four and put in the nine when Aaida showed out, pitching a diamond. Sakher won the ♥J and returned the king to dummy's ace. Mosad cashed the ace of diamonds and ruffed the low diamond then took the club finesse. He cashed the ace of clubs and king of diamonds, then played the ♦Q. Sakher could ruff that but was then endplayed to give the last trick to dummy's ♥10, so the contract was down one one for -200.


In the other room N/S got all the way to 4♥ and that, of course, was also doubled. Down two meant -500 and 7 IMPs to Egypt, who went on to win the match by 18-12 IMPs.

I can only apologise for the inadequate coverage of the first two rounds, caused by problems with the BBO coverage.

OPEN ROUND 3 – SAUDI ARABIA V UAE

With BBO still not functioning properly, I will try to cover one table from Round 3 as much as looks reliable on BBO, featuring our hosts, Saudi Arabia, and UAE.


Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Elvan</i>	<i>Sahab</i>	<i>Timur</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
–	–	–	1♠
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
All Pass			

For Saudi Arabia, Sahab responded 3♦, a mixed raise type, and facing four-card support but a maximum of about 9 HCP, Bassem signed off in 3♠. Elvan led the two of hearts to the king and ace, and Timur promptly switched to the queen of diamonds. That allowed the defence to collect two diamonds, a diamond ruff, and two clubs, so the contract was down two for -100 and a flat board, scoring up with 4♠-2.

Board 20. Dealer West. All Vul.


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

West	North	East	South
<i>Elvan</i>	<i>Sahab</i>	<i>Timur</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♣
Pass	2♦	All Pass	

I don't have access to the players' systems, so my guess as to the meaning of the 2♦ overcall is no better informed than yours. What we can say is that it worked nicely in getting Sahab to declare declare 2♦.

Timur led the queen of hearts and, when that held the trick, continued with the two of hearts to Elvan's ace, Elvan switched to a spade, which Sahab ducked to the king, and Timur cashed the ace of clubs, and there was just one trump trick to be lost; +90 and 5 IMPs to Saudi Arabia, scoring up with 3♦-1 from the other room.

Board 21. Dealer North. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Elvan</i>	<i>Sahab</i>	<i>Timur</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
–	Pass	1♥	1♠
Dble	4♠	5♥	All Pass


If the bidding is correct, Elvan's double of the 1♠ overcall was an interesting effort. Sahab had a raise to 4♠ and Timur saved in 5♥ and that ended the auction.

Bassem cashed the ace of spades and switched to the jack of hearts. According to the BBO operator, Timur did not take a spade ruff, but simply won and played three more rounds of hearts. Bassem won the jack and led a diamond and the defence took its winners for down three and -150.

I'm sure that South should double in this kind of situation. Yes, partner's raise to 4♠ could be just based on a big spade fit and shapely hand, but South has a surprise trump trick on defence and the actual outcome of down three for +500 is more likely than 5♥ doubled making for -850. I've seen this sort of result too often, where the sacrificing side get away undoubled for two or three down.

With 5♠ making at the other table, UAE picked up 11 IMPs.

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.


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

West	North	East	South
<i>Elvan</i>	<i>Sahab</i>	<i>Timur</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
–	–	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Timur's weak two-suited opening and the 2NT enquiry shut N/S out of the auction. Timur showed the diamonds, then admitted to spade tolerance. Elvan won the club lead, ruffed the remaining club, and cashed the top spades, losing just one trick in each major; +650.

That was worth another 8 IMPs to UAE as their N/S pair found the save in 5♣ doubled or –300 in the other room.

Board 23. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Elvan</i>	<i>Sahab</i>	<i>Timur</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
–	–	–	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♠	All Pass	

Sahab bid and rebid the spades and was left to play at the two level. Timur led the unbid suit, the two of clubs going to dummy's bare ace. There were two discards to be had on the top hearts, and club ruffs to come after that, so Sahab lost just three spades and one diamond ruff; +140 and 1 IMP to Saudi Arabia.

TODAY'S QUIZ

Dealer South. None Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
–	–	–	1♥
2♥	Dble	Pass	4♦
5♣	5♦	Pass	6♦
All Pass			

Two Hearts is Michaels, at least five-five in spades and a minor. West thought a little before passing over 6♦.


He leads the ace then king of clubs, East following with the queen then seven.

The answer
will be published
tomorrow...

OPEN 4 – JORDAN V SAUDI ARABIA

As BBO has been too unreliable today, I decided to sit and watch at a table for the first of the afternoon matches, poised with pen and paper just like when I first worked on championship bulletins before we all just started to watch BBO and get our material that way.


Board 25. Dealer North. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Sakher	Hakim	Aaida	Bassem
–	1♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Dble	3♦
All Pass			

For Saudi Arabia, Hakim opened 1♦ then rebid his suit over Bassem's 1NT response. Aaida had not wanted to come in at her first turn, not being quite strong enough to double and holding a weak main suit, but now that one opponent at least had denied a major she could afford to double at her second turn. That saw Bassem accept the push to 3♦, which ended the auction. With the friendly club position there was nothing to the play after a spade lead and Hakim came to nine easy tricks for +110.


Board 26. Dealer East. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Sakher	Hakim	Aaida	Bassem
–	–	1♣	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Aaida opened 1♣, showed the spades, then the extra club and, finally, admitted to a heart stopper when Sakher used what my circle have always called fifth-suit-forcing. Bassem led ace and another heart so Hakim won the king and played a third round. That meant that he had a winner to cash when Aaida played on clubs, but only one, so the contract was just made for +600.

Board 27. Dealer South. None Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Sakher	Hakim	Aaida	Bassem
–	–	–	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♥	Pass	6NT	All Pass


Two Diamonds was game-forcing, so Aaida could presumably have bid 2Nt at her next turn rather than used fourth-suit forcing. It didn't make a difference this time, but for opener to have one more option at his third turn could be useful on a hand where e had nothing to show. This time showing the fifth heart was automatic, of course.

On hearing that partner was at least five-five, Aaida launched into Key-card, finding that two were missing. Undaunted, she leaped to slam, but unfortunately for her not the one that was easily makable. I think 6NT is a poor choice and it duly got punished.

Bassem led the seven of hearts, which ran to the ten. The ♥Q was ducked and run, and a third heart was won

by the jack. Two more rounds of hearts followed then, as both defenders had pitched the suit, all three clubs. Hakim came down to three spades and two diamonds, and Bassem kept diamonds, so there was no way home from here and the contract was down one for -50.


Board 28. Dealer West. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sakher</i>	<i>Hakim</i>	<i>Aaida</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

A simple Stayman auction saw Hakim declare everyone's favourite contract. Aaida led the ten of diamonds, which ran to Hakim's jack. He played ace then nine of hearts, the latter going to queen and king. Taking no risks, Hakim led a spade to hand, cashed the ace and queen of clubs, then cashed the second spade and the jack of hearts, and quietly conceded the rest; +600.

Board 29. Dealer North. All Vul.


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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sakher</i>	<i>Hakim</i>	<i>Aaida</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
-	1♦	Pass	1♥
1♠	2♦	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Facing an opening bid, Bassem could hardly do less than bid the heart game, but making it proved to be more of a challenge than bidding it. Sakher led ace and another club, Bassem winning the king and leading the nine of hearts to the king and ace, Back came the nine of diamonds. Bassem finessed the queen, losing to the king, and Aaida switched to a spade. Confident that this defence meant that the king was on his left, Bassem rose with the ace and played ace of diamonds then ruffed a diamond high. A heart to the ten would now have made the contract had hearts divided evenly, but they did not, so there was one more loser to come and the contract was down one for -100.

It looks as though declarer should make this one. Even without West's spade overcall, isn't it right for declarer to play ace and another spade at tricks three and four? This sets up a discard so that the diamond finesse isn't required. Not only does this appear to work if either king is onside, subject to spades not being six-two, but the fact that West has not switched to a spade at trick two through dummy's queen to three screams out that he has the king.


Board 30. Dealer East. None Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sakher</i>	<i>Hakim</i>	<i>Aaida</i>	<i>Bassem</i>
-	-	1NT	Pass
2♠	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	All Pass		


Sakher transferred to clubs, Aaida saying that she liked the suit, then signed off in 3♣. Hakim's cunning nine of diamonds lead through the strong NT looked a trifle less cunning after Sakher had put in the queen and Bassem had ducked it. Fortunately, that just cost an overtrick; +130.

Board 31. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Sakher	Hakim	Aaida	Bassem
–	–	–	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Board 32. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
Sakher	Hakim	Aaida	Bassem
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

A simple Stayman auction saw Sakher at the helm in 3NT, against which Hakim led the nine of spades, which ran to declarer's queen. Sakher crossed to the king of clubs to lead a heart to the ten, queen and ace, and back came a second spade to the ace. Sakher again crossed to dummy in clubs and led a second heart up. Bassem won the king and returned the king of diamonds. Sakher won the ace and played a diamond back, and Bassem won and cashed the king of spades; nine tricks for +400.


Aaida opened as much for the lead as anything, then passed Sakher's 1♠ response. That was probably going to fail by a trick, but Bassem balanced with 1NT and was allowed to play there. Sakher led his partner's suit and Aaida cleared them, giving strong suit-preference signals for clubs while doing so. Bassem won the third heart and called for the queen of clubs. Aaida won that and returned a spade, the queen losing to the king, but Bassem won the spade continuation, crossed to dummy, and ran the nine of clubs, making three of those to go with two diamonds and two major-suit aces; just made for +90.



WOMEN 5 – EGYPT V UAE

For Round 5 we take a first look at the Women's competition, with the match between Egypt and UAE – again, just from one table.

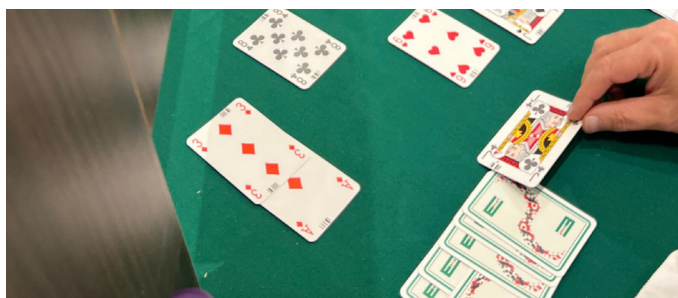
Board 1. Dealer North. None Vul.

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


West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
–	Pass	1♣	1♠
2♥	4♠	5♣	5♠
Dble	All Pass		

For Egypt, Hoda opened 1♣ and Dina introduced her long heart suit over Maria's overcall. One Spade really found Sawsen at home and she jumped to 4♠. Hoda could hardly not bid 5♣ now and Maria ignored the old rule about the five level belonging to the opposition and took the push to 5♠, doubled by Dina.

And right Maria was as the friendly diamond position means that 5♣ is untouchable. Meanwhile, Dina led the king of clubs against 5♠ doubled, and Hoda overtook to cash the ace of hearts then revert to clubs. Maria could ruff that with the eight, draw trumps, and play the jack of hearts. Dina won that and rather carelessly, as diamond tricks couldn't be going anywhere, returned a low diamond. That was a nice bonus for Maria, who was down only one for –100 instead of the –300 it should have been or the –500 it could have been on a double dummy heart lead.



Board 2. Dealer East. N/S Vul.


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

West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♣	1♦	1♠	All Pass

Hoda felt that the East hand didn't quite fit anywhere so passed as dealer, and was then quite happy to respond a simple 1♠ at her next turn. Surely someone would bid again? Well, I would have thought that South might have doubled or West rebid the seven-card club suit, but what do I know?

One Spade was passed out and, after a diamond to the ace and diamond continuation, a heart went away and declarer took the spade finesse. That lost and Maria cashed the ace of hearts, and that was all for the defence; 10 tricks for +170.

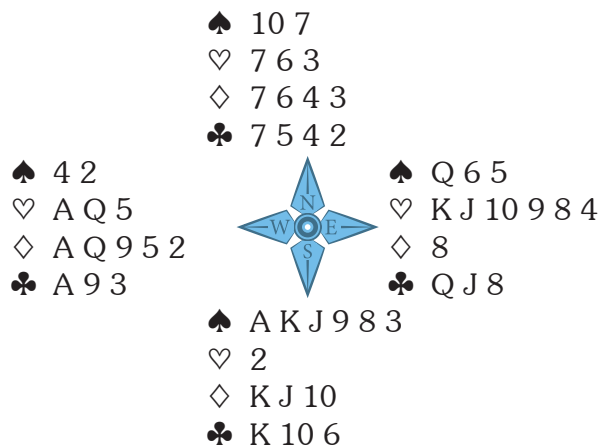
Board 3. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
–	–	–	1♠
3♦	4♦	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Dina made a weak jump overcall and Sawsen made an aggressive cuebid on what was only really a borderline raise to 4♠. That didn't matter as Maria signed off in game and she had just one loser in each side-suit so 10 tricks for +420.

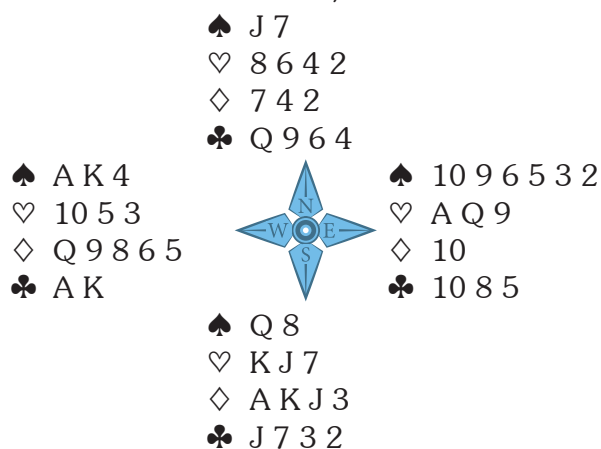
Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.



West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
1NT	Pass	2♦	2♠
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Dina opened 1NT and Hoda transferred to hearts. When Maria overcalled 2♠, Dina liked her strong hearts and short spades sufficiently to compete with 3♥, though of course Hoda was going to drive to game anyway. Three rounds of spades saw Dina ruffing high, drawing trumps and leading the queen of clubs off the table. That was covered so she won the ace and played a club back to the eight. That lost but she had 10 tricks for +620.

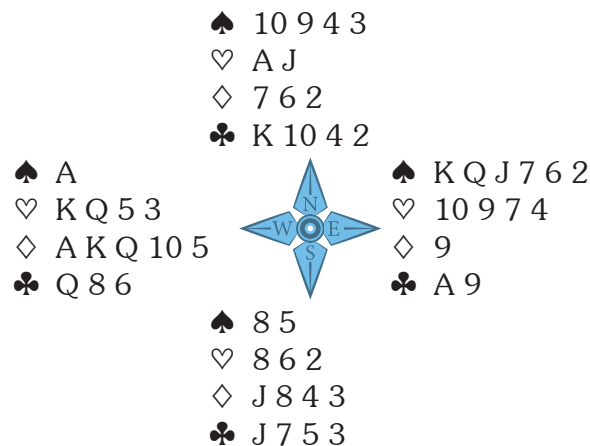
Board 5. Dealer North. N/S Vul.



West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
–	Pass	Pass	1NT
Dble	Rdbl	2♠	3♣
3♠	All Pass		

Dina made a penalty double of the strong NT then raised Hoda's spades in competition. Maria cashed a top diamond then switched to a club. Hoda won the ace and cashed the top spades. She cashed the king of clubs then led a heart to the nine and jack. Maria returned the ♥K and there was a second one of those to be lost so the contract was made with one overtrick for +170.

Board 6. Dealer East. E/W Vul.



West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
–	–	Pass	Pass
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♥	Pass	4NT	Pass
5♣	Pass	6♥	All Pass

I don't like the 2NT rebid when West could just reverse into hearts, but Hoda's use of Checkback allowed Dina to show the hearts anyway so no harm was done. Hoda not became very optimistic, using Key-card then bidding the small slam without checking for the ♥Q. As it turned out, even when Dina did have the queen slam was poor.


Sawsen led the two of clubs and Dina would have been better placed had she run it to her queen, but who likes to go down at trick one if there are alternative lines available? Dina rose with the ace and cashed the ace of spades then two top diamonds for a club pitch from the dummy. She ruffed a club then led a heart to the king and ace. After some thought and finding nothing else to have any attraction at all, Sawsen returned a club and, when she ruffed in the dummy, Dina could no longer avoid a second heart loser.

In practice the contract was down two for –200.

Six Spades might have been easier to play, in that a club lead to the queen, king and ace leaves declarer with fewer options. Win the club, a spade to the ace, two top diamonds for a club pitch, a diamond

ruff, draw trumps, and a heart to the king means six spades, four diamonds, a heart and a club.

Board 7. Dealer South. All Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
–	–	–	Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	


UAE reached a thin 3NT, against which Dina led the three of spades. Maria won the king and played the ten of clubs and, when that was ducked, a second club. This was also ducked and now declarer had a decision to make. Should she clear the clubs, when she would require spades to be four-four plus a winning diamond guess to provide the missing tricks, or should she abandon clubs and play for four diamond tricks?

Both lines essentially depend on finding the jack of diamonds, but playing on clubs first leaves open the option to play either defender for the jack, while if four tricks are required it will be better to play East for

the length.

Perhaps the fact that the second club has been ducked suggests that spades are indeed four-four, otherwise declarer has been given a chance that she need not have been. Anyway, Maria switched her attention to diamonds, leading the queen from dummy, and that was one down as West won two diamonds and two spades to go with east's ace of clubs; –100.

Board 8. Dealer West. None Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Dina</i>	<i>Sawsen</i>	<i>Hoda</i>	<i>Maria</i>
Pass	1♦	1♥	Dble
2♥	All Pass		

Sawsen might have upgraded to a strong NT with all those 10s but contented herself with opening 1♦, and did not come again in competition, though if Maria's double promised four spades it must have been tempting to bid 2♠ over 2♥. Defending turned out to be just fine, however, as there were seven losers in 2♥ so down two for –100.



RESULTS

ROUND 1

		IMPs	VPs 1	VPs 2
Saudi Arabia (Open)	Kuwait (Open)	21-44	2.89	17.11
Egypt (Open)	Morocco (Open)	36- 7	18.21	1.79
Jordan (Open)	UAE (Open)	13-24	5.91	14.09
Egypt (Women)	-- --		12.00	
Morocco (Women)	Saudi Arabia (Women)	40-11	18.21	1.79
Tunisia (Women)	Palestine (Women)	35-4	18.53	1.47
UAE (Women)	Jordan (Women)	35-14	16.68	3.32

ROUND 2

		IMPs	VPs 1	VPs 2
Morocco (Open)	Saudi Arabia (Open)	3-15	5.61	14.39
Kuwait (Open)	UAE (Open)	20-40	3.54	16.46
Egypt (Open)	Jordan (Open)	18-12	12.42	7.58
Saudi Arabia (Women)	Egypt (Women)	11-13	9.14	10.86
-- --	Palestine (Women)	0- 0		10.00
Morocco (Women)	Jordan (Women)	12- 2	13.78	6.22
Tunisia (Women)	UAE (Women)	37- 5	18.68	1.32

ROUND 3

		IMPs	VPs 1	VPs 2
Saudi Arabia (Open)	UAE (Open)	6-35	1.79	18.21
Morocco (Open)	Jordan (Open)	39- 5	18.97	1.03
Kuwait (Open)	Egypt (Open)	2-16	5.04	14.96
Egypt (Women)	Palestine (Women)	23-24	9.56	10.44
Saudi Arabia (Women)	Jordan (Women)	31- 1	18.37	1.63
-- --	UAE (Women)			12.00
Morocco (Women)	Tunisia (Women)	16-16	10.00	10.00

ROUND 4

		IMPs	VPs 1	VPs 2
Jordan (Open)	Saudi Arabia (Open)	17-19	9.14	10.86
UAE (Open)	Egypt (Open)	1-26	2.50	17.50
Morocco (Open)	Kuwait (Open)	13-25	5.61	14.39
Jordan (Women)	Egypt (Women)	12-26	5.04	14.96
Palestine (Women)	UAE (Women)	7-20	5.32	14.68
Saudi Arabia (Women)	Tunisia (Women)	15-37	3.10	16.90
-- --	Morocco (Women)	0- 0		10.00

ROUND 5

		IMPs	VPs 1	VPs 2
Saudi Arabia (Open)	Egypt (Open)	0-47	0.00	20.00
Jordan (Open)	Kuwait (Open)	30- 2	18.04	1.96
UAE (Open)	Morocco (Open)	5-24	3.77	16.23
Egypt (Women)	UAE (Women)	13-13	10.00	10.00
Jordan (Women)	Tunisia (Women)	9- 2	12.77	7.23
Palestine (Women)	Morocco (Women)	11-23	5.61	14.39
Saudi Arabia (Women)	-- --	12.00		

ROUND 6

		IMPs	VPs 1	VPs 2
Kuwait (Open)	Saudi Arabia (Open)	3-18	4.77	15.23
Morocco (Open)	Egypt (Open)	14- 2	14.39	5.61
UAE (Open)	Jordan (Open)	13-14	9.56	10.44
Tunisia (Women)	Egypt (Women)	12- 5	12.77	7.23
UAE (Women)	Morocco (Women)	3-16	5.32	14.68
Jordan (Women)	-- --		12.00	
Palestine (Women)	Saudi Arabia (Women)	14-16	9.14	10.86