



19TH HCL INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIP

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Texan Aces Lead After 5 Rounds

In the Gold category, FORMIDABLES – Mavericks match finished with a 7.82-12.18 VP score. Texan Aces got 16.18 VPs against Rampage. In the Silver category, Lucky SIX blitzed Jai Ganesh 30-0 IMPs that converted to 17.84 VPs for the round and 89.7 VPs in five rounds for the top spot. Blitz got 18.15 VPs against SANGAM on table 2 to move to the second position with 77.45 VPs. Last five rounds will be played tomorrow.

Results Gold

1.	Texan Aces	77.74
2.	Formidables	76.87
3.	RL Sanghi	75.64
4.	Mavericks	75.36
5.	Tornatae	71.74
6.	Atha B	68.69
7.	Hope and Prey	64.05
For more details, Click here Please Scroll down		

Results Silver

1. Lucky Six	89.70	
2. Blitz	77.45	
3. Team Vibrant	72.21	
4. Quantum Leap	69.54	
5. Andromeda	69.35	
6. Invincibles	68.39	
7. Six Spades	68.07	
For more results, click here		

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WHERE THE SHARPEST MINDS PARTNER TO CONQUER

Tewari and Keyzad waving a magic wand By Prakash Paranjape

Formidables lifted the Ruia Trophy in the 2021 Winter Nationals held by the Bridge Federation of India. In the finals, they defeated a star-studded Seligman team by a comfortable margin by way of a 117-71.5 IMPs victory in a four-session 48-board final. Formidables team consisted of Bachiraju Satyanarayana, Jaggy Shivdasani, keyzad anklesaria, Kiran Nadar, Rajeshwar Tewari, and Sandeep Thakral whereas Seligman team had Jacek Pszczoła, Kamil Nowak, Martin Seligman, Michal Kwiecien, and Włodzimierz Starkowski. Covid had not yet loosened its grip on physical movements, so the championships were conducted online.

Seligman team easily topped the Swiss league with a VP score of 114.7, more than five VPs clear of the second finisher. None of the knockout rounds was a cakewalk for the Seligman team as they met Rampage, Monica Jajoo, and Aristos teams from round of 16 onwards. Formidables had a relatively easier time in winning those KO rounds.

The final was keenly contested. The following deal generated a lot of interest on the Indian whatsapp group bridge discussion.

Deal 41, North Dealer, EW Vul

♠ A 6 3 🕈 K 6 8752 A K 8 5 2 **♦** Q 9 7 🔶 K T 8 5 **V**JT9852 **V** A 4 AKJT6 • 9 ♣A97 🕭 T 6 **♦** J 4 2 **V**Q73 • Q 4 3 \Lambda Q J 4 3 West North East South Wodzimierz Sandeep Michal Jaggy Shivdasani Starkowski Thakral Kwiecien Pass Pass 1Nt 4 ♦ Pass 47 Pass Pass Pass

In both the rooms, East opened 1Nt in the second position. In one room, Jaggy Shivdasani bid 4♦ to transfer to Heart suit at four level. Kwiecien led the ♣Q against Sandeep Thakral's 4♥. Sandeep won the A, cashed AK, and ruffed the Diamond Ten felling the Queen. Getting back to the Closed hand with the A, he next played the Jack. Kwiecien ruffed with the Q and considered his next move for some time. Close the North and West cards and give a thought to South's next move.

While commentating on the deal with all the four hands on the view, we could see that a Spade switch would be disastrous for the defence. I said as much in my spoken commentary even as Kwiecien switched to Spade Jack. Sandeep had no problem after that switch and the contract made easily.





In the other room, Marty Seligman transferred to 2♥ and invited with a 3♥ bid. Pszczoła accepted the invitation. The first four tricks went just as they did in the first room. Tewari, too, ruffed with the ♥Q and considered his options. After giving it a long hard thought, Tewari came up with a trump continuation. The focus of the commentary on that set was the first room, so I switched back to the first room to kibitz the remaining deals, satisfied that Tewari had found the winning defence, or rather, had avoided the obviously losing defence.

After the end of the final, and the customary congratulations from the many fans of the Formidables team, when Tewari watched the youtube commentary, he realised that we had missed

Tewari and Keyzad waving a magic wand

the real meat of the deal, the real action, the one that happened in the other room.

"The Spade Jack play by Kwiecien was certainly not a mistake", Tewari posted. If North held \bigstar AT3 instead of the \bigstar A63 that he actually held, it might have been important to make that deceptive switch to the \bigstar J. If South did not switch to Spades, Declarer would have played a round of trumps, and not having any two-way option in Spades, would have used the \bigstar K entry to the Closed hand to reach the winning fifth Diamond. The guess of the position of \bigstar J was not at all the issue, the entry to the Closed hand was. He certainly had a point.

But then, how on earth did Tewari and Keyzad manage to prevent the Declarer from reaching the closed hand for cashing the Diamond winner? Well, that was the KEY of the hand, pun intended KEY being Keyzad's nick name.

Tewari played a trump after ruffing the fourth Diamond with the Queen of Hearts. Keyzad exited with the Club King. Declarer ruffed in the Dummy and played the Queen of Spades looking to induce a quick grab of the Ace trick. He was out of luck there. The ♠Queen got ducked in tempo. Pszczoła next played a small Spade. Keyzad ducked again ever so smoothly that Pszczoła was doubly convinced that the Spade Ace was with Tewari. He let the Spade run to South. Tewari now produced the & Jack, and on the next round of Spades, Keyzad the magician produced the Spade Ace. Down one and 12 welldeserved IMPs to FORMIDABLES was the result of the deal. While commentating and kibitzing, we had missed the most exciting moments of the 2021 RUIA trophy finals. Click on the following link to visualise how kibitzing with all the four hands on view can sometimes lead one astray.

For more results, Click here

DON'T TAKE A SINGLE ON THE LAST BALL By Prakash Paranjape

In the second round of the GOLD Swiss league, Mavericks, the team consisting of the legendry Zia Mahmood played against team Aquarius from Pune. In the Vu-graph room on the Lobby Floor, a few people from Pune had gathered to watch Ashok Vaidya play against Zia. Ashok Vaidya had represented India in the 1993 World Championships in Santiago, Chile. His partnership with late Suhas Vaidya had performed very well in that event. Milind Bhadbhade, the President of the Pune Bridge Federation, but not an international expert yet, was Ashok's partner.

It was almost like watching Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson bowling to Gundappa Viswanath on a fast pitch. Here is a deal that will tell you why we thought of this cricket analogy.

Deal 18

East Dealer, NS Vul



wondering whether Ashok would try a risky pull on the next round of bidding with a vulnerable 2♥ barrage, but Ashok merely offered a defensive Pass. Daniel responded 1Nt and that became the final contract.

The excitement now shifted to the opening lead. Would Milind choose a middle-of-the-road fourth best, or would he go for the Jack of Spades? After some thought, Milind chose the $\clubsuit 6$ and the Punekars in the Vu-graph room breathed a sigh of relief. Declarer won the Opening lead with the $\bigstar A$ and played a small Spade. South inserted the \bigstar Ten. Declarer won with the $\bigstar K$ Ashok discarding a Heart, and played a small Diamond on which Ashok Vaidya played the $\blacklozenge 8$. The Declarer played a small Diamond.

South had two options now. South could play small and let Ashok Vaidya guide the defence. That would be like refusing a single on the last ball of the over so that the stronger batsman remains on strike for longer. Alternately, South could have won the Diamond trick and planned the defence himself. Now, that wasn't an easy task. South would have had to shift to a small club from ATX to defeat the contract. That way, North could get in with a Club winner to push the ♥Jack.

Milind thought for some time and decided to win the trick. That, the kibitzers thought was not a wise move. As expected, South failed to find the killing shift after that trick and the contract made easily. Aquarius eventually lost the match 12-19 IMPs, a narrow margin. They would have saved some IMPs had South allowed Ashok to win that Diamond trick.

The main takeaway from the deal is that it is a good idea to allow the strongest from your side face the strongest from theirs when that is easily possible. Refuse that single on the last ball when the batsman at the other end is an expert in handling sticky wickets, in cricket parlance.

Round 5 : FORMIDABLES vs. MAVERICKS By Prakash Paranjape

At the end of round 4 FORMIDABLES were at the top of the table with 69.05 VPs whereas Zia's Mavericks that has one of the regular FORMIDABLES pair – Jaggy Shivdasani and Sandeep Thakral - on their team were second with a score of 63.18. For the fifth round, they were on Table 1 facing each other. We had a brief look at the play record.

We had a brief look at the play record.

Deal 11, South Dealer, none Vul

	▲ A85432 ♥ K T 862 ♦ 42	
▲QT ♥Q74 ◆T83 ◆T8542	♣ ♠ K76 ♥ J95 ♦ AJ65	▲ J9♥ A3♦ KQ97♣ KQ763
	& AJ9	

Open Room Bidding

West <i>Jaggi</i>	North <i>Keyzad</i>	East Sandeep	South <i>Tewari</i> 1♦
Pass Pass Pass	1≜ 2♥ Pass	1Nt Pass Pass	Pass 2 ≜

This was the first deal of the match. In the Open Room, Sandeep Thakral overcalled 1Nt with his 15pointer hand that did not have much by way of Spade control. On the second round, with a 6520 6-loser hand, Keyzad rebid a timid 2♥ and continued to take a pessimistic view of the hand when partner reverted to Spades. The final contract was 2♠ making 12 tricks for +230 to NS.

Closed Room Bidding

West Satya	North <i>Daniel</i>	East <i>Kiran</i>	South <i>Zia</i>
Pass Pass Pass	1 ♠ 4♠	2 ♣ Pass	1♦ X¹ Pass
1: Support do	uble showing	3 Spades.	
In the Close	d Room, Kir	an overcall	ed 2 ♣ , Zia

Zia doubles to show support !!

doubled to show 3-card support. That was enough for Daniel to bid the game straightaway. Daniel also made 12 tricks for a score of 480. Mavericks won 6 IMPs. Score: Mavericks:6, FORMIDABLES:0

Board 12 was a push whereas Mavericks added one IMP on board 13. Board 14 presented a difficult problem for Wests.

Deal 14, East Dealer, none Vul



Keyzad led a small Spade. The benefit Jaggi got from that lead wasn't enough for him to make the contract. Winning in hand with the $\bigstar K$, Jaggy played a Club to Dummy's honour and pulled a small Diamond. Tewari went up with the $\bigstar K$ and cleared Spades. With $\checkmark AK$ and $\bigstar A$ still out, the 1Nt contract was beyond hope. Down one was the result.

Round 5 : FORMIDABLES vs. MAVERICKS Contd.

Closed Room Bidding

West S <i>atya</i>	North <i>Daniel</i>	East <i>Kiran</i>	South <i>Zia</i>
1♠*	Х	1♦ 2♣	1♥ Pass
2♦ Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass

With 4-5 in Diamonds-Clubs Kiran opened 1 ♦ and rebid 2. Satya's 1. was likely showing a balanced hand asking partner to bid 1Nt. Daniel doubled to show Spade suit, but when the bidding reverted to him, he competed to 2. believing that opponents had found a 5-3 fit. Opponents only had a 4-3 fit and the Hearts divided badly, so 2. went down two for a score of 100 to EW. FORMIDABLES won 4 IMPs on the board as a result. Running Score: Mavericks 7, FORMIDABLES 4.



Board 15 was a push but 16 provided for some excitement at four and five level.

Deal 16, West Dealer, EW Vul



Open Room Bidding

West	North	East	South
<i>Jaggi</i>	<i>Keyzad</i>	Sandeep	<i>Tewari</i>
1♦ 4♠ 6♥ Pass	Pass 5♠ 6♠ Pass	1♥ 6♣ X	3♠ Pass Pass

West opened 1 \blacklozenge and East responded 1 \blacktriangledown . At favourable vulnerability, Tewari decided to fire a javeline missile into the bidding works with a 3 \blacklozenge jump on mere 6 cards. That fooled everyone into thinking that each side was making a couple of tricks more than the hands were actually good for. Jaggy took the bait first. With a 4-loser 1-5-6-1 hand and a guaranteed 5-4 fit, he chose to Cue bid 4 \bigstar rather than just bid 4 \blacktriangledown . Keyzad raised the bar to five level. Sandeep Thakral hadn't had a chance to show his solid Clubs, so he too joined the high-level party with a 6 \bigstar bid. Tewari was no longer in control of the situation. The end result was 6 \bigstar doubled going down 2 for +300 for Mavericks.

Closed Room Bidding

West	North	East	South
Satya	<i>Daniel</i>	<i>Kiran</i>	<i>Zia</i>
1♥	Pass	2 ♣	3 ≜
4♦	4 ≜	5♥	5 ≜
Pass Pass	Pass Pass	Х	Pass

In the Closed Room, Zia also jumped to $3 \bigstar$, but that was after a $1 \checkmark -P-2 \bigstar$ Game-force sequence. Everyone on the table assumed that Zia had a little less than he promised, so the bidding stayed one level lower. NS played in $5 \bigstar$ doubled going down 1. Note that played from the West hand, only nine tricks are available in a Heart contract whereas 10 are available from East side. Only a thin line must have separated South's $5 \bigstar$ decision from the option of a Pass.

On the principle that it is better to take a small insurance by way of a penalty for one or two down rather than hand opponents a doubled contract at four or five level when both sides have massive fit, it is right for North-South to bid as many Spades as necessary. That number was different in the two rooms based on the way the bidding started. That meant five more IMPs to Mavericks. Running Score: Mavericks 12, FORMIDABLES 4.

Round 5 : FORMIDABLES vs. MAVERICKS Contd.

Board 17 was a push. Mavericks added five more on Board 18 and seven on Board 19. On the last board of the set, FORMIDABLES pulled back all of them and one more.

Deal 20, West Dealer, Both Vul



Open Room Bidding

West	North	East	South
<i>Jaggi</i>	<i>Keyzad</i>	Sandeep	<i>Tewari</i>
1♠ 2♠ Pass Pass	Pass 3 ♣ 4♥	Pass Pass Pass	X 3♥ Pass

When 1♠ opening was passed around to Tewari, he opted to double although he held singleton Club. Jaggy rebid 2♠. With 8 HCP and a six-carder Club suit, Keyzad came in voluntarily with the 3♣ bid. Tewari now rebid 3♥ and Keyzad raised to four. Some might not like the look of that sequence. I can easily see that Tewari hasn't partnered GIB robot any time. The robot would have carried him all the way to at least a 5♣ game if not a slam. The meat of the deal wasn't quite in bidding, however. Witness Tewari handle this tricky one for play.

Jaggy led the \bigstar K. Tewari won and played the \bigstar Ten. Jaggy won the \bigstar K and continued Spades. Tewari ruffed small and ruffed a small Club, the key step. That brought down the Club King from West hand making Tewari's task somewhat easier. Tewari now ruffed another Spade, this time with the \forall 8, overruffed by Sandeep with \forall T.

Sandeep pushed a Club. Tewari ruffed with the ♥Jack and cashed the ♥Ace. Everyone followed. Tewari now had ♥Q6 while K-7 were out. Would those two cards be divided? Tewari suspected that East could as well hold both. He next played a Diamond to Dummy's Jack. West followed with the Diamond deuce and it appears that Tewari placed West with four Diamonds based on that. He then cashed just one of Dummy's Club winners and cashed two more Diamonds ending in the Dummy. When he next played a Club from the Dummy, East's ♥K7 were powerless to stop him from making one more trick. That was yet another hand played well by RT.



L-R : Tewari, Jaggy, Keyzad, Sandeep

Closed Room Bidding

West	North	East	South
Satya	<i>Daniel</i>	<i>Kiran</i>	<i>Zia</i>
1 ≜	Pass	Pass	2♥
2 ≜	3 ♥	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

In the Closed Room, Zia opted to bid $2\P$ rather than risk a double with a singleton in an unbid suit. The bidding soon ended in $4\P$. Satya led the \bigstar K and the first two tricks were the same as in the Open Room. When Satya played the \bigstar Q at trick three, Zia ruffed with the \P 9 and ran the \bigstar Q discarding a Spade from the hand. It seemed that he had placed the \bigstar A with East right from the beginning. That wasn't the case and the fate of the contract was almost sealed. Satya continued with another Spade, Kiran overruffed Dummy and there weren't enough trumps left in the North hand to take care of East's \P Kxx. One down was the result. 13 IMPs to FORMIDABLES. Running Scores: Mavericks 24, FORMIDABLES 17.

Mavericks won the match 12.18-7.82, but the tight score meant Texan Aces moved into the lead by virtue of their big victory in the fifth round.

The 19th HCL International Bridge Championship 11th October to 16th October 2022







Tournament Schedule

Wednesday, Oct 12	Wednesday, Oct 12 TEAM OF FOUR GOLD / SILVER EVENTS – SWISS LEAGUE Continues	
	1000 – 1125 Hrs.	Round – 6 (10 Boards)
	1145 – 1310 Hrs.	Round – 7 (10 Boards)
	1310 – 1410 Hrs.	Lunch Break
	1410 – 1535 Hrs.	Round – 8 (10 Boards)
	1555 – 1720 Hrs.	Round – 9 (10 Boards)
	1720 – 1750 Hrs.	Tea Break
	1750 – 1915 Hrs.	Round – 10 (10 Boards)
	1930 - 2000 Hrs.	Captain's Meeting for TOP 16 qualifying teams of the GOLD & the SILVER event for the PRE-QF knock-out.
Thursday, Oct 13	TEAM OF FOUR GOL	D & SILVER EVENT – KO Pre-QF (4 x 14 Boards)
	1000 – 1200 Hrs.	Session – 1
	1215 – 1415 Hrs.	Session – 2
	1415 – 1515 Hrs.	Lunch Break
	1515 – 1715 Hrs.	Session – 3
	1715 – 1745 Hrs.	Tea Break
	1745 – 1945 Hrs.	Session – 4
	OPEN MP PAIRS – EI	LIMINATION – 1 (3 Sessions of 18 Boards each)
	1030 – 1300 Hrs.	Session - 1
	1300 – 1400 Hrs.	Lunch Break
	1400 – 1630 Hrs.	Session - 2
	1630 – 1700 Hrs.	Tea Break
	1700 – 1930 Hrs.	Session - 3
Friday, Oct 14TEAM OF FOUR GOLD & SILVER EVENT – KO QF (4 x 14 Boards)		D & SILVER EVENT – KO QF (4 x 14 Boards)
	1000 – 1200 Hrs.	Session – 1
	1215 – 1415 Hrs.	Session – 2
	1415 – 1515 Hrs.	Lunch Break
	1515 – 1715 Hrs.	Session – 3
	1715 – 1745 Hrs.	Tea Break
	1745 – 1945 Hrs.	Session – 4

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Tournament Schedule Contd.					
OPEN MP PAIRS – ELIMINATION – 2 (3 Sessions of 18 Boards each)					
	1030 – 1300 Hrs.	Session - 1			
	1300 – 1400 Hrs.	Lunch Break			
	1400 – 1630 Hrs.	Session - 2			
	1630 – 1700 Hrs.	Tea Break			
	1700 – 1930 Hrs.	Session - 3			
	MP PAIRS STRATA II – (2 Sessions of 24 Boards each)				
	1100 – 1415 Hrs.	Session - 1			
	1415 – 1515 Hrs.	Lunch Break			
	1515 – 1830 Hrs.	Session – 2			
	1930 Hrs. Onwards	Cocktails & Dinner (Hosted by HCL)			
Saturday, Oct 15	TEAM OF FOUR GO	TEAM OF FOUR GOLD & SILVER EVENT – KO SF (4 x 14 Boards)			
	1000 – 1200 Hrs.	Session – 1			
	1215 – 1415 Hrs.	Session – 2			
	1415 – 1515 Hrs.	Lunch Break			
	1515 – 1715 Hrs.	Session – 3			
	1715 – 1745 Hrs.	Tea Break			
	1745 – 1945 Hrs.	Session – 4			
	OPEN MP PAIRS – E	LIMINATION – 3 & IMP PAIRS – ELIMINATION			
	(3 Sessions of 18 Boards each)				
	1030 – 1300 Hrs.	Session - 1			
	1300 – 1400 Hrs.	Lunch Break			
	1400 – 1630 Hrs.	Session - 2			
	1630 – 1700 Hrs.	Tea Break			
	1700 – 1930 Hrs.	Session - 3			
Sunday, Oct 16	TEAM OF FOUR GOLD & SILVER EVENT – Final (4 x 14 Boards) & Play-off				
	0900 – 1100 Hrs.	Session – 1			
	1115 – 1315 Hrs.	Session – 2			
	1315 – 1400 Hrs.	Lunch Break			
	1400 – 1600 Hrs.	Session – 3			
	1615 – 1815 Hrs.	Session – 4			
	OPEN MP PAIRS – FINAL (GOLD & SILVER) - Barometer Scoring				
	0930 – 1300 Hrs.	Session - 1			
	1300 – 1400 Hrs.	Lunch Break			
	1400 – 1745 Hrs.	Session - 2			

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Tourna	ament Schedule	Contd.
IMP PAIRS – FINAL (2 Sessions of 24 Boards each)		
1000 – 1330 Hrs.	Session - 1	
1330 – 1430 Hrs.	Lunch Break	
1430 – 1745 Hrs.	Session - 2	
IMP PAIRS STRATA -	II (2 Sessions of 22 Boards each)	
1030 – 1330 Hrs.	Session - 1	
1330 – 1430 Hrs.	Lunch Break	
1430 – 1730 Hrs.	Session - 2	
1830 Hrs. onwards	Prize Distribution & Closing Ceremony	

IMPORTANT - MP Pairs Entry

Please note that the Entry for Open Match Point Pairs event, which commences tomorrow morning, will close today (12th October) at 1430 Hrs. No entry will be taken after that. All participants are requested to kindly adhere to the entry timings.

Also remember that those who qualify to the Last-16 stage of Gold / Silver Team event and plan to participate in MP Pair event will also have to give their entries before start of the Pairs event. They will not be seeded to the MP Pairs, if the entry is not received within the scheduled time. It may also be noted that those who reach the Semi-final stage of GOLD & Silver team event will be returned their MP Pairs entry fee, as they can't participate in the event.

NO SMOKE, TEA & TOILET BREAKS DURING PLAY

In exceptional circumstances, a participant needing

to go to the toilet, will have to be accompanied

by a volunteer after taking permission

from the director.

В	BO Schedule	for Wednesday, October 12, 20)22			
	1020 Hrs:	T-4 GOLD, Swiss League, R-6 (4 Tables)				
	1205 Hrs:	T-4 GOLD, Swiss League, R-7 (4 Tables)				
	1430 Hrs:	T-4 GOLD, Swiss League, R-8 (4 Tables)				
	1615 Hrs:	T-4 GOLD, Swiss League, R-9 (4 Tables)				
	1810 Hrs:	T-4 GOLD, Swiss League, R-10 (4 tables)				
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