



HCL 22nd INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIP

DAILY BULLETIN

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Richa Shriram - Boye Brogeland claim Pro-Am crown



Richa Shriram and Boye Brogeland emerged as the champions of the Pro-Am Pairs with a commanding score of +79 IMPs. For Richa, this triumph crowns years of quiet dedication — the long hours at the laptop and a careful study. The victory was richly deserved, and comfortably secured, well ahead of Sandeep Thakral and Arjun Sawhny, who finished second on +60 IMPs. Christian Bakke and Maneesh Bahuguna claimed third place with +41, while Kaustubh Nandi and Arun Kumar Sinha finished fourth on +35.

This year's prize structure was as handsome as ever — ₹6.9 lakh to the winners, ₹4.6 lakh to the runners-up, ₹3.45 lakh for third, and ₹2.07 lakh for fourth — with a total purse of ₹23 lakh, befitting an event that continues to stand as the richest in the Bridge world.

The Pro-Am marked the finale of the 22nd HCL International Bridge Championship — a spectacle that, every autumn, unfurls with the precision of a Swiss timepiece. The halls gleam, the cards flash, and the atmosphere hums with quiet intensity and polished grandeur. Play begins on time, ends on time, and in between, the rhythm of deals and decisions flows as smoothly as the service.

The ambience remains unmatched, the hospitality abundant, and the buffet as generous as ever. Players depart content, some with winnings, others with memories, and many already looking forward to next year's return — same time, same stage, same perfection.

Pos.	No.	Players	MPs	Pos.	No.	Players	MPs
1	24	Boye Brogeland & Richa Shriram	79	14	19	Wojciech Gawel & Petar Ljubicic	-3
2	13	Sandeep Thakral & Arjun Sawhny	60	15	8	Debabrata Majumder & Sailaja Tahiliani	-4
3	3	Christian Bakke & Maneesh Bahuguna	41	16	15	Subhash Gupta & Anshul Singhal	-10
4	6	Kaustabh Nandi & Arun Kumar Sinha	35	17	1	Tor Eivind Grude & Santanu Chakraborty	-11
5	5	Jaggy B Shivdasani & Mangalam Punj	29.01	18	20	Arun M Bapat & Bindiya Judge	-12
6	2	Ami Zamir & Jesal Dabriwala	29	19	18	Piotr Marcinowski & Mukund Jagannathan	-17
7	12	Rajeshwar Tewari & Ayan Mondal	28	20	22	Sanjit Dey & Rahul Khambete	-19
8	23	Oren Toledano & Subodh Maskara	25	21	10	Matthew Brown & S Vijayraghavan	-20
9	25	Sumit Mukherjee & Monica Jajoo	24	22	11	Paul D Hackett & Kannan Krishnamurthy	-51
10	17	Olanski Wojciech & Subrata Sadhukhan	15	23	26	Bachiraju Satyanarayana & Kiran Nadar	-52
11	7	Keyzad Anklesaria & N Sudhakar Babu	9	24	16	Kaustubh Milind Bendre & Suresh Senapaty	-57
12	14	Sayantan Kushari & Prasad V Keni	8	25	4	Hemant Lall & Ramprosad Das	-59
13	21	Binod Kumar Shaw & Sejal Shah	3	26	9	Michael Whibley & J K Bhosale	-70

A Brief History of PRO-AM Pairs Tournament

During lockdown, there was a lot of online Bridge, however, amateurs had limited opportunities to put together a partnership or a team that had top level players. Professional players, in turn, had limited opportunities to market their skills. The PROAM tournament came to the rescue. Sandeep Thakral thought of the idea to put a bit of spice and purpose into the lockdown era games.

PROAM 2020

The first PROAM event was held a few weeks after the lockdowns started. The event itself was played from 29th May to 31st May 2020. The tournament was a resounding success. Lot of people had keen interest in playing with some of the pros so even after a particular pro, was bought via the highest bid, the suiters kept trying to win back that PRO through some back-channel negotiations.

PROAM 2.0

More twists and turns were added in the design of PROAM 2.0. One of them included an abrupt closure of the auction process at a random time. Amateur players could also add a Pro of their choice to the pool provided that the PRO satisfied some minimum criteria. The buy-now amount increased from 20000 Rupees to 50000 rupees. That event took place on October 30 to November 1, 2020.

Here is the table of bought out pros.

Total Bid Amount : 1008000

Player	Current Bid	Bid By
Abhijit Chakraborty	50000	Sukalyan
Ajay Khare	24000	Sanjay Dutta
Amar Nath Banerjee	20000	R P Tripathi
Anal B Shah	20000	Vasanti Shah
Anil P Padhye	30000	Lele Suhas
Anirudh Bhattacharya - Lalta	10000	R K Sinha
Arun M Bapat	50000	Ashok Goel
Bachiraju Satyanarayana	50000	Kiran Nadar
Bhabesh Saha	14000	Navneet Kumar Swaika
Debabrata Majumder - Laltu	20000	Somesh Bhattacharya
Jaggy Shivdasani	50000	Subodh Maskara
Jitu Solani	22000	Dr. Mukund Jagannath
K R Venkataraman	30000	N. S. Rao
Kaustabh Nandi	28000	Dashu
Kaustubh Milind Bendre	20000	Sampath Shrinivasan
Keyzad Anklesaria	50000	Maneesh
Manna Gopinath	20000	Amit Dabriwala

Player	Current Bid	Bid By
Naresh Kumar Gupta	14000	Richa Shriram
Pinaki Khan	20000	Animesh Majumder
Prasun Kumarmukherjee	10000	Vijayraghavan
Pritish Kushari	22000	H.K.Jalan
R A Agarwal	14000	aditijhaveri
R Krishnan	28000	Kannan Krishnamurthy
R Sreekrishnan	12000	Vivek Bhand
Rajeev Khandelwal	10000	Himani Khandelwal
Rajesh Dalal	18000	Janak Shah
Rajeshwar Tewari	50000	Arvind Vaidya
Raju Tolani	12000	Premasagar
S K Iyengar	16000	Sudhakar Chaudhri
Sandeep Thakral	50000	Atul Rai
Sandip Dutta	16000	Ashish Malhotra
Sayantan Kushari	16000	Sowmik Das
Srinivasan J	18000	T C Pant
Subhash Gupta	34000	Noriko Domichi
Subir Majumdar	12000	A K Sinha
Subrata Saha	20000	Binod Shaw
Sukamal Das	20000	Sanjit Dey
Sumit Mukherjee	50000	Monica Jajoo
Swarnendu Banerjee	14000	Vikrant Mehta
Uttam Swarup Gupta	24000	Dipak Poddar

The main attraction of Today's PROAM Pairs event is the presence of foreign players. The opportunity to play with or against Boye Brogeland is a great attraction to almost all the Indian players, professionals and amateurs alike. With the presence of many other foreign players, the Indian amateurs will have more opportunities to experience the approach of top bridge players and professionals in foreign countries. Perhaps, we will see more convention cards diligently filled, the I's of the CCs dotted and T's crossed, the laisses faire approach to CC writing set aside for a day, perhaps not. We will know soon.

We hope that this opportunity will help amateurs improve their game and enjoy it even more than they do at present. We also hope that today's association will lead to some more fruitful transnational associations that benefit both Professionals and Amateurs.

Happy Bridging.

ProAM Pairs

The play of the PROAM Pairs 2025 started at 9:30 A.M. Board one witnessed some fierce bidding competition with North-South holding a Spade fit, and East-West, a Heart fit.

Prasad Keni, the President of the Bridge Federation of India, was East. He opened 1♦ in the second position and Arjun Sawhney overcalled 1♠. Sayantan responded 2♥, Thakral raised Spades and it went Pass-Pass to West. The absence of Support double from East hand suggested East started with less than 3 Hearts. Sayantan now reasoned that East was likely to hold five or more Diamonds and competed with a 3♦ bid. Prasad Keni, with ♥Ax, now forced with 3♠. Arjun Sawhney now introduced his second suit, Clubs. Sayantan bid 4♥, and Sandeep Thakral, realising that 4♥ might not have any defence, took an insurance save in 4♠. Prasad Keni doubled.

D		N THAKRAL		W N E S	
1		♠ 10754		2♥ P 1♦ 1♠	
		♥ 1052		3♦ P 3♠ 4♣	
		♦ A93		4♥ 4♠ X P	
		♣ Q93		P P	
W SAYANTAN				E KENI	
♠ 2		♦ Q		♠ KQ8	
♥ KJ9863				♥ A4	
♦ J72				♦ K10865	
♣ K6				♣ 1072	
		S SAWHNY			
		♠ AJ963			
		♥ Q7			
		♦ 4			
		♣ AJ854			
				4♠x S NS: 0 EW: 0	

Sayantan led the ♦Q. Declarer lost a Spade, two Hearts, and the ♣King. Nine tricks were quickly claimed. A 4♥ contract made on three tables. Those East-West Pairs earned 7 or 8 IMPs depending on whether they made 10 or 11 tricks. Indeed, a couple of Pairs made 11 tricks with three Aces out with opponents. On one table it went down, and on two tables, 5♦ went down one. Two North-South pairs bid and made 3♠ and earned six IMPs. All in all the board set the stage nicely for some keen competition.

After a few part-scores and uninteresting games, board 6 brought up a decent hand for four and five level competition.



N. Sudhakar Babu opened 2♠, weak, in the second seat, Boye Brogeland overcalled 3♥, and Keyzad jumped to 4♠. With four Hearts, Richa Shriram bid 5♥. N Sudhakar Babu now bid 5♠ and Boye doubled. What would you lead from the following hand?

W	BROGELAND.
♠	KQ
♥	AQJ952
♦	A1076
♣	Q

W	N	E	S
		P	2♠
3♥	4♠	5♥	P
P	5♠	P	P
X	P	P	P

Would you lead the singleton Club, would you lead away from one of the red suit Aces, or would you lead a trump honour?

6	D	N KANKLESAR	W	N	E	S
		♠ A1074	3♥	4♠	5♥	2♠
		♥	P	5♠	P	P
		♦ Q943	X	P	P	P
		♣ KJ543				
W BROGELAND.		♥ A	E R SHRIRAM			
♠ KQ			♠ 9			
♥ QJ952			♥ 10876			
♦ A1076			♦ J85			
♣ Q			♣ A10876			
		S SUDHAKAR B				
		♠ J86532				
		♥ K43				
		♦ K2				
		♣ 92				
			5♠ S	NS: 0	EW: 0	

Boye led the ♥A. Declarer ruffed, played ♠A, and back. Defenders only got two minor suit Aces after that. Down one was the result.

In the other room on the Vu Graph, South, Anshul Singhal passed, Kaustubh Bendre opened 1♥, Subhash Gupta doubled, Suresh Senapaty, in the East seat bid 3♦ to show four Hearts and a weak hand with some values. South bid Spades, Kaustubh Bendre bid 4♥, and North bid 4♠. When the tray came back to Kaustubh, he decided to double. Perhaps, 5♥ would have been a better option, if not to make, just to take an insurance policy. As it was, 11 tricks were available in 4♥ if the Declarer guessed Diamond right playing South for a doubleton honour.



Kaustubh Bendre led the ♠King. Anshul Singhal won the ♠A and played a Diamond to ♦King. Kaustubh won ♦A, cashed ♠Queen, and played a Diamond. The Declarer was restricted to nine tricks. To make, Declarer will have to play the ♣King at trick two, a play that can be thought of only on a double Dummy basis.

6		N SUBHAS ♠ A1074 ♥ ♦ Q943 ♣ KJ543		W N E S 1♥ X 3♦ 3♣ 4♥ 4♠ P P X P P P																														
W BENDRE ♠ Q ♥ AQJ952 ♦ A1076 ♣ Q		♠K		E SENAPATY ♠ 9 ♥ 10876 ♦ J85 ♣ A10876																														
<table><tr><td></td><td>♠</td><td>♥</td><td>♦</td><td>♣</td><td>NT</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>8</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>13</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>8</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>13</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>11</td><td>3</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>W</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>11</td><td>3</td><td>9</td></tr></table> Par Score: -100 Par: NS 5x-1			♠	♥	♦	♣	NT	N	8	4	2	13	3	S	8	4	2	13	4	E	7	8	11	3	9	W	7	8	11	3	9	S SINGHAL ♠ J86532 ♥ K43 ♦ K2 ♣ 92		4x S NS: 0 EW: 0
	♠	♥	♦	♣	NT																													
N	8	4	2	13	3																													
S	8	4	2	13	4																													
E	7	8	11	3	9																													
W	7	8	11	3	9																													

Three pairs bid and made 5♥. Christian Bakke-Maneesh Bahuguna, Jaggy Shivdasani-Mangalam Punj, and Sanjit Dey-Rahul Khambete were the three Pairs who won 10 IMPs each for making 11 tricks in 5♥. One pair played in 6♥ and went down. Six Pairs went down one in 5♠ doubled, one went down two. Oren Toledano-Subodh Maskar made 4♠ doubled on ♣Queen lead. One Pair went down in 4♠ doubled. One went two down in 5♠ doubled. In the last two cases, the lead was the same, the ♠K.

Board 14 was a Spade game for East-West. The contract needed slightly careful handling. Some players went down. On the Vu graph, Maneesh Bahuguna was able to make 11 tricks.



East-West bidding followed a certain popular bidding construct that is known as Gazzilli convention. Wide-range one-level opening bids run into a few range identifying problems. Most players play two over one Game Force. For a major suit 1-level opening, that leaves only the 1Nt response to take care of all the responder's hands where responder cannot immediately visualise a game. Natural rebids are woefully inadequate for that purpose. Gazzilli convention offers some help at the cost of a good degree of artificiality. Then again, artificial bids later in the play are not frowned upon as much as artificial opening bids. The upshot is that Gazzilli is turning out to be a popular construct.

14 D		N P HACKETT		W N E S	
		♠ Q		1NT P 1♠ P	
		♥ QJ76		2♦ P 2♥ P	
		♦ J106		4♠ P P P	
		♣ A10965			
W BAKKE				E M BAHUGUNA	
♠ 875				♠ AKJ62	
♥ 985				♥ AK104	
♦ A953				♦ K2	
♣ KJ2				♣ 84	
		♦ 7			
		S K KRISHNAM			
		♠ 10943			
		♥ 32			
		♦ Q84			
		♣ Q73			
				4♠ E NS: 0 EW: 0	

Stephen Bakke started with a 1Nt response to Maneesh's 1♠ opening. Maneesh now rebid 2♣ likely showing a top-of-the-wide-range hand. Bakke relayed with 2♦ and Maneesh showed his Heart suit with his second rebid. Point counting take care of, Bakke jumped to 4♠.

On the ♦7 lead, Maneesh won in the Closed hand and cashed the ♠Ace. That was a simple good play some missed. In a hurry to take the trump finesse, some rose with the ♦A and played a Spade from Dummy wasting a Dummy entry for a job that didn't need to be done. When ♠Q came down on the ♠A, Maneesh played a Club to Dummy's ♣Jack. Paul Hackett won and switched to ♥Q. Maneesh won a top Heart and cashed two top trumps. He now had two entries to Dummy to play Hearts for a finesse against North's ♥Jack. Maneesh scored 11 tricks.



A Five or Seven case

Board 20 offered a chance for the risk-takers. In the VU graph Open Room, Sayantan Kushari opened 1♠, Prasad Keni bid 2♣, Game-Force, Sayantan Kushari jump-rebid 3♠, and asked Aces despite South failing to Cue-bid Clubs. Sayantan bid 6♠ upon hearing a reply that showed 2 Key Cards. ♦ Ten was lead. Sayantan now had 14 tricks. Bridge doesn't allow a score for the fourteenth trick, so North-South got +1460.

Hand Distribution Diagram for Deal 2:

Hand	Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs
North (N)	AKQJ76543	10	3	84
South (S)	10	Q643	9764	AQ62
West (W)	K NANDI	109	J875	J82
East (E)	SINHA	10	10	10

Par Score: 650
Par: NS 4♦+1

In the 'Closed Room' of the Vu graph, (this is not a team event, please note -, the Open and Closed designation is just how Vu graph configured the two rooms for which the play was shown), Sanjit Dey opened 4♠ and played there. On the same ♦10 lead, Sanjit scored 13 tricks for +710.

20	N SANJIT ♠ AKQJ76543 ♥ 10 ♦ 3 ♣ 84	W N E S P 4♠ P P
W TOLEDANO ♠ 109 ♥ J875 ♦ J82 ♣ KJ109	♦ 10	E Maskara ♠ ♥ Q643 ♦ 9764 ♣ AQ62

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ NT <table> <tr><td>N</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>11</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>11</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr> </table> Par Score: 650 Par: NS 4+1	N	5	6	5	11	9	S	5	6	5	11	9	E	6	6	7	0	0	W	6	6	7	0	0	S KHAMBETE ♠ 82 ♥ AK92 ♦ AKQ5 ♣ 753	13 Tricks Claimed 4+ N NS: 0 EW: 0
N	5	6	5	11	9																					
S	5	6	5	11	9																					
E	6	6	7	0	0																					
W	6	6	7	0	0																					

Seven pairs bid and made a small slam, four made 13 tricks in 4♠, one made only 11 tricks. Matthew Brown- S Vijayraghavan defeated the 6♠ slam on the lead of ♣A. They got 15 IMPs for the choice of that lead. Well-led indeed.

The event continued into a second session.

Photo Gallery



Keyzad Anklesaria & N Sudhakar Babu



Sailaja Tahiliani & Debabrata Majumder



Arun Bapat & Bindiya Judge



Kaustabh Nandi & Arun Kumar Sinha

Photo Gallery



Sanjit Dey & Rahul Khambete



Petar Ljubicic & Wojciech Gawel



Sejal Shah & Binod Kumar Shaw



Paul Hackett & Kannan Krishnamurthy

Photo Gallery



J K Bhosale & Michael Whibley



Monica Jajoo & Sumit Mukherjee



Suresh Senapaty & Kaustabh Bendre

Photo Gallery



Anshul Singhal & Subhash Gupta



Satyanaryana Bachiraju & Kiran Nadar



Mukund Jagannathan & Piotr Marcinowski

Photo Gallery



Boye Brogeland & Richa Shriram



Ramprosad Das & Hemant Lall



Jaggy Shivdasani & Mangalam Punj

Photo Gallery



Mike Brown & S Vijayraghavan



Tor Eivind Grude & Santanu Chakraborty



Olanski Wojciech & Subrata Sadhukhan

Photo Gallery



Arjun Sawhny & Sandeep Thakral



Oren Toledano & Subodh Maskara



Sayantan Kushari & Prasad V Keni

Photo Gallery



Ami Zamir & Jesal Dabriwala



Maneesh Bahuguna & Christian Bakke



Rajeshwar Tewari & Ayan Mondal