

Semi final 1 European Winter Games February 2020

The semifinals of the 2020 European Winter Games featured very powerful teams: every team fielded at least two world champions, with only RUSSIA lacking multiple world title holders. One match had a favourite: GUPTA over RUSSIA, while SWISS TEAM (Zimmerman's new project) vs LAVAZZA was too close to call.

Playing across the four matches in 3NT, 3NT, 4S, a club partial and then 3NT, the first five boards were so boring that the spectators had started to yawn (thanks to overtricks, GUPTA led 2-1, while LAVAZZA was leading 1 -0), but a sudden rumbling thunder shook the sky, awakening the (almost) dead.

Board 6

East Deals ♠ A
 E-W Vul ♥ 6 3
 ♦ A J 10 9 8 2
 ♣ A J 10 4

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

♠ 10 7 6 2
 ♥ J 8 5
 ♦ 6 4
 ♣ 9 8 7 3

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
KHOKHLOV	GUPTA	DUBININ	ROSENBERG		ZIA	GROMOV	MECKSTROTH	GULEVICH
-	-	Pass	Pass		-	-	Pass	Pass
1 NT	3♦	Dbl	Pass		1 NT	Dbl	2♥	Pass
3 NT	4♦	Dbl	All pass		2♠	3♦	4♥	All Pass

Over Gupta's eccentric, but very effective 3♦ Dubinin could have bid 4♦ to offer the choice of major, but when he decided to double, he was later presented with an impossible problem to solve. Wisely he doubled again - you can easily draw up distributions where this is the successful decision, while bidding 4♥ is a disaster - but after the club lead all EW could collect was +300, a poor exchange for their vulnerable game in either major. (However, in 4♠ there's some guessing to be done, as Zia proved). In the other room, over Gromov's double Meckstroth was able to show his two suiter and Zia picked spades. No problem: Gromov led the ♦A, cashed the ♣A and continued with the ♦J. West won and played a spade. North won and tried a third diamond, but Zia ruffed high and passed the ♠9. +620 and 8 IMPs to GUPTA.

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
KLUKOWSKI	BILDE	GAWRYS	MADALA		SEMENTA	DRIJVER	BOCCHI	BRINK
		Pass	Pass				Pass	Pass
1 NT	Pass	4♣	Pass		1 NT	Dbl	2 NT	Pass
4♥	All pass				3♣	3♦	4♦	Pass
					5♣	Dbl	5♦	Pass
					5♥	Dbl	All pass	

Bilde didn't have any convenient way to enter the auction, so the Swiss (Poles) didn't have any problem reaching the top spot. +620. In the other room, Bocchi's 2NT showed a strong two suiter, but the pair had a misunderstanding about the meaning of 4♦. It is obvious what Bocchi meant, but Sementa, reasoning that 3♥ would have shown the majors, took it as clubs and a major and the wheels came off. 13 IMPs to Swiss Team.

Board 7

♠ A Q J 2
 South Deals ♥ Q 10 4
 Both Vul ♦ 9 8 6 5 3
 ♣ Q

♠ 8 7 5 4 3	N	♠ K 10
♥ A K J 3	W	♥ 6 5
♦ K 4	E	♦ A J 2
♣ A 2	S	♣ K J 10 9 7 6

♠ 9 6
 ♥ 9 8 7 2
 ♦ Q 10 7
 ♣ 8 5 4 3

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>	<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
-	-	-	Pass	-	-	-	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣!	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♣	Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
4 ♣	Pass	4 ♠	Pass				
6 ♣	Dbl	All pass					

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>	<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
-	-	-	Pass	-	-	-	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 NT	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥!	Pass
3 NT	All pass			2 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
				3 ♠	Pass	3 NT	All pass

Board seven was uneventful in LAVAZZA vs SWISS TEAM (1 IMP to the Swiss), but generated a big, spectacular swing in the other match. While everybody else rested in 3NT, Dubinin drove to 6♣, and Gupta found a double, asking for the spade lead. Debbie Rosenberg, however, did not oblige, leading a trump instead. Had she led a spade, and north continued the suit, declarer would probably have found his way home. However, the club lead offered him an alternative, and the rope with which to hang himself. Dubinin won the lead in hand, cashed the ace and king, then ruffed the third diamond in dummy before playing a spade up to hand. Gupta won it, and played a fourth round of diamonds, promoting the killing trump trick - South's eight. Declarer had a few winning alternatives, but the one I fancy most (you can give it 100% likelihood) starts with a second round of clubs. When North shows out, you place four clubs with South, together with, probably, two or three spades (she would have led the suit with a singleton). Accordingly, you play a spade and a) if north plays ♠A and another, you have enough entries to set up the fifth spade; b) if north ducks, you pull trumps and play another spade, eventually setting up the fifth card of the suit; c) if north wins and plays a

diamond (best defence), you win in hand, pull trumps, unblock the ♠K and proceed as before. Bottom line, GUPTA won 13 IMPs when RUSSIA should have collected the 13 IMP bounty.

The same thing was about to happen on the very next board, in both matches.

Board 8

♠ A Q 8 7 6		
West Deals	♥ 7 6	
None Vul	♦ 9 8 6 3 2	
	♣ 7	
♠ 10	N	♠ J 5 3
♥ J 10 9 5 2	W E	♥ K Q 8 4 3
♦ A J 7	S	♦ 10
♣ A Q 8 4		♣ K J 10 9
		♠ K 9 4 2
		♥ A
		♦ K Q 5 4
		♣ 6 5 3 2

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>		<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♠	4 ♠		1 ♥	1 ♠	4 ♣!	4 ♠
Dbl	Pass	5 ♥	All pass		Pass	Pass	Dbl	All pass

Both Klukowski's and Bocchi's doubles suggested action, but came from different sides of the table. Sementa, with good side values but poor hearts left it in, while Gawrys, with no defence at all, took it out. In theory, Sementa was right, but in fact he misjudged the defence and let the contract make. Actually, cards up 5♥ is where you'd like to be: you go down only when you suffer a ruff (as here: Bilde led a club and was given a ruff when Duboin won the first trump), and don't risk 4♠x being made. As it was, Bocchi led the ♦10, and Sementa could have defeated the contract by giving his partner two diamond ruffs. However, he continued with a small club at trick two to cater for his partner holding Kx: curtains. Sementa's play looks correct only when East led from ♦10x, extremely unlikely on the auction (if East has the ♦9, there's no danger in playing back the suit), or declarer is 6313 (in which case, partner doubled holding a 2452, eight count, and led a diamond instead of a heart: also unlikely). 11 IMPs to SWISS TEAM instead of 4 the other way.

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>		<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
1 ♥	1 ♠	4 ♣	4 ♥		1 ♥	2 NT	4 ♦	4 ♥
5 ♥	All pass				5 ♣	Pass	5 ♥	5 ♠
					Dbl	Pass	6 ♥	6 ♠
					Dbl	All pass		

Khokhlov went to 5♥ without any encouragement, and suffered the same fate as Klukowski. In the other room Gulevich took Meckstroth's push to 5♠, and GUPTA seemed headed for a sizable swing when Zia doubled it. But no. Meckstroth removed to 6♥, offering 6 IMPs on a silver platter to RUSSIA. But wait there's more. Gulevich's unilateral 6♠ bid was the last word: 10 IMPs to GUPTA instead. Russia had manhandled 39 IMPs on two consecutive deals.

The two leading teams added 5 more IMPs thanks to some luck: they stayed in a partial where a vulnerable game on a finesse was available: the ♠K offside doomed it. A dull game followed, then

board eleven delivered a flat board in Gupta vs Russia, but brought the first double digit swing to Lavazza.

Board 11
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ Q J 10 5
 ♥ K
 ♦ A 7 5
 ♣ K J 10 9 7

♠ K 8 6 4
 ♥ 9 6
 ♦ J 10
 ♣ A 8 6 4 3

N
 W E
 S

♠ 7
 ♥ Q 10 8 7 4 3 2
 ♦ Q 9 4 2
 ♣ Q

♠ A 9 3 2
 ♥ A J 5
 ♦ K 8 6 3
 ♣ 5 2

West <i>KHOKHLOV</i>	North <i>GUPTA</i>	East <i>DUBININ</i>	South <i>ROSENBERG</i>	west <i>ZIA</i>	North <i>GROMOV</i>	East <i>MECKSTROTH</i>	South <i>GULEVICH</i>
—	—	—	1♦	—	—	—	1 NT
Pass	1♠	3♥!	Pass	Pass	2♣	2♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	3♠	Pass	Dbl	Pass	2♠
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♠	Pass	4♠	All pass	
All pass							

West <i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	North <i>BILDE</i>	East <i>GAWRYS</i>	South <i>MADALA</i>	West <i>SEMENTA</i>	North <i>DRIJVER</i>	East <i>BOCCHI</i>	South <i>BRINK</i>
—	—	—	1♣	—	—	—	1 NT
Pass	1♥	3♥	Pass	Pass	2♣	3♥	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	4♠	Pass	Dbl	Pass	4♠
All pass				All pass			

There's no way to go down in 4♠, but Brink - as Kaplan would have said - found one. The BBO record is incomplete, and my correspondents in Monaco were not able to dig out the full story, however we know that south won the heart lead in dummy and ran the ♠Q, ducked, then the ♠J, won by west who persisted with a third round of the suit. Brink won it in hand, and finessed dummy's ♣J, losing to Bocchi's queen. East played a small diamond, won by south's king, who continued with a club to dummy's king, ducked, and here the record ends.

Here is the ending:

♠ 10
 ♥ -
 ♦ A 7
 ♣ 10 9 7

♠ 8
 ♥ 9
 ♦ J
 ♣ A 8 6

N
 W E
 S

♠ -
 ♥ Q 10 8 7
 ♦ Q 9
 ♣ -

♠ A
 ♥ A J
 ♦ 8 6 3
 ♣ -

It is really awkward to understand how Brink went down: even if he played $\spadesuit A$ and a diamond (west pitching a heart), he needed to play the $\heartsuit A$ when the suit was played: rather odd, since he had a complete count of the covered hands. That is, down he's recorded to have gone: 10 IMPs to Lavazza, when Klukowski, in the other room, after the same start won the first round of spades and switched to the $\spadesuit J$. Declarer won in dummy, cashed a spade, came to hand with the $\spadesuit K$ and lost the club finesse. Gawrys was powerless: he switched to a heart, but south ruffed it in dummy and ran the $\clubsuit K$ to establish two winners in the suit, with the $\spadesuit 10$ as an entry.

Gulevich added a third variation: same start as Madala and Klukowski, but she won the diamond switch in hand and lost the club finesse. She won the diamond continuation, cashed a spade winner in dummy, then ran the $\clubsuit K$ to come to the requested ten tricks. In the other room Gupta was not tested at all: he received the $\clubsuit Q$ lead.

Board 12

West Deals

N-S Vul

\spadesuit A K 3			
\heartsuit K 10 4 3 2			
\diamondsuit A 5 4			
\clubsuit K 3			

\spadesuit 7 5 4 2		N	\spadesuit J 10 9 8 6
\heartsuit 9 8		W	\heartsuit Q 6 5
\diamondsuit Q 9 3 2		E	\diamondsuit 10 8
\clubsuit J 6 2		S	\clubsuit Q 10 9

\spadesuit Q
\heartsuit A J 7
\diamondsuit K J 7 6
\clubsuit A 8 7 5 4

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>	<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
Pass	1 NT	Pass	3 \spadesuit^1	Pass	1 \clubsuit	Pass	2 \clubsuit
Pass	3 NT	All pass		Pass	2 \diamondsuit	Pass	3 \clubsuit
				Pass	3 NT	Pass	4 NT
				Pass	5 NT	Pass	6 \heartsuit

All pass

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>	<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
Pass	1 \heartsuit	Pass	2 \clubsuit	Pass	1 \heartsuit	Pass	2 \clubsuit
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 \heartsuit	Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 \clubsuit
Pass	3 \spadesuit	Pass	4 \clubsuit	Pass	3 \diamondsuit	Pass	3 \heartsuit
Pass	4 \spadesuit	Pass	5 \diamondsuit	Pass	3 NT	Pass	4 \clubsuit
Dbl	Rdbl	Pass	5 \spadesuit	Pass	4 \diamondsuit	Pass	4 NT
Pass	6 \heartsuit	All pass		Pass	5 \diamondsuit	Pass	5 \spadesuit
				Pass	6 \heartsuit	All pass	

Russia started a comeback immediately, thanks to Gupta being (systemically) the only North to open 1NT with his 17 count 3532, and paid dearly: at the three other tables North opened 1 \heartsuit , and eventually showed extras: enough for South to drive to slam. 13 IMPs to Russia, and 1 IMP to

Lavazza when Drijver misguessed trumps, while Bilde did not. An weird hand was waiting around the corner.

Board 13

North Deals

Both Vul

♠ 10 7 5
♥ 2
♦ A K 7 6 3
♣ K Q 7 2

♠ A K Q 9 6
♥ J 10
♦ J 4
♣ 6 5 4 3

N
W E
S

♠ J 8 3 2
♥ A K Q 6 5 3
♦ —
♣ A 10 8

♠ 4
♥ 9 8 7 4
♦ Q 10 9 8 5 2
♣ J 9

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>	<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
—	1♦	1♥	4♦	—	1♦	1♥	5♦
4♠	5♦	6♦	Pass	Pass	Pass	Dbl	All pass
6♠	All pass						

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>	<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
—	1♦	1♥	5♦	—	1♦!	1♥	4♦
Dbl	Pass	6♦	Pass	4♠	5♦	6♦	Dbl
7♠	All pass			Pass	Pass	Rdbl	Pass
				6♠	Pass	Pass	7♦
				Dbl	Pass	7♠	All pass

Russia scored a huge pick up, when Zia took a very odd view, passing his partner's double, and collecting a very meagre 200. In the other room, Khokhlov, despite his powerful spade holding, did not accept his partner's invite and rested in 6♠, probably wondering about a loss of 13 IMPs when dummy came down. He must have been relieved to learn his team had won 15, limiting his personal loss to 4 IMPs (had he bid the grand, his team would have scored 19 IMPs).

In the other match, Sementa took exactly the same, very pessimistic view, but Brink came to rescue: over his sacrifice, Sementa, probably regretting his previous shy bid, doubled suggesting action, and Bocchi was happy to bid seven. Flat at 2210 apiece, when Klukowski was the only one to give full value at his spade holding and his partner's 6♦ bid.

On board fourteen, history repeated itself: an almost flat board in Lavazza vs Swiss Team (1 IMP to Lavazza) and a double digit swing in the other match, this time to Gupta.

Board 14East Deals
None Vul♠ Q 7
♥ J 7 5 3
♦ A K 8 5 2
♣ Q 10♠ A 10
♥ Q 6
♦ Q 10 4
♣ A 8 7 6 3 2

	N		♠ J 8 4 2
		E	♥ 9 4 2
W			♦ 9 7 6 3
	S		♣ 9 5

♠ K 9 6 5 3
♥ A K 10 8
♦ J
♣ K J 4

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>		<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
—	—	Pass	1 ♠		—	—	Pass	1 ♠
2 ♣	Pass	Pass	3 ♥		Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass			Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
					All pass			

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>		<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
—	—	Pass	1 ♠		—	—	Pass	1 ♠
2 ♣	Dbl	Pass	2 ♥		2 ♣	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥		Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

All pass

Anna Gulevich was the only South to declare without an overcall from West, and without that piece of information, was the only unsuccessful declarer. She won the diamond lead in dummy, and continued with the ♣Q, ducked, and another club. West won that, cashed the ♠A and continued with a third club. South pitched a diamond from dummy, suffering a ruff, and eventually finessed her ♥10. -50.

Rosenberg received the ♣A lead and continuation. She overtook dummy's ♣Q with her king and tabled the ♠K. West won it, and switched to a third club, but declarer knew to ruff high and had no problem to come to ten tricks. 10 IMPs to Gupta.

Brink received the diamond lead, cashed the ♥K, then played a spade to dummy's queen and ducked a spade to West's ace. ♣A and another club followed, South overtaking and tabling another spade. West ruffed with his ♥Q and that was it. Madala was the most successful declarer: after the same start as Brink, he banged down both heart top honours to win 1 IMP.

Board 15
 South Deals
 N-S Vul

♠ Q J 7 5
 ♥ A 6 3
 ♦ Q J 10 2
 ♣ A 4

♠ A 6 4
 ♥ J 9 8
 ♦ K 6 4 3
 ♣ Q 6 3

N
 W E
 S

♠ K 10 8 2
 ♥ 7 2
 ♦ A 5
 ♣ K J 10 9 7

♠ 9 3
 ♥ K Q 10 5 4
 ♦ 9 8 7
 ♣ 8 5 2

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>	<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
—	—	—	Pass	—	—	—	Pass
1 NT	Dbl	Pass ¹	2♥	Pass	1♦	1♠	Pass
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All pass	2♦	Pass	2♠	All pass

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>	<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
—	—	—	Pass	—	—	—	Pass
Pass	1♣	Pass	1♦	1 NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
Pass	1 NT	Pass	2♦	2♦	Pass	2 NT	All pass
Pass	2♥	Dbl	Pass				
2♠	All pass						

Khokhlov-Dubinina lived dangerously, doubling Rosenberg in 2♥, but won 3 IMPs. While Swiss Team picked up 4 IMPs playing in 2♠, when Bocchi-Sementa went overboard: down one in 2 NT. Some more blood flowed on board sixteen too, a fascinating hand.

Board 16

West Deals
E-W Vul

♠ K Q 5
♥ K Q J 10 7
♦ 9
♣ Q 8 5 4

♠ 3
♥ A 8 6 4 3 2
♦ K
♣ A K J 6 2

♠ J 8 6 4
♥ 5
♦ A J 10 7 6 4 3
♣ 10

♠ A 10 9 7 2
♥ 9
♦ Q 8 5 2
♣ 9 7 3

N
W E
S

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>	<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥	2♣	2♠
All pass				Dbl	Pass	Pass	3♦
				All pass			

West	North	East	South	West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>	<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	1♥	2♣	3♦
Pass	2♠	All pass		Dbl	Pass	4♣	All pass

It is not clear to me why Gupta passed Rosenberg's 1♠, but when Dubinin refused even to balance, after not having overcalled, that became the final contract, and should have been defeated. The ♦5 lead was overtaken in turn, then Rosenberg played a heart to dummy's king and East's ace. Dubinin cashed the ♣K (seven from West), then played a second heart. South pitched a diamond, and West ruffed and tabled the ♣9, covered in turn and ruffed by declarer. She played a spade, and West won it to play a second round. Dummy played a heart winner, ruffed by West who continued the club tap. Here is the ending:

♠ K
♥ Q J
♦ —
♣ 8

♠ 10
♥ —
♦ Q 8 2
♣ —

N
W E
S

♠ —
♥ —
♦ J 10 7 6
♣ —

♠ —
♥ 8 4
♦ K
♣ J 6

Declarer presented the ♦J, and West erred badly, covering it: dummy ruffed and played a heart winner, and West could only score his trump winner. Making one, GUPTA +80, which was worth 5 IMPs when Gulevich ended up two down in her 3♦.

In LAVAZZA vs SWISS TEAM Bocchi overcalled, and after South's preempt he probably regretted it. His 4♣ was unmakeable, and one down it went. This paired nicely for Swiss Team with Madala's 2♠-3, a result worth 6 IMPs. History was about to repeat itself once more.

Board 17

North Deals ♠ J 3
 None Vul ♥ K 7 5 4
 ♦ Q 9 8 3
 ♣ 5 3 2

♠ Q 10	N	♠ A 9 8 7 6	
♥ 8 6 3	W	♥ A J	E
♦ A K J 10 5	S	♦ 6 4	
♣ Q 9 7		♣ A 10 6 4	

♠ K 5 4 2
 ♥ Q 10 9 2
 ♦ 7 2
 ♣ K J 8

Three declarers in 3NT received the heart lead, and when the diamond finesse proved wrong had to concede defeat, but Gromov picked the club lead from North. Gulevich won it, and had to find the heart switch to beat Zia's game, but she switched to a diamond: curtains, 11 IMPs to Gupta. An amazing deal was awaiting the players.

Board 18

East Deals ♠ Q J 9 5 4 2
 N-S Vul ♥ K 10 9
 ♦ 10 9 5
 ♣ 4

♠ —	N	♠ 7	
♥ A Q 5 4 2	W	♥ J 8 3	E
♦ K	S	♦ A Q J 8 6 4 3	
♣ A K 10 9 7 5 3		♣ Q 6	

♠ A K 10 8 6 3
 ♥ 7 6
 ♦ 7 2
 ♣ J 8 2

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
<i>KHOKHLOV</i>	<i>GUPTA</i>	<i>DUBININ</i>	<i>ROSENBERG</i>		<i>ZIA</i>	<i>GROMOV</i>	<i>MECKSTROTH</i>	<i>GULEVICH</i>
—	—	1♦	1♠		—	—	1♦	1♠
2♦ ¹	4♣	4NT ²	Pass		2♣	4♣	5♦	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♦	Pass		5 NT	Pass	6♦	Pass
7♦	All pass				7♦	All pass		

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
<i>KLUKOWSKI</i>	<i>BILDE</i>	<i>GAWRYS</i>	<i>MADALA</i>		<i>SEMENTA</i>	<i>DRIJVER</i>	<i>BOCCHI</i>	<i>BRINK</i>
—	—	1♦	1♠		—	—	1♦	2♠
2♣	4♣	Pass	Pass		3♥	4♣	5♦	Pass
5♥	All pass				5 NT	Pass	6♦	All pass

Both teams reached the lay-down grand slam in GUPTA vs RUSSIA, in both cases rather well. In the other match, Sementa, in the same position as Zia took a rather conservative view and languished in

6♦, but LAVAZZA surprisingly won 10 IMPs when Klukowski-Gawrys rested in game. Gawrys was the only East not to bid at his second turn, and passed again over five hearts.

Board 19

South Deals

E-W Vul

♠ Q 4
♥ A K 4
♦ A Q 5 2
♣ Q J 9 6

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

West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South	
KHOKHLOV	GUPTA	DUBININ	ROSENBERG		ZIA	GROMOV	MECKSTROTH	GULEVICH	
—	—	—	Pass		—	—	—	Pass	
1♦	Dbl	1♥!	Pass		1♣	Dbl ¹	Rdbl	1♦ ²	
2♣	2NT	Dbl	3♥		Dbl	Pass	Pass	2♦ ³	
Pass	Pass	Dbl	All pass		Pass	2♥	Pass	Pass	
					3♣	All pass			
	West	North	East	South		West	North	East	South
	KLUKOWSKI	BILDE	GAWRYS	MADALA		SEMENTA	DRIJVER	BOCCHI	BRINK
	—	—	—	Pass		—	—	—	Pass
	1♦	1NT	Dbl	2♦		1♣	Pass	1♥	Pass
	Pass	2♥	All pass		1NT	All pass			

One more medium sized swing ended the session (last board brought just one overtrick IMP to RUSSIA, in an otherwise dull game. Both trailing teams scored 5 IMPs, though through different paths.

Gupta went all the way to show his strength, bidding a dangerous 2NT, but hit his partner with a distribution good enough to limit damage. Dubinin, characteristically, found an enterprising double, and scored 100, the same amount collected in the other room by his teammates, who had stopped on the best spot, before Zia took the push to three clubs, down one. However, 2 more IMPs were available on better defence: Gromov led the ♥A before switching to the 4♠. Zia won, cashed the ♣AK and played a heart. Gromov cashed club winners then, fatally, the ♦A as well.

LAVAZZA profited by Drijver's atypical silence throughout, which allowed Sementa to play an unbeatable 1NT, while in the other room Bilde's moderately heavy 1NT overcall drove his pair to the best spot.

The first stanza ended with Gupta ahead by 21 IMPs, 59-38, while Swiss Team led by 13, 40-27.