



SPECTOR v LAVAZZA

The fourth quarter's start surpassed Spector's dreams: they scored as many as 45 unanswered IMPs in the first five hands, starting from:

Board 16
Dealer West
E-W Vul

♠ A Q 4 3 2
♥ J 10
♦ A 8 2
♣ 6 5 2

♠ J 6 5
♥ K 8 2
♦ K Q 10 9
♣ A Q J

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

♠ K 10 8 7
♥ A 3
♦ 7 5
♣ K 10 8 4 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
1 NT	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Rdbl	3 ♠	All pass	

3 ♠ by North

Lead: ♣ 9

Down 1 — NS -50

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1 NT	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥! ¹	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	2 ♠	3 ♥	Pass
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	Pass
4 ♥	Dbl	All pass	

1. not 4 ♥

4 ♥× by West

Lead: ♠ A

Made 4 — EW +790

After the same start, Wooldridge jumped to 3♣, in fact shutting Bocchi up despite his partner's redouble. That was it: down one when clubs produced three tricks for the defenders.

In the other room Bilde, looking at his own strength, was not afraid to push the opponents, but he was proven wrong, though the defence had a chance. The lead was the ♠A, and Bilde was not up to the task when he switched to clubs. To beat 4♥, it was necessary to underlead the ♦A at trick two, or lead any diamond at trick one. Ten tricks and 12 IMPs to Spector, back in the lead by a single IMP.

Board 17

Dealer North ♠ Q
 None Vul ♥ K Q 7 2
 ♦ J 6 5 2
 ♣ J 9 6 3

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
	Pass	1 ♥	2 ♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
3 ♣	All pass		

3 ♣ by West

Lead: ♦ 5

Down 1 — EW -50

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	1 ♥	1 ♠
Pass	1 NT	Dbl	2 ♠
3 ♣	All pass		

3 ♣ by West

Lead: ♠ Q

Down 1 — EW -50

A flat board followed - a normal 3♣ down one - but it was just the quiet before the storm.

Board 18 ♠ K 9 8
 Dealer East ♥ 10
 N-S Vul ♦ Q 10 6 5
 ♣ A K J 9 7

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
		Pass	Pass
1 ♥	2 ♣	2 NT ¹	3 ♠
4 ♦	4 ♠	All pass	

1. invite heart raise 3+ hearts

Lead: ♦ A

Made 4 — NS +620

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
		Pass	Pass
1 ♥	Dbf	2 NT!	4 ♠
5 ♥	Dbf	All pass	

5 ♥× by West

Lead: ♣ K

Down 1 — EW -100

My preference goes to Bilde's double, but it allowed Madala to jump immediately to 4♠, and West had an almost automatic save. In the other room, Wooldridge's 2♣ did not promise any spades, so Hurd bid at the three level with two consequences: Sementa could show his shape, and NS's fit was not so clear. So, on one side Sementa felt he had already bid his hand, and left the final decision to his partner. On the other Bocchi, with some defensive values and a flat hand opted to defend. One of them, or both, were wrong: ten tricks in spades were pretty intangible, while 5♥ goes down only one. 11 IMPs to Spector.

Board 19 ♠ K 10 5 2
 Dealer South ♥ A J 2
 E-W Vul ♦ 10 7 3
 ♣ J 4 2

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
			Pass
1 ♣ ¹	Pass	1 ♦! ²	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	All pass		

1. 2+ clubs
2. hearts

1 NT by West

Lead: ♠ 2

Made 2 — EW +120

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
			Pass
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 ♥ ¹	Pass
2 NT! ²	Pass	3 NT	All pass

1. 4 ♠
2. 3 ♥

3 NT by West

Lead: ♦ 7

Made 3 — EW +600

Demuy-Kranyak picked the very right time to stretch to 3NT, a not so good contract which had only one excellent characteristic: it was unbeatable thanks to the club position. Sementa contented himself with eight tricks, but it didn't matter. 10 IMPs to Spector, who were pulling away. But the rain had not stopped yet.

Board 20 ♠ Q 8 2
 Dealer West ♥ J 8
 Both Vul ♦ 9 8 5 2
 ♣ 7 5 4 2

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
2 NT	Pass	3 ♥!	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
5 ♦!	Pass	5 ♠	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 ♠	Pass
6 NT	All pass		

6 NT by West

Lead: ♦ 9

Made 7 — EW +1470

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 ♥ ¹	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 ♣	Pass
7 ♠	All pass		

1. ♠

7 ♠ by West

Lead: ♦ 9

Made 7 — EW +2210

For the second time in a row Demuy-Kranyak proved that the blind deity was on their side: the grand slam is way below par, since it required either a singleton spade or, as it was, the suit splitting 3-2 and the queen onside. A mere total of roughly 38%, while a grand slam, vulnerable, should have a making likelihood of around 60%. 12 IMPs more to Spector, who had built quite a respectable lead: 152-118.

Board 21 ♠ 8 7 2
 Dealer North ♥ 9 8
 N-S Vul ♦ 6 2
 ♣ A K J 5 3 2

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
	3 ♣	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♥	All pass		

4 ♥ by West

Lead: ♣ K

Made 5 — EW +450

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	2 ♣	Dbl	Pass
4 ♥	All pass		

4 ♥ by West

Lead: ♣ A

Made 4 — EW +420

After one of those boards which should never been dealt - flat at 420 apiece - Lavazza started a comeback from a single step.

Board 22 ♠ J 7 6 3 2
 Dealer East ♥ A
 E-W Vul ♦ 10 3
 ♣ A J 8 6 4

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

♠ K Q 10 4
 ♥ K 7 6 5
 ♦ K Q 5 2
 ♣ 2

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
		Pass	1 ♦
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠
Dbf	4 ♠	All pass	

4 ♠ by North

Lead: ♣ 10

Made 4 — NS +420

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
		Pass	1 ♦!
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

4 ♠ by North

Lead: ♥ 3

Made 5 — NS +450

Both declarers won the respective lead and played a diamond. Demuy ducked it, and never had another chance, while Sementa won it to hold declarer to ten tricks. 1 IMP to Lavazza, then immediately afterwards Spector received two big blows.

Board 23 ♠ J 8 6 5
 Dealer South ♥ Q J 9 4
 Both Vul ♦ 6 5 4 3
 ♣ 7

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
			Pass
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣! ¹	Pass	2 ♦! ²	Pass
2 NT! ³	Pass	3 ♦!	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	3 NT	All pass

1. natural or any 16+
2. artificial GF opp the strong version
3. 16-19 balanced, 2 spades

3 NT by West

Lead: ♦ 6

Made 4 — EW +630

We don't have any record about the auction in the Closed room, but we know that Demuy-Kranyak pushed their luck once more, reaching a slam which was, after all, in terms of relative odds better than the grand slam they had bid before (you need clubs 2-2 or 3-1 with a singleton honour in South, but in the latter case you should also be able to handle spades successfully, and not to get ruffed on the second round of the suit: close to 50%, while for a fair bet you need roughly 52%: you win 12 and lose 12 here, but sometimes you lose 13 when 3NT scores eleven or more tricks). Lavazza won 12 IMPs.

Board 24 ♠ Q J 10 8 5 4
 Dealer West ♥ —
 None Vul ♦ 5 2
 ♣ K Q 10 8 4

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
1 ♦	3 ♠	3 NT	All pass

3 NT by East

Lead: ♠ 2

Made 3 — EW +400

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1 ♦	3 ♦ ¹	Dbl	Rdbl
Pass	3 ♠	All pass	

1. 5 ♣5 ♠

3 ♠ by North

Lead: ♦ 3

Made 3 — NS +140

Over three spades Bocchi closed his eyes and bid a 3NT which he could have either made, or finished many down. His luck was in: +400. In the other room, I suspect that Kranyak thought the situation was forcing, but Demuy proved they were not on the same wavelength when he passed, though it's not clear what he would have bid had he been of the same opinion as his partner. 3♠ was lay-down, and Lavazza added a further 11 IMPs, to trail by only 10 IMPs.

Board 25 ♠ 6 5 4 3 2
 Dealer North ♥ 8 6
 E-W Vul ♦ Q J 9
 ♣ J 10 9

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
	Pass	Pass	3 ♥
3 NT	All pass		

3 NT by West

Lead: ♥ 8

Made 5 — EW +660

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	Pass	Pass	3 ♥
3 NT	All pass		

3 NT by West

Lead: ♥ 8

Made 5 — EW +660

Board 25 was another silly one, but the next brought a significant swing to Spector, in a fascinating hand.

Board 26 ♠ A J 6
 Dealer East ♥ A 7 6 4
 Both Vul ♦ K 8 6 3
 ♣ Q J

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

♠ 7 4 3
 ♥ J 9 5 3
 ♦ A 9 2
 ♣ A 10 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1 NT	2 ♠ ¹	Dbl
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

1. spades and a minor

3 NT by North

Lead: ♠ Q

Made 3 — NS +600

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1 NT	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

3 NT by North

Lead: ♠ Q

Down 1 — NS -100

Double dummy, you always make 3NT, and, in fact, Wooldridge, who had seen Bocchi's overcall, was playing almost open cards. Yet, he could have gone down, had Sementa found the killing defence when given the chance.

Bocchi led the ♠Q, and sped things up by returning the ♥8, covered in turn by the nine, ten and ace. Wooldridge started well, playing a diamond to dummy's nine and winning the spade continuation. At that point, it was necessary to run a club honour to avoid a fatal blockage, but he didn't, instead tabling immediately the ♥6, and Sementa had to find the killing continuation in the following position:

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

West continued with a club, and declarer conceded another heart. With his communication still fluid he eventually guessed diamonds to come to nine tricks. But had Sementa continued with the ♥K, declarer would have had to choose between two evils: he could have unblocked dummy's ♥J, but West continues with a diamond, and North cannot, at the same time, keep dummy's last entry to enjoy all his club winners, and cash three diamond tricks. Or, North can decide to keep the ♥J, but West continues with a fourth heart, and declarer can score three diamond tricks, but not three clubs anymore (even if squeezed, and he would be in a three card ending, East simply covers the first club).

In the other room, after the same lead Kranyak switched to a club, which ran to North's queen, and Bilde started well tabling the 6♥, covered by the eight, nine and ten. When West continued with his last spade, North erred by ducking: having to concede two hearts and a diamond, he could not afford to lose two spades. That was it: down one and 12 IMPs to Spector.

Board 27 ♠ K J 8 4 2
 Dealer South ♥ 10 9 6 4
 None Vul ♦ 9 5
 ♣ 7 5

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
			3 ♣
3 ♦	4 ♣	4 ♥	All pass

4 ♥ by East

Lead: ♣ K

Made 5 — EW +450

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
			3 ♣
3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	3 NT	All pass

3 NT by East

Lead: ♠ 9

Made 6 — EW +490

The leaders added one IMP when Woolridge's brave 4♣ drove his opponents to a less fruitful contract of 4♥. However, in the not impossible case that North had held one the top club honours, 3NT would have represented a heavy loss, while 4♥ was still making. That IMP might have been doubled, had Hurd continued with a third round of clubs after having cashed ace and king, but he switched to a diamond, and that was it. Spector was up by 23, with three boards to go, and Lavazza needed some heavy boards to stage a comeback. They duly got one.

Board 28 ♠ 7 5
 Dealer West ♥ 10 5 3
 N-S Vul ♦ A 9
 ♣ A K 8 5 4 3

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
1 ♥	2 ♣	3 ♣	Pass
4 ♥ ¹	All pass		

1. bad hand

4 ♥ by West

Lead: ♣ K

Made 4 — EW +420

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
1 ♥	2 ♣	2 ♠	3 ♣
Pass	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

4 ♥ by West

Lead: ♣ A

Down 1 — EW -50

Sementa simply outplayed Demuy: both declarers ruffed the club lead, pulled trumps and tried their luck in spades, overtaking the king and cashing two more rounds. At that point, Sementa and Demuy could read North's distribution to likely be 2326 and had to decide where the ♦ A was. Sementa guessed correctly, ducking a diamond from dummy, eventually ducking another diamond to drive out North's ace, while Demuy played a diamond to his king. 10 IMPs to Lavazza, now 13 IMPs behind. With more to come.

Board 29

Dealer North

Both Vul

♠ J 8 4
 ♥ K J 9 5
 ♦ A K J 5 4
 ♣ 5

♠ Q 6 5 3 2
 ♥ 10 8 6
 ♦ Q
 ♣ 9 7 4 2

W N E
 S

♠ A 7
 ♥ A 7 4 3
 ♦ 9 7
 ♣ A Q J 6 3

♠ K 10 9
 ♥ Q 2
 ♦ 10 8 6 3 2
 ♣ K 10 8

West	North	East	South
<i>Sementa</i>	<i>Wooldridge</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Hurd</i>
	1 ♦	2 ♣	3 ♣
4 ♣	4 ♦	All pass	

4 ♦ by North

Lead: ♣ A

Made 4 — NS +130

West	North	East	South
<i>Demuy</i>	<i>Bilde</i>	<i>Kranyak</i>	<i>Madala</i>
	1 ♦	2 ♣	2 ♦
3 ♣	3 ♦	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♣	All pass		

4 ♣ by East

Lead: ♦ 2

Down 3 — EW -300

Somehow, Wooldridge was right when he climbed to 4♦, a contract that's cold if you guess spades, but 4♣ should always go drift two off, and in fact Kranyak overlooked the play and went three down, giving 5 IMPs to Lavazza. The diamond lead went to Bilde's king, and the ♥J was tabled, ducked all around. Now the Dane switched to the ♦A, and a simple way to come to eight tricks was for declarer to pitch a heart. Instead, East ruffed, and fatally continued with a club to his queen and South's king. Unerringly, Madala tabled the only card which held Kranyak to seven tricks, the ♣8, and when declarer won in hand and played two round of hearts, Bilde, accurately, switched to spades. Lavazza was just 8 IMPs away from another overtime, but it was not to be.

Board 30 ♠ A K 9
 Dealer East ♥ 10 6
 None Vul ♦ K 9 8
 ♣ K J 9 6 2

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

♠ 7 2
 ♥ A K Q J 7 5 2
 ♦ Q 10 3
 ♣ Q

West	North	East	South
		2 ♠	4 ♥
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	5 ♥
All pass			

5 ♥ by South

Lead: ♠ 8

Made 5 — NS +450

West	North	East	South
		2 ♠	4 ♥
Pass	4 ♠!	Pass	5 ♥
All pass			

5 ♥ by South

Lead: ♦ A

Made 5 — NS +450

The last board of the match proved to be dull: after the same start, both NS pairs found out they lacked the two minor aces and stopped safely enough in the lay-down 5♥. Spector held on winning 165-157.

It was a hard fought, high-scoring, spectacular match.