

# INTO THE FINAL STRETCH OF THE LEAGUE

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The 9th Open House of the League Cup was held at the beautiful clubhouse of the Japanese Association of Singapore on 20th August.

In the 1st Division, Friends of Sheep, lying a close 2nd just 1 Victory Point (VP) behind the Bridge Bears, kept up the pressure by winning by 19-11 VPs against NUSS (Red). However, in their postponed match, Bridge Bears rose to the challenge to beat a strong Bukit Timah CC A team by 23-7 VPs to extend their lead to 5 VPs. Bell is lying 3rd, 12 VPs behind the leaders, with 3 matches to go. In the relegation zone, Bozzetto (Argento) and NTU staff face a tough battle as they are 20 and 12 VPs away respectively from the 8th place team, Bozzetto (Rosso). Still, NTU staff has shown that they are no pushovers by reaching the finals of the Cup.

In Division 2, 2nd placed NUS (A) overturned a 1st half deficit of 6 imps to overwhelm Poly 25-5, outscoring Poly by 62 imps in the 12 boards of the 2nd half. However, they are still 7 VPs behind leaders Bengal Aces, who won 23-7 against NTU1 in a postponed match. SICC (Red), augmented by the return of Samir Datta who represented Singapore in the PABF 2 years ago, are lying 3rd, 12 VPs away from the leaders. NUSS (Knaves) looks a certainty for relegation, being 39 VPs away from safety. Japan Club lies 9th, 8 VPs away from 8th placed Poly.

LTA looks to be running away with the Division 3 title, with a lead of 20 VPs over joint 2nd placed Parc D'Rakes and NUS (B).

The updated league results can be found on our web-site: [www.bridgeleague.net/league.html](http://www.bridgeleague.net/league.html)

Here are some highlights from the 9th Open House.

## Board 12: NS Vul, West Deals

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

This is a marginal slam, despite the combined 31 HCP between the two hands. With only seven top tricks (nine after driving out the ♥A) and no long suit, declarer needs several good things to happen for the extra tricks: ♥A onside or 3-3 heart break (one extra trick); finessable ♠Q and a 3-3 diamond break (two extra tricks); or a finessable ♠K (two extra tricks). Unfortunately, declarer cannot try both finesses, so has to guess which line to take. The odds-on line is the spade finesse, which unfortunately fails on this hand; so most declarers in 6NT went down.

Some players sitting East would drive to slam after hearing partner open. Our sequence went:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1C	Pass	1D	Pass
1H	Pass	1S	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Partner wisely signed off in 3NT after learning of the lack of fit and at most 14 HCP opposite (since we agreed to open 1NT with 15-17 HCP). Unfortunately our opponents, Seet and Loo from Friends of Sheep were the only pair to bid and make 6NT.

## Board 19: EW Vul, South Deals

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

28 HCP and 12 top tricks in 6D. Pairs who play "Walsh style" responses after a 1C opening (bidding a 4-card major in preference to a possibly longer spade suit) may have difficulty finding the diamond fit as happened at our table.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	Pass	Pass	1C
Pass	1S	Pass	2H
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

It is unclear whether 3D instead of 3NT would show a natural suit or simply be 4th suit forcing, with a nice hand. The club suit was lost with the advent of strong 1C systems, and now we are beginning to lose the diamond suit as well in the bidding. If East manages to hear of a long diamond suit opposite, his hand improves tremendously and he should be interested in slam.

The slam was bid and made by the EW pairs from the following teams: Bozzetto (Rosso), Bozzetto (Argento), NUS (A), CLRXY. Well done!

## Board 25: EW Vul, North Deals

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

6D is slightly less than 50%, as it requires the ♥A to be onside and trumps to break 2-1. Despite the sole high card in the ♣A, the South hand figures to provide at least seven extra tricks to partner in a diamond contract. Some pairs were in a heart or diamond part-score contract after a forcing 1NT sequence. Others were in 5D, making six. This was the sequence at our table:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1H	Pass	Pass	1S
1NT	Pass	5D	All Pass

Our compliments to the only 2 pairs, from LTA and SCBA (Lights) who managed to bid and make this slam.