

1	Netherlands Red	278
2	'Rosa dei Venti' - Cagliari	262
3	Argentina	258
4	Hungary	252
5	Romania	247
6	Netherlands Purple	242
7	Norway	242
8	Denmark	240
9	Sweden	237
10	Bulgaria	236

Still two matches to play in the Round Robin (A Swiss, where you meet 17 of the 26 teams). At BBO Hungary versus Netherlands Purple; both teams can use a win. I will follow this and see how the rest of the matches develop. To speak in cycling terms: Netherlands Red and Cagliari are sprinting for the win in this stage while a group is working very hard to get to place three or four.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1 ♥
pass	1 ♠	pass	2 ♦
pass	3 ♣	pass	4 NT
pass	7 NT	pass	pass
pass			

Your lead: ♠ 6 4 3 ♥ 9 6 5 ♦ J 10 6 ♣ 10 7 5 4

1	Netherlands Red	300	18,75
2	Argentina	283	17,69
3	Hungary	268	16,75
4	Norway	265	16,56
5	'Rosa dei Venti' - Cagliari	265	16,56
6	Sweden	262	16,38
7	France	260	16,25
8	Italy	259	16,19

One match to go, still six candidates for place three and four. It was nice to see npc's Giampaolo Rinaldi (It) and Jean Christophe Quantin (Fr) walking around with a rather tense look at their faces. As I know so well by experience you really want your team to do well in the final stage and reach the semifinal.

Spel ♠ AKQ982  
 10 ♥ T73  
 O/A ♦ K2  
 ♣ K5

♠ 653     N  
 ♥ 965     W     O  
 ♦ JT6     Z  
 ♣ T764

♠ T74  
 ♥ AQ  
 ♦ 9543  
 ♣ 9832

♠ J  
 ♥ KJ842  
 ♦ AQ87  
 ♣ AQJ

With ♣ or ♠ lead declarer cashes ♠J, ♣K, ♣Q and ♣A and crosses to ♦K to cash all the spades and killing east in a ♥A-four card diamond squeeze. After a diamond lead the same happens: ♦K, three clubs and overtaking ♠J.

Did you lead a heart? I think a double by east would ask for a diamond. True?

So the last match really promised to be exciting with also Sweden, France and Italy coming in the picture for a qualifying spot.

And with Sweden playing Argentina at BBO this could be decisive. Well, the boards were somewhat slow and both teams playing well. So only a few imps changed hands, both ways scoring about the same; Sweden winning but too little for them. In the meantime France came up with the so desired big win and it became a tight battle with Sardinia. One single imp could be sufficient for the super vip. The French did it.

1: Netherlands Red	307
2: Argentina	297
3: Hungary	287
4: France	284

As rule for the formation of the semifinal we agreed that the winner of the Round Robin could choose the opponent from the teams that finished third and fourth.

Semifinal on Thursday 21 march

Netherlands Red - Hungary

Argentina -France