

Netherlands Red - Norway

Netherlands Red and Norway both suffered severe defeats in the previous round when they met in round 4 of the Intermediate Final-A. Netherlands Red lost 18-2 to Sweden, but Norway lost even harder against Poland: 20-0. For Norway the loss meant a drop to 4th place and no worries yet. Netherlands Red however dropped to 6th place and only 10 VP ahead of 8th place. With 7 teams advancing to the Quarter Finals Netherlands Red could not afford another heavy defeat.

In the Open Room Norway's Tor Eivind Grude and Harald Eide took on Tom van Overbeeke and Tobias Polak. In the closed room we saw Scheie and Saeter against Kiljan – Tijssen.

Board 1 immediately gave problems for the pairs.

Spel 1
 N/-

♠K843
 ♥107
 ♦K972
 ♣Q98

♠AQJ6
 ♥KQ93
 ♦3
 ♣AK72

♠107
 ♥J5
 ♦Q108654
 ♣543

♠952
 ♥A8642
 ♦AJ
 ♣J106

W N
 O Z

West	North	East	South
<i>Tijssen</i>	<i>Scheie</i>	<i>Kiljan</i>	<i>Saeter</i>
-	Pass	Pass	Pass
1♣ *	Pass	1♦ *	Pass
1♥ *	Pass	1♠ *	Pass
2♠	Ap.		

Tijssen – Kiljan had a conventional bidding sequence after a 2+ 1♣ opening. 1♥ was either balanced minimum or natural with clubs and hearts. 1♠ asked which. West's 2♠ showed that his previous bids and this one were natural, so a 3-suiter, with 18+ points. Kiljan left him to play 2♠ in the 4-2 fit, hoping it was the least of evils now. 2♠ played remarkably well when the defense never played a trump. South led a club and declarer won to give up the heart. A club came back and East played two more rounds of hearts. That got ruffed and overruffed and then he gave up a club. The defense played two rounds of diamonds and all declarer had to lose was the King of spades, making 9 tricks. NS -140.

At the other table things got even more out of hand:

West	North	East	South
<i>Grude</i>	<i>Polak</i>	<i>Eide</i>	<i>van Overbeeke</i>
-	Pass	Pass	1♥
DBL	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Ap.

Van Overbeeke opened a light 1♥ in third seat and Grude decided to DBL, hoping partner would not produce 2♦. Of course Eide bid 2♦ and Grude now tried 2NT, showing a hand too strong to overcall 1NT. Eide felt he had extras and bid 3NT, hoping his long diamond suit would provide the necessary tricks. It looks like declarer can set up 9 tricks, scoring three spades, three hearts and three clubs, but the defense can then score a spade, heart, club and two diamonds. Polak dutifully led the ten of hearts and van Overbeeke won. He now had a tough problem. Declarer might have ♦Kxx. In that case the defense needed to set up some tricks quickly. On the bidding and lead West seems to have four hearts and probably four spades, as partner had not bid spades. The likely weak suit of declarer in that case is clubs. So he returned the ten of clubs (2nd/4th through declarer) and declarer ducked. South returned the Jack, won by West. Declarer now gave up a spade. North had the final chance to defeat the contract, but he returned the Queen of clubs, so declarer could cash his 9 tricks. NS -400. Norway led 6-0.

Spel 4
W/A

♠QJ76
♥103
♦J10753
♣KQ

♠K952
♥AK76
♦Q
♣J1074

♠A104
♥Q5
♦96
♣A86532

W O Z N

♠83
♥J9842
♦AK842
♣9

West	North	East	South
<i>Tijssen</i>	<i>Scheie</i>	<i>Kiljan</i>	<i>Saeter</i>
1♣*	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠*	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	5♣	Ap.

Scheie went quietly with the North hand and EW had an inverted minor sequence to the good 5♣. NS -600.

West	North	East	South
<i>Grude</i>	<i>Polak</i>	<i>Eide</i>	<i>van Overbeeke</i>
1♣	1♦	2♦	4♦
DBL	Pass	5♣	5♦
DBL	Ap.		

Polak's overcall persuaded South to bid on to the 5-level. That cost -800. 5 IMPs to Norway,. They had taken two overtrick IMPs along the way, so 13-0.

Spel 5
N/NZ

♠AQ7		♠K1086
♥85		♥A104
♦J6432		♦A10
♣Q93		♣AJ64
♠J5		
♥KQJ97		
♦875		
♣1052		
♠9432		
♥632		
♦KQ9		
♣K87		

The Dutch recovered some IMPs on the next board when Kiljan-Tijssen reached a game missed by the Norwegians.

West	North	East	South
<i>Tijssen</i>	<i>Scheie</i>	<i>Kiljan</i>	<i>Saeter</i>
-	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦*	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	4♥	Ap.

East opened 1♣, 2+ and West made a negative or natural response (1♦ = 0-7 or no Major) East then showed a 16-18 no trump. West then invited game, accepted by East.

South led a top diamond and Kiljan won and immediately played back another diamond, North winning the Jack. With spades favourably placed declarer can always come to ten tricks by pitching a club on the spades. In real life Scheie returned a club after the diamond Jack, so declarer lost only one club and had 10 tricks. NS -420.

West	North	East	South
<i>Grude</i>	<i>Polak</i>	<i>Eide</i>	<i>van Overbeeke</i>
-	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♥	Ap.

Grude made a simple transfer response and then did not feel worth an invite. NS -170, 13-6.

This was a very interesting 3NT. Scheie for Norway got a heart lead which he ran to the 10 to lead a spade up. ♠ King held and he now tried a diamond to the King, won by East. If East now returns a diamond declarer is in big trouble, but East instead played Ace and another heart. Declarer now cashed his tricks for +600.

At the other table play started along the same lines, but Eide as East ducked the first diamond. Polak now played a heart himself and got a heart back and he too could cash out for nine tricks and +600. No score.

Spel 10	♠43		
O/A	♥J98642		
	♦K		
	♣J983		
♠QJ8		♠9765	
♥K10		♥AQ	
♦A743		♦QJ96	
♣10754		♣KQ2	
	♠AK102		
	♥753		
	♦10852		
	♣A6		

West	North	East	South
<i>Grude</i>	<i>Polak</i>	<i>Eide</i>	<i>van Overbeeke</i>
-	-	1♦	Pass
1NT	Ap.		

Grude bid just 1NT and got to play there. Polak led his long suit, a heart. When Grude now took a diamond finesse to the King North-South could set up their hearts and cash them along with two spade tricks, so down two. NS +200.

West	North	East	South
<i>Tijssen</i>	<i>Scheie</i>	<i>Kiljan</i>	<i>Saeter</i>
-	-	1♦	Pass
1NT	Pass	Pass	2♠
DBL	Ap.		

Saeter did not want to give up that easily and ventured 2♠. Tijssen showed a maximum with 3 spades with DBL and Kiljan passed as North-South would not have many spades. Dummy must have been a disappointment for South. The defense was not all that easy. Tijssen led a club to the nine, Queen and Ace and declarer played back a club to the eight and King. East played a spade, won by the Ace. Saeter played a heart now, won by King and Ace, so Kiljan could play a second spade tot he King. A heart went tot he Queen and now the defense could cash a few diamonds. Declarer's Ten now made a trick though, so the final result was 2 down, NS -500. 12 IMPs to Netherlands Red.

Final score Netherlands Red – Norway 20 – 13, converting to 12.51 – 7.49 in VP. Norway dropped another place to 5th and the Netherlands Red remained 6th with just two rounds to go.

