

The First World Championships for Teams 1937

The origin of tournament Bridge in Europe.

Previous to the year 1932, only a very few and comparatively unimportant International Tournaments and Matches were held, and these were mostly of a private nature. It was not until after the foundation of the International Bridge League in June, 1932, that international relations were systematically regulated.

We may in the first instance refer to those matches in London, Paris and Vienna, in which Ely Culbertson's team, famous in its day, took the leading part. The matches played in England 1933 and 1934 were rounds for the Schwab Trophy, and were won hands down by the Americans. It must, however, be pointed out that, with the exception of Colonel Beasley's team, the English teams were very weak. Colonel Buller's team especially was wholly lacking in attacking power, so that there was hardly any question of a serious contest. In Paris, Culbertson's team had to be content with a draw.

The first European tournament was organized by the Dutch Bridge Union was held in Holland 1932. The competing teams were Austria, Belgium, Germany, England, Holland and Norway. The result was: Austria first, Holland second and Norway Third.

The first Annual Tournament of the IBL was held in London 1933. The competing teams were Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England, Holland, and Norway. The result was: Austria first, Holland second and Norway third.

The second Annual Tournament was held in Vienna 1934.

The competing teams were Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. The result was: Hungary first, Holland second and Austria third.

The third Annual Championship Tournament was held in Brussels 1935.

The competing teams were Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, England, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Hungary. France was victorious; Yugoslavia and Hungary tied for second place, and Austria came next.

The fourth Annual Championship Tournament was held in Stockholm 1936. The competing teams were Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Holland, Hungary, Norway, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. The result was: Austria first, Hungary second, Holland third and Belgium fourth.

The World Championship 1937

The International Bridge League had modestly entitled its annual tournament "The Championship of the IBL." Even when thirteen European nations, that is to say, all those who possessed a Bridge organization, had entered for the Tournament at Stockholm, it still avoided the term European Championship. But when in the course of the year 1936-37 Italy and Rumania had joined the IBL, and the American Bridge League was affiliated, the IBL proceeded to arrange matches for the World Championship for Open Teams of four, and for

Ladies' Teams of four. These are the first official recognized World Championships for these categories.

There was considerable confusion about the American representation, partly because the IBL recognized Ely Culbertson's United States Bridge Association rather than the more substantial American Bridge League. Culbertson announced an open qualifying contest, the winners of which would become the official American team in Budapest. To his annoyance, the Four Aces entered the tournament and won. They were then advised that they would be playing in Europe as official represent of the Culbertson organization and the Culbertson System. Since the Four Aces played their own bidding methods, which they had tried in vain to impress on the Culbertson- indoctrinated public, they withdrew indignantly. The runners up, a Minneapolis team, took their place.

Culbertson wanted to play himself and was not deterred by his lack of success in the qualifying event. He announced that the United States Bridge Association would send two teams to Budapest. He then nominated himself, his wife Josephine and two little-known players, Charles Vogelhofer and Helen Sobel, who then was beginning a very great career.

The following took part in the World Championship 1937 for Open Teams of four:

USA Team 1. Ely Culbertson (Captain), Josephine Culbertson, Helen Sobel, and Charles Vogelhofer.

USA Team 2. Minneapolis: Edward Burns (Captain), Stanley Sanders, Len Reiter and Maurice Schanfield

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Egypt, England, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

The eighteen teams were divided into two groups of five, and two groups of four. The four "favorites " USA 1, USA 2, Austria and Hungary, were "seeded."

Each team in the four groups had to play 32 hands against each of the three other teams in the same group. Each team in the five groups had to play 24 hands against each of the other four teams in the same group. Thus, each team had to play a total of 96 hands.

Each win counted two points, each draw one point. The two teams with the highest score in each group ascended into the Quarter-Finals, in which the knock-out matches began. The four winners in their respective groups were USA 1, USA. 2, Austria and Hungary. The four teams with the next best scores were Sweden, Norway, England, and Holland.

Each of the group winners played the second-best team from another group. The result of the draw was as follows: USA 1 vs Norway, USA 2 vs Sweden, Austria vs Holland and Hungary vs England.

Whereas Austria and Hungary won their matches with ease, the two American teams had difficulty in defeating their respective opponents, Norway and Sweden. In both cases, extra hands had to be played, because after 72 hands neither USA1 nor USA 2 had scored the 300 points necessary for a win. Finally, USA 1 won this round with a score of 1070 points, Hungary with 3220, USA 2 with 540 and Austria with 3440.

The four "seeded" teams thus reached the semi-finals. USA 1 was drawn against Hungary, and USA 2 against Austria. After 72 boards USA 1 won their round with a score of 3620 and Austria with a score of 2650.

The Final consisted 96 boards. The Americans took the lead and kept it until board 22. Onwards Austria held the lead. At board 80 the lead was only 890 points, but on the last 16 boards they increased their lead and winning with 4740 points and was thus the first to win the newly constituted Championship of the World.

If it depended on the system or not, the Austrian bidding proved much more accurate. They also had the best of the luck. Ironically, the Austrians were employing, successfully, Culbertson's new invention, the asking bid which Culbertson was not using anymore!



The winning Austrian Team behind the trophy table. From left: Walter Herbert, Eduard Frischauer, Paul Stern, Karl Schneider, Hans Jellinek and Karl von Blühdorn. Udo von Meissl is missing.

This was the last time the Austrian played together. After the Anschluss 1938 all members fled the country to different countries as described later in the document.

Last but not least, it must not be forgotten that in Budapest 1937, simultaneously with the Matches for Open Teams of Four, Championship Matches for Ladies' Teams of Four were played off.

Here was also confusion about the American representation. Culbertson took along three women experts, counting on the fact that he already had two feminine stars. However, he discovered on reaching Budapest that the events were being held simultaneously, something which might have been foreseen, and neither Mrs. Sobel nor Mrs. Culbertson felt able to play at two tables at the same time. In this emergency the Americans selected a tourist, but her knowledge of the game was quite limited and the team did not do well.

The Championship were won by Austria. The teams were composed of the following Ladies:

Gerty Brunner (Captain), Ethel Ernst, Grete Joseffy, Rella Mandl, Rika Markus, Marianne Boschan, Liesl Klauber, and Gertrude Schlesinger.

Members of the USA 1 Team

Ely Culbertson – Captain



“Winner of Championship Events conducted by the American Bridge League and the American Whist League, including National Team of Four Events at both Contract and Auction, as well as Pair Events. His victories cover the period from his first entry into tournament Bridge down to the present time. With three players with whom he had never played before, he won the American Bridge League Team of Four event in 1930. All the members of the team have won the Vanderbilt Trophy for Team-of-Four play at Contract.

He was Captain of the American of the team which played in the first International Duplicate Contract Match in the world's history match in London in 1930.

His record as a player not only includes these Tournament Events, but he has been considered for years to be America's leading Rubber Contract player. He has met players of all degrees of skill and has had uniform success with all types of Bridge players as his partners.” – Ely Culbertson

In the 1937 he didn't seem to play as well as in earlier years.

“In the quarterfinal he played extremely nervous and complains that he is sick. He asks for a pause for visiting his Hungarian doctor.”

Josephine Culbertson



“She is beyond question the greatest woman player in the world. She is the one woman who is conceded to be the peer of the strongest men at the Contract table. She is the only woman to have been a member of a team-of-four winning the Vanderbilt Cup. She is the only woman to have ever finished second for the Masters' Pair Event, played for the von Zedtwitz Gold Cup. She is the only woman to have been a member of a team which won the Challenge Contract team-of-four event of the American Bridge League. This occurred in 1930, just prior to the International Matches in London. The team of which she was a member with her husband and von Zedtwitz and Lightner successfully defended their possession of the Cup in a number of challenge matches against the strongest teams in New York.” – Ely Culbertson

Charles Vogelhofer

Charles Vogelhofer was a rather unknown player. His merits was that he had won Reisinger 1936 and a couple of other big tournaments 1936-1937. His bridge career didn't seem to take off after the loss in the World Championship. The only place he is mentioned in The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge is as partner to Helen Sobel in the World Championship 1937!

Helen Sobel



She won her first national championship, the Women's Pairs, in 1934. In 1937. She was the first female player to represent the United States in a world championship.

Universally considered the best female player of all time, she won a total of 33 national championships, 3 more than her longtime partner Charles Goren, aka the "King of Bridge." Once, when a female kibitzer observing Goren asked her how it felt to play with an expert, Sobel replied, "I don't know. Why don't you ask him?"

Her 33 titles included the Spingolds five times, Reisinger four times and the Vanderbilt twice.,

By 1948 she had amassed the greatest number of master points of any woman and holding it uninterrupted to 1964.

Sobel was fiercely competitive. For good measure, she sometimes wore sunglasses to tournaments to deceive opponents into regarding her as a dumb blonde.

Helen Sobel seldom, if ever, mis guessed a queen in a slam contract when she was playing against two men. Her trick was to lift her skirt a little above her knees. It never failed that the one with the queen of spades was too nervous to look around, but the one without the queen always looked.

The ACBL elected her to its Hall of Fame in 1995.

Members of the Austria Team

Dr. Paul Stern – Non playing Captain



Paul Stern's profession was a lawyer and a Doctor of Law.

It is hard to summarize Paul's vast bridge playing achievements. He excelled as player, theorist, author and official. He founded the Austrian Bridge Federation in 1929 and was its first president. He was a member of the Austrian open teams that won the first two European championships in 1932 and 1933, under the auspices of the International Bridge League in Scheveningen, Netherlands and in London.

In the World Championship he chose to concentrate on the Captain role and was non playing Captain. Paul had a fiery attitude towards his bridge squads, savage words and merciless punishments for even small errors. *"To win an International, you do not need four bridge-players; you need four oxes who can sit and sit and push out the cards, so long as they are not horse-cards, if they do not get mad, they are sure to win."*

But alongside that, he was an eccentric and endearing mentor too. An article in Contract Bridge Journal described him as "... tall, burly, irascible, with a voice so rough, a temperament so volatile that half the people who saw him called him a dictator; but with a charm so great, a sweetness so unexpected that even those he castigated seldom bore malice for long."

He did not tolerate fools gladly at the bridge table. Once he was confronted with having thrown a cup of coffee at his partner, and said, "It was nothing serious. There was no sugar in it".

Sometime around this period (the months leading up to the Anschluss, 12 March 1938, the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany), Paul Stern was protesting about the politics of his country and the actions of the Nazis. His protests did not go unnoticed. So, what actually happened? He wrote a very strong letter to the Nazi authorities and he returned the medals that he was awarded in World War 1, whilst he was in the Austrian Army. The medals returned included one awarded for the highest level of bravery in the face of the enemy during his time serving in Serbia. The upshot of his actions was that he was placed on a wanted list (some sources informally indicated "no 11 on a death list"). Having been alerted to the danger, he was able to escape. Rixi Markus's autobiography describes the incident,

"At the time of the Anschluss he was in a Vienna clinic – he was diabetic – but the doctors smuggled him out by train. The nurse looking after him splashed a lot of chloroform or some such nasty-smelling drug around the compartment, and when they reached the Swiss frontier, she told the German officials who boarded the train that her patient was suffering from a contagious disease. From Switzerland he escaped to England via the South of France, and reaching London more or less penniless, he immediately advertised in the papers for people who would like to learn to play Bridge the Austrian way." - **Guy Ramsey, Aces All**

In London Paul published two books in English: *Beating the Culbertsons*, and *The Stern Austrian System*. He taught bridge, competed in events, and played rubber bridge at the Lederer's Club and later at the Hamilton Club.

Karl Schneider

His profession was engineer.

He was Karl Schneider, perhaps the most brilliant member of the Austrian group that captured the world title in 1937 in Budapest. He and Hans Jellinek were the strongest pair in the 1937 team and probably the best in Europe.

He fled to Britain in 1938 because of Nazi persecution, returned home the following year. He remained trapped thereby the war and although suspected of Judaism managed to evade

deportation and returned to bridge after the war. He won the silver medal at the World Championship 1954. He also became European Champion in 1954 and 1956, runner up 1951 and 1957 and third 1964 and 1956.

He represented France in Bermuda Bowl 1954, where his partner was Jean Besse from Switzerland. They replaced a French pair. He was a captain of the Austrian team for five years.

He retired from bridge in 1957 after an accusation of improper conduct and mounting ill-health.

He has been credited to the upside-down signal, where a low card signal strength and a high weakness. In USA this type of signals was banned until 1964.

He has been credited as a player of the highest class, although his bidding methods seemed a bit primitive to the scientists.

There are many reported fine plays by Karl Schneider. Here is one from New York Times:

NORTH			
♠ 6			
♥ Q 8 6			
♦ A Q 10 8			
♣ K 9 6 5 4			
WEST		EAST	
♠ 10 8 4 3 2		♠ 7	
♥ A 9 5		♥ K J 4 3	
♦ K 6 5 4		♦ J 9 7 2	
♣ 8		♣ J 7 3 2	
SOUTH (D)			
♠ A K Q J 9 5			
♥ 10 7 2			
♦ 3			
♣ A Q 10			
Both sides were vulnerable. The bidding:			
South	West	North	East
4♠	Dbl.	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the diamond four.

Play by Karl Schneider

The late Karl Schneider, one of history's greatest card players, held the South hand and opened four spades. Nowadays, experts would prefer one spade, for fear of missing a slam. West doubled four spades for penalties and led the diamond four.

Although the double suggested that West might hold the diamond king, Schneider was not inclined to risk a heavy defeat by taking an immediate finesse. Instead he won with the ace in dummy and made a most spectacular play: He finessed the spade nine.

Schneider knew that West did not have A-K of hearts, since he had not led them. The justification for the penalty double must be a sure spade trick. The idea of the spade finesse was not to gain a trick, but to force West to take his trick before East could signal.

With no help from his partner, West had to guess at the third trick. He guessed right by shifting to the heart ace, but could not be sure what to do when East played the four. This was not a clear signal, for South might have

held the three. West shifted to his singleton club, giving South his opportunity. He won with the ten and drew trumps, leaving this position:

NORTH			
♠ —			
♥ Q			
♦ —			
♣ K 9 6 5			
WEST		EAST	
♠ —		♠ —	
♥ 9 5		♥ K J	
♦ K 6 5		♦ —	
♣ —		♣ J 7 3	
SOUTH			
♠ 5			
♥ 10 7			
♦ —			
♣ A O			

When the last trump was led and a club was thrown from dummy, East was helpless. He chose to part with the heart jack, and a heart lead established declarer's ten as his 10th trick.

Hans Jellinek



Hans Jellinek together with Karl Schneider formed the strongest pair in the Austrian team.

Of Jewish descent, he fled to Norway in the beginning of the war in the hope of escaping the Nazis. In Norway he worked as a bridge teacher in the Worker Sports Federation. This is how the knowledge of the Vienna System was spread to and became popular in Norway.

He had hoped the Norwegian Government would offer the hoped-protection to refugees. But after the German occupation he was deported to Germany in 1942 and murdered in Auschwitz January 14, 1943.

Udo von Meisel

Udo also fled from Austria 1938, to USA. He never returned to Austria.
is no record of his bridge play in USA.

There

Eduard Frischauer

Eduard Frischauer also fled to USA 1938.

He continued his bridge carrier in USA. He is acknowledged as one of the finest dummy-player of all. A streak of optimism in his bidding, which often landed him in contracts unattainable even by brilliant card-play, prevented him from gaining the highest honors in American bridge championships. But he won nearly every possible West Coast title between 1946 and 1958.

Walter Herbert

Walter Herbert was musician and the third member of team that fled to USA.

In 1943 he became general director and conductor of the New Orleans Opera.

In 1955 he took on the general director's job with both the Houston and Denver opera companies The San Diego Opera was founded under his leadership in 1966. His leadership of the Houston company lasted until 1972.

The San Diego Opera was founded under his leadership in 1966.

He continued to play bridge in USA on District level:

District 23 (Los Angeles). Bridge Week: Winner Master Pairs 1940

District 21 (North Central California) All Western: Winner Master Pairs 1940

District 10 Mid-South Spring: Knock Out Teams Winner 1948

District 16 (Most of Texas and New Mexico) Texas Fall: Winner Mixed Team 1962

The *Herbert Negative* is a bridge convention advocated by Walter Herbert, based on the idea that a negative response in a variety of situations can be made by making the cheapest possible suit response, e.g. as a response to a forcing two-bid, response to a take-out double.

Karl von Blühdorn



Karl von Blühdorn fled to France 1938 and he didn't return to Austria. There is no information available on his whereabouts except that he died in Paris 1961.

Views on the Championship

The difference lay in the slam-bidding, where the Austrians gained 4,880 points. The Austrian team bid and made five grand slams. They also bid and made five small slams. Their only two failures in the slam zone were one small-slam bid that went off and one slam attempt that cost them a game. One expert thought the difference between the Austrians and the Americans was that the Austrians used asking bids better and generally showed more natural flair.

It was a success for Paul's Vienna System versus the natural Culbertson system. In *the Walk of the Oysters*, Rex Mackay described the victorious system as "...the first of the really artificial systems whose many misbegotten progenies bedevil and threaten the game today...". This was a spectacular result for Austria, and it was widely publicized around the world. For the world's most famous self-publicist and self-proclaimed emperor of bidding, Ely Culbertson, this was a humiliating defeat. Culbertson's team was just four: Ely and Josephine, Helen Sobel and Charles Vogelhofer. America had sent two teams to the championship, but the strongest American team of the time was not one of them.

ACBL didn't recognize this tournament as a World Championship at that time, probably because they didn't accept the way the selection of the USA teams was handled.

"The United States would probably have won if it had been represented, as it should have been, by the Four Aces foursome of David Burnstine, Howard Schenken, Merwyn Maier and B. Jay Becker.

They had won the designated qualifying event, staged by Culbertson's organization, but they allowed themselves to be outmaneuvered by Culbertson. He announced that they would be going to Budapest as representatives of the Culbertson System, which they did not play, and they withdrew in a huff.

A Minneapolis team qualified second and made the trip. Culbertson persuaded the organizers to bend the rules by admitting two American teams, and nominated himself. He himself had virtually abandoned bridge, preferring world politics, and was out of practice. Vogelhofer was a player with little claim to fame, but Mrs. Sobel, just married to a tournament director, was a rising star." - **Allan Truscott 1987 in New York Times.**

"Or was it the Austrian team which won? For behind the six pairs of hands which alternately played the cards with such dazzling brilliance; behind even the six brains which tactically schemed the victory there lay a single intelligence, dynamic, diabolically ingenious, ruthlessly

dictatorial, which governed and controlled the strategy of the campaign.” – **Guy Ramsey, Aces All**

‘When I had the honour of captaining the British Ladies’ Team at Budapest in 1937, the only team which had undergone serious training for the World Championship was the winning team- the Austrian- trained by Dr. Paul Stern who had also trained the victorious men’s team.” - **Daphne Kleuser , Contract Bridge Journal May 1948:**

The Vienna System

The Vienna System was one of the earliest conventional bidding systems in the game of contract bridge. It was devised Paul Stern.

The Bamberger point count (7-5-3-1) was originally used, but many Vienna players have preferred the standard 4-3-2-1 point-count which is employed in the following system summary. (References are to high-card points.)

The characteristic features of the Vienna System were not in its methods of hand evaluation, but in its bidding structure.

Opening bid and the responses:

(1) 1♣ shows 11-17 points and no suit except clubs longer than four cards. 1♦ is the negative, or Herbert, response showing 0-7 points. With a six card or longer suit, an alternative negative response is available: a negative jump to 2♥, 2♠, 3♣ or 3♦. Over 1♦ the opener rebid at the one level, keeping the bidding as low as possible. (This treatment very closely resembles the Roman System.)

Responses of 1♥, 1♠ or 2♣, 2♦ are positive but limited, showing 8-11 points. The opener can pass or make a natural rebid: any jump rebid would be encouraging but not forcing.

The strongest response to 1♣ is 1 NT, showing 12 points or more, This almost always leads to game, but the responder can pass if the opener rebids 2 NT at any stage.

(2) 1♦, 1♥ and 1♠ shows a five-card suit with 11-17 points. Responses are standard except that 2 NT is limit and nonforcing.

(3) 1 NT shows minimum 18 points and is forcing and unlimited; any distribution is possible. With 0-7 points, the responder gives a negative response of 2♣ or a negative jump to 3♦, 3♥ or 3♠.

With 8 points or more, responder bids a five-card suit, which is game forcing; but the jump to 3♣ is made only if the suit is very strong. With a broken five-card club suit, the response is sometimes 2 NT, which denies a five card diamond suit and also a total of five cards in the major suit.

For other hands containing between five and eight cards in the major suits the response is 2♦, which is therefore a two-way bid. After a negative response of 2♣, a rebid of 2♦ asks for a major suit.

(4) Two-bids should be specialized asking bids, but most users prefer standard methods.

(5) 3♣ and 3♦ is with a very strong suit and 1 outside trick.

(6) Other opening bid are standard.

The system also included Culbertsons asking bid.

In London Paul Stern continued to develop the system, but he changed it so frequently that it was hard to keep up with him. Partly because of this, and also because of the point count system that he used, the system failed to gain widespread support.

"The Vienna System, as Dr Stern himself prefers to call it, is an amalgam of various systems. To master it, it is necessary to unlearn much, receive on trust several new ideas, and take the structure as a whole with no half measures. "Bidding," it is stated, "should not be a series of problems for one's partner but a more or less mechanical disclosure of specific card."

– **The Times 1938**

"This system is gaining ground rapidly in this country and also in the United States, where, with some alterations, it has made its appearance as the American System. Unless both partners understand it thoroughly, however, it is a dangerous weapon to employ."

– **The Times 1939**

The system became popular in Norway, mainly because of Hans Jellinek who spread the Jellinek knowledge of the system during his stay in Norway between 1938-1942. The system was also developed in Norway to the modern Vienna system, which is very different from the original Vienna system. The modern Vienna system are described in depth in the Swedish Bridge Encyclopedia "Bridge" from 1960.

Probably the Italian systems makers of Roman Club and Neapolitan Club (Blue Team Club) with its strong 1 club (1NT in Vienna) and 1D, 1H, 1S and 2C with limited strength was influenced by the Vienna system.

The Vienna system became also popular on Iceland and in Australia.

Cheating accusations of the Austrian players

Karl Schneider playing with Hans Jellinek, 1937: "Strong suspicion"

Post-mortem analysis suggested that Schneider–Jellinek had exchanged illegal signals at the 1937 World Championship.

In his 1945 book, *Why You Lose at Bridge* [S. J. Simon](#) referenced the Austrian team playing the British team the following year and noted the "devastating leads" made by the Austrians, alluding to their cheating on the choice of opening leads.

In the book there are no examples of "devastating leads", he just a claim that something fishy is behind their leads. It would be interesting to see what the claim are based on. – **Author of this article**

"Players who cheat are regularly more successful in opening leads than are their opponents. Sixty-five years later, the verdict of history must be that the Austrians should be disqualified and the Americans were entitled to reign as world champions." – **Alan Truscott, The New York Times**

It is difficult so many years after the event publicly accuse somebody of cheating without having a very good ground for it. The question is what did Allan Truscott knew that made him publish his article? Was it what S.J. Simon wrote in his book or/and was he influenced by that Schneider later was caught with cheating? But it does not necessarily mean that he and Jellinek was cheating 1937! The record from the final 1937 shows that their leads does not indicate any pre-knowledge. – **Author of this article**

Request that Jean Besse refused, 1954

The French were to play the Americans at the 1954 international contest but since it was a European-based championship, France was entitled to add two non-French players to their team; they chose Karl Schneider of Austria and Jean Besse of Switzerland.

Before the match, Schneider told Besse, "You know, we've got to help each other." Besse knew exactly what that meant and refused indignantly.

Playing with Max Reithoffer, 1957: Accusation and end of partnership

In 1957, Austrian pair Karl Schneider and Max Reithoffer were found by the Swiss team member Jaime Ortiz-Patiño to hold their cards in peculiar positions. Ortiz-Patiño made notes of their activities and later deduced that the pair were exchanging information about the number of aces they held. Ortiz-Patiño recruited Alan Truscott as an additional witness to the code being used so as to corroborate his findings. Reithoffer was the President of the Austrian Federation hosting the tournament and Truscott much later recounted that in order to avoid embarrassment, the accusation was discreetly presented without a formal inquiry and no public finding of guilt; the pair agreed never to play again, except for a minor event in London for which they were already entered.

Victor Mollo alluded to the 1957 incident in his 1958 book, *Bridge Psychology*, but without acknowledging that there was no public finding of guilt. He and his publisher were sued by Schneider and Reithoffer but settled out-of-court. While no official reasons were disclosed, it was later speculated by Truscott that although evidential testimony by him was available, the publisher and insurance company "wanted a cheap way out".

The recreation of the match

The program used for the play of the boards (NetBridgeVu) does only support modern scoring (IMP). Therefore, after each session the actual standing in the match are shown, based on the 1937 scoring. The complete record with all the boards and some statistic by Paul Stern are available in the document "1937 Scoring".

The differences between 1937 and modern scoring:

Totals points were used.

The big differences between using total points and IMPs is the relative scoring between games and slams or other high point result. The relative difference between a game and small slam in vulnerable using total scoring is 2,5 and using IMPs is 1,6. So the slams had a bigger impact on the result. A big swing on one board had more impact compared with modern scoring. This was also the reason for introducing IMP scoring, to reduce the impact of big swings.

Undertricks.

The only difference was that how doubled undertricks not vulnerable scored. The second, third and so on undertrick was scored 200 instead of 300 today.

There was no bonus if a doubled or redoubled contract was made.

Honors

The honors were counted in the trump suit, 100 points for A-Q-J-10 and 150 Points for A-K-Q-J-T. Also 150 points with all fours Aces in one hand in a No-Trump contract.

The recreation is based on the official record with boards, bidding and lead for all 96 boards. The card plays are only available for a few boards. The plays for the other boards have been recreated, with the same lead and result as in the official records. The generated plays are what likely happened. It has not been possible to create a card play that is consistent with the result for board 15 (open room) and 85 (open/closed room) and therefore the card play has been omitted on these boards.

The interesting boards are commented by Paul Stern.

[Video with the match.](#)

[The complete scoring from the match.](#)

An alternative to watch the video is to use a Bridge Movie program, BridgeVu, NetBridgeVu or Handviewer (only online version available). The LIN files can be downloaded [here.](#)

Sources

Beating the Culbertsons by Paul Stern (1938)

Bridge by Alvar Stenberg, Hans Olof Hallen and Einar Werner (1960)

[Lives and Time Part 1-5 \(Bridge, issue 177-181\) by Shireen Mohandes](#)

[The Official Encyclopedia of Bridge](#)

[New York Times](#)

[Bridge Scoring](#)

[Cheating at Bridge](#)

Revision

21-01-04