



Around the World with 52 Cards

by Migry Zur-Campanile



Once upon a time the young Lydéric, returning from the fields, witnessed the slaughter of his family at the hands of the evil Phinéart. He was then raised by a hermit, who let a deer give him her milk and gave him an axe as a toy. Years passed... and Lydéric could chop down a tree with a single blow of his axe! At last, the time for revenge came. He challenged Phinéart to a duel and killed him. King Dagobert rewarded Lydéric for ridding his kingdom of the evil knight by granting him Phinéart's possessions and elevating him to nobility.

No, do not worry: This is still *Bridge Today* and not some novelette from Fantasy&SF. What I just related is the legend of Lydéric and Phinéart, the founders of Lille, the host city of the 1998 World Bridge Championships and this month's bridge travelogue.

I admit that my expectations were very high before the trip: I love France and everything French and I also felt very much in form. Only a few months earlier I had won the Ladies Generali World Masters and my partner, Ruti Levit, had finished in fourth place, so we were considered one of the favorites in the coming World Ladies Pairs.

We got to Lille on August 22 and soon found out that Lille was indeed a very nice place to be: for an umbrella manufacturer! Never in my life have I experienced so

much rain. It would drizzle and then turn into showers, then revert to a steady down-pour, stop for a while and, just when you thought the sun was about to break the persistent cloudy siege, it would start raining again. Buckets, cats and dogs... we soon ran out of expletives...oops, I mean adjectives, to describe it. If there is anyone out there who is interested in studying rain, Lille is for you.

Despite the dreadful weather, we still managed to find some interesting spots to while away the pre-tournament hours. For a start I was forced to spend quite a few mornings re-supplying my wardrobe with winter items in order to brave this unusual version of late summer weather. Going up and down the boulevards, checking out and trying on the latest creations of the local couturiers can be a very tiresome task as the girls out there will know all too well. Then we discovered the Braderie, one surviving relic of the city's rich history as a center of the textile trade, which used to be the market at which, once a year, servants could put up for sale their masters' cast-off possessions. Today it is Europe's biggest flea market. On the first weekend in September, you can buy second-hand goods from stalls which, they assured me, placed end to end would stretch all the way to Paris. More than a million people attend the market each year and they witness positively medieval scenes of carousing, as the restaurants compete to serve the most moules frites —

mussels with french fries — to the visitors. Nobody clears away the shells: They are just thrown onto the street, and the restaurant producing the highest pile is the winner.

Another very special experience can be had in Confiserie Meert. Enter this confectioner's and you find yourself transported back to the nineteenth century — an illusion that is heightened when you bite into a Gaufre de Meert. It is said that President Charles de Gaulle used to have these famous oval waffles, with their sugar icing and vanilla filling, delivered by courier to the Presidential Palace because they reminded him of his childhood.

The bridge events seemed at the start to be a very suitable match for the rain-fest, which welcomed us whenever we put our nose out of the playing venue. After a lackluster mixed pairs and teams, I started playing the Ladies Pairs and things seemed to pick up at last. A solid performance saw us getting through to the final where we began the last round in ninth position, with outside chances of a medal.

Alas, it was not to be: The top-placed pairs all had great sessions, and the winners turned out to be my good friend Jill Meyers playing with Shawn Quinn. Here is a very interesting board from the fourth session:

North dealer	North (Ruti)
All vul	♠ A
	♥ A K J 10
	♦ K 9 2
	♣ A K 9 3 2
West	East
♠ Q 9	♠ J 8 7 5
♥ Q 3	♥ 8 7 5 4
♦ Q 8 7 3	♦ A 10 5
♣ Q 10 8 6 5	♣ J 7
	South (Migry)
	♠ K 10 6 4 3 2
	♥ 9 6 2
	♦ J 6 4
	♣ 4

After a quick 1♣-2♠ (weak)-4♠ auction, I became declarer in 4♠ on the lead of the ♥Q. I won in dummy, cashed the ♠A and played the ♣A and ruffed a club. Then I cashed the ♠K (the ♠Q dropped and I discarded a diamond), played a heart to dummy and continued with the ♣K. When East declined to ruff (as that would have been at the expense of her second trump trick), pitching a heart, that pinpointed the 2-4 break in trumps and directed me to

the winning line to make a very important overtrick. I pitched a heart on the club and continued cashing all the hearts in dummy. I pitched a diamond on the third heart. On the last heart East could not ruff without giving up her second trump trick, so she pitched a diamond. I did the same. We now reached this position with dummy to play:

♠ —	♠ —	♠ —
♥ —	♥ —	♥ —
♦ K 9	♦ K 9	♦ A 10
♣ 9 3	♣ 9 3	♣ —
♠ —		♠ J 8
♥ —		♥ —
♦ Q 8		♦ —
♣ Q 10		♣ —
	♠ 10 6 4	
	♥ —	
	♦ J	
	♣ —	

The distribution was clear. I ruffed a club, East shedding a diamond, and played a diamond to the king. Whatever happened I would make one of my trumps: 4♠ +1 turned out to be a complete top.