

The Blue Team (6)

The Italian Blue Team were, without question, the greatest team in the history of bridge. They dominated the bridge world for a decade and a half, took a short break, then returned to win three more Bermuda Bowls and an Olympiad. As these championships are being held in Italy, it seemed a perfect opportunity to honour the members of this fine team.

Today we conclude our series on this outstanding Italian Team. We hope we have given you an insight into why they were so successful. Even in today's highly professional game they would be a force to be reckoned with.

The last two members of the Blue Team sadly died within a very short time of each other in 1977.

CARL ALBERTO PERROUX did not play in any of the team's successful championships, yet he was perhaps the most important single member of the team.

A trial lawyer in private life, Perroux was non-playing captain of the team through the fifties and early sixties and was responsible for turning a group of talented individuals into, firstly three partnerships and, secondly a team.

He was noted for his tough discipline and was said to check that team members went to bed early during tournaments (fine with your bulletin team) and on their own (not so fine).

Players who broke the rules were benched, even if it hurt the team in the short term. Perroux was also a president of the Italian Bridge Federation.

EUGENIO CHIARADIA (*The Professor*) was a professor of philosophy from Naples. He was an original member of the team and shared all their early successes before leaving the team after the 1963 Bermuda Bowl.

He won five Bermuda Bowls and five European Teams Championships. Chiaradia devised the Neapolitan Club system and was the leader of the team in its early days. After retiring, he went to live in Sao Paulo, Brazil and coached the Brazilian team.

This slam deal was played by Chiaradia in a European Teams Championship.

NS Game; Dealer: North.

♠ Q J 8
♥ A K 5
♦ K 6 5
♣ A Q 9 7

♠ 10 9 3 2
♥ 10 9 7 3
♦ Q 4 3
♣ 3 2



♠ A K 7 6 5 4
♥ Q J 8
♦ —
♣ J 10 8 4

♠ —
♥ 6 4 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 2
♣ K 6 5

West	North <i>Siniscalco</i>	East	South <i>Chiaradia</i>
	1♣	1♠	INT
Pass	2♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♥	Pass	5♠
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♣
Pass	7♦	All Pass	

West led the ♠10 to the queen, king and ruffed. Chiaradia's first problem was how to play the trumps. As East was known to have spade length, he laid down the ♦A and, when East pitched a spade, picked up West's queen, East discarding two more spades. Now, what about the heart loser? Chiaradia played ♣A and a club to the king, East following four, jack and West two,three. Now Chiaradia followed a line which would succeed so long as West held the ♠9 - almost certain after the opening lead. He played a third club to the queen and ruffed the last club. The next diamond squeezed each defender in turn. West had to pitch a heart as if he bared the ♠9 declarer could cross to dummy with a heart and pin it. Dummy also pitched a heart and now it was East's turn. If he threw a spade, declarer could ruff out the ace, so he pitched a heart. But now declarer could simply cash the top hearts, ruff a spade back to hand and cash his third heart at trick thirteen - a beautiful ending.