

## The Blue Team (I)


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.

Each day the bulletin will feature one team member. We start with **Pietro Forquet**. Comparing individuals is a difficult task but it is safe to say that there was a period when Forquet would have received a lot of votes for the title of world's best player.

Pietro Forquet came from Naples and was a banker. He brought to the table a great calm; rarely ruffled, he was apparently immune to the nervous tension suffered by those around him. At different times, he employed three different club systems - Neapolitan, Blue and Precision - with three different partners - Guglielmo Siniscalco, Eugenio Chiaradia and Benito Garozzo. He was co-author, with Garozzo, of *The Italian Blue Team Bridge Book*, and sole author of *Bridge With The Blue Team*, a collection of truly wonderful hands featuring the team during their years at the top. Anyone who has not yet read this book, try to find a copy because no bridge lover can fail to admire the beauty of some of these deals.

Our deal featuring Forquet comes from *Bridge With The Blue Team* and was played during an Italian championship.

Game: All; Dealer: South.

<p>♠ 7 5 4 ♥ 5 4 ♦ A Q 9 7 ♣ 9 7 5 4</p>		<p>♠ 8 ♥ 8 3 2 ♦ J 10 8 6 3 ♣ Q 10 8 6</p>
<p>♠ A Q J 10 9 6 ♥ 9 6 ♦ 2 ♣ A K 3 2</p>	<p>♠ K 3 2 ♥ A K Q J 10 7 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ J</p>	

Wednesday  
22 March  
1995

West	North Forquet	East	South Garozzo
-	-	-	1♣
2♠	Dble	Pass	3♥
3♠	4♥	All Pass	

West's 2♠ showed at least six spades and a sound opening bid. Today's germ warfare approach to bidding over a strong club was not quite so prevalent in those days.

West led the ace of clubs and continued with the king, East following eight - six, playing standard signals. Clearly the problem was to avoid three spade losers with the ace obviously offside. You ruff the second club and cash two trumps. West is known to have at least six spades, two hearts and two clubs. What now?

It looks obvious to draw the last trump, but this would commit you to a discard from dummy before you know West's shape. Perhaps you would throw one of dummy's useless spades? Oh, dear. You just threw away your tenth trick.

Forquet crossed to the ♦A and ruffed another club. When West followed it was impossible for diamonds to be 3-3. Now declarer drew the last trump, pitching a diamond from dummy. West saw a possible end-play looming and pitched the ♠Q and, when Forquet cashed the ♦K, continued with the ♠J. A diamond to the queen squeezed West again. He chose to let go the small club and now Forquet ruffed dummy's last club. West was down to nothing but spades. If he discarded the six, declarer could duck a spade to him and make the king at trick thirteen. If he threw the nine or ten, declarer could exit with the king, pinning the bare eight and making dummy's seven at the last trick. West chose to throw the nine but took a few seconds to do so.

Forquet judged the position correctly, exiting with the king and making his contract on a rare one-suit squeeze.