

15TH EUROPEAN SMALL FEDERATION GAMES

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Let the Games Begin!



Picture: The Representatives of the Small Federations

As in Larnaca last year, 15 countries have travelled to Estonia's delightful capital city to contest the 15th edition of the European Small Federations Games. Despite losing their opening match Romania sit at the top of the table after the first day's play, followed by unbeaten Monaco and the Faroe Islands.

Ranking after Round 5

1	ROMANIA	79.16
2	MONACO	71.21
3	FAROE ISLANDS	61.14
4	HUNGARY	54.71
5	BULGARIA	54.62
6	SERBIA	53.34
7	CZECH REPUBLIC	50.86
8	LITHUANIA	49.97
9	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	47.65
10	SLOVAKIA	46.24
11	ESTONIA	44.76
12	LATVIA	43.08
13	CYPRUS	42.59
14	CROATIA	42.03
15	SAN MARINO	16.64

All Round the Robin

Here's a somewhat attenuated review of the first day's play. We start at the beginning with this deal from the opening round:

Board 4. Dealer West. All Vul.

	♠ —		
	♥ Q		
	♦ J 9 7 6 5 4 3		
	♣ A 10 9 6 4		
♠ 9 6 5 ♥ A 10 9 8 ♦ 10 8 ♣ K J 7 2		♠ A Q J 10 7 ♥ J 7 5 ♦ A Q 2 ♣ 5 3	
	♠ K 8 4 3 2		
	♥ K 6 4 3 2		
	♦ K		
	♣ Q 8		

North's options include passing initially, hoping to get a chance to make a descriptive bid later, opening 2NT to show a limited minor two-suiter, or some sort of preemptive action in diamonds (including a possible transfer pre-empt of 3♣). If North elects to pass then East is going to choose between 1♠ and 1NT, and in the case of the latter South is likely to show the majors, although with such poor suits and opposite a passed partner it might not be the right moment.

We'll start by looking at the match involving our hosts and Serbia:

Estonia v Serbia

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zipovski</i>	<i>Maripuu</i>	<i>Radisic</i>	<i>Sester</i>
Pass	3♦	3♠	Pass
4♠	5♣	Dble	5♦
Dble	All Pass		

If North is determined to make a second bid then doubling 4♠ is perhaps an option! It allows for the possibility that South might be able to convert it. (Usually it suggests a void somewhere, Lightner style, but partner will only pass with a significant trump holding.)

East does not have an easy lead, but one option is to start with the ♦A – it looks odd, but the ♦Q will not run away, and you get to see dummy.

East started with the ♠A and declarer ruffed as West followed with the ♠9) and played the ♦4, East

taking the ace and switching to the ♥J (as it happens the best move at this point is to switch to clubs, setting up a potential ruff) which ran to declarer's queen. A club to the eight saw West win with the ♣Q and play the ♦10 for the jack and queen, East returning the ♥7. Declarer ruffed, cashed the ♦9 and the ♣A and conceded two down, -500.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Aava</i>	<i>Vujicic</i>	<i>Kurig</i>	<i>Altman</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	2NT*	Dble	3♣
Dble	Pass	Pass	3♥
Dble	All Pass		
2NT	Minors		

In this situation, with a two card disparity between his suits, North might have bid 3♦ over West's initial double.

West led the ♠5 and declarer pitched a diamond from dummy, East winning with the ♠A and switching to the ♥5. West took the ace and returned the ♠9 and the die was cast. Declarer ducked, won the third round of spades, cashed the ♥K and exited with a heart, East winning with the jack, cashing two spades and then taking the ♦A. and switching to a club. That held declarer to four tricks, five down, -1400 and a 14 IMP swing to Estonia.

San Marino v Croatia

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Sipus</i>	<i>Pecci</i>	<i>Caric</i>	<i>Ritani</i>
Pass	3♦	All Pass	

East led the ♣5 and the defenders took all their tricks for one down, -100.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fazzardi</i>	<i>Martinovski</i>	<i>Paolucci</i>	<i>Zoric</i>
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	2NT*	Pass	3♣
3♠	Pass	Pass	Dble
All Pass			

With five trumps it looks attractive to double 3♠,

but where are the other four tricks going to come from?

South led the ♠2 and my best guess is that declarer won with the ♠7 and played a heart to the eight and queen, North returning a diamond. Declarer probably put in the queen, after which there are only eight tricks, one down, -200 for 7 IMPs to Croatia.

Another possible line of play is to continue spades at tricks two and three, South winning and probably switching to a heart. North wins with the queen and plays a diamond, but now declarer might go up with the ace, draw trumps, cash the ♦Q and finesse in hearts for +730.

Faroe Islands v Bulgaria

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Radev	Lassaberg	Dimitrov	Mikkelsen
Pass	3♦	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Dble

South led the ♦K and declarer won and went three down, -800.

How could that happen?

If declarer plays on spades South wins and might switch to the ♣8. If declarer plays dummy's king North wins and returns the ♦J, covered and ruffed, by South who cashes the ♣Q and exits with a heart. If declarer does not go up with dummy's ace that will be three down.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Dam	Velichkov	Mohr	Todorov
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♦	All Pass	
2NT	Minors		

If you want to discover more about an opening bid of 2NT get hold of a copy of *The Mysterious Multi*.

East kicked off with the ♠A and the defenders managed to restrict declarer to eight tricks, one down, -100 and 14 IMPs for Faroe Islands.

Lithuania v Monaco

Open Room

West	North	East	South
Allavena	Arlovich	Desmoulin	E Vainikonis
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♣*
3NT	All Pass		

2♣ Majors

Rather than look for a possible penalty West bid what he expected his partner to make. South led the ♥3 and right he was, as declarer collected 10 tricks for +630. That's possible if when North plays a diamond at trick two, declarer puts up the ♦A.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
Olanski	Fissore	V Vainikonis	Catellani
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♣*
Dble	Pass	Pass	2♥
Dble	All Pass		

2♣ Majors

How do you play North's Pass over 2♣ doubled? The obvious answer is to say that it promises clubs, with no good fit in a major. Without clubs you can bid 2♦ indicating no preference (usually 2/3 or 3/2). Having done that North could then happily bid 3♦ on the next round, indicating that he wanted to play in 3♦ come what may.

There is another possibility as we shall see in a moment.

Here 2♥ doubled went three down, -800 so Lithuania scored 5 IMPs.



Arne Mikkelsen, FAROE ISLANDS
Radi Radev, BULGARIA

Hungary v Latvia

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bendiks</i>	<i>G Kemeny</i>	<i>Romanovska</i>	<i>Trenka</i>
Pass	4♦	4♠	Dble
All Pass			

Against the full-blooded preempt East was tempted to bid, but how likely are 10 tricks facing a passed partner?

South led the ♦K and declarer finished three down, -800.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Argay</i>	<i>Neimanis</i>	<i>M Kemeny</i>	<i>Jansons</i>
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♣*
Dble	2♦	All Pass	

What could be simpler than that – 2♦ was to play. Declarer collected eight tricks for +90 but Hungary collected 12 IMPs.

In Round 2 most pairs reached a slam on this deal:

Board 15. Dealer South. N/S Vul.

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

We'll look at the auction from the match featured on BBO:

Bulgaria v Hungary

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Argay</i>	<i>Rusev</i>	<i>M Kemeny</i>	<i>Binev</i>
—	—	—	1NT
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣*	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♠*
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

2♦	Transfer
4♣	Cue
4NT	RKCB
5♠	2 keycards + ♥Q

West found the tremendous lead of the ♦8 but with the ♥K inside there were 12 tricks, +1430.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Todorov</i>	<i>G Kemeny</i>	<i>Velichkov</i>	<i>Trenka</i>
—	—	—	1NT
Pass	2♦*	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♠*	Pass	5♥*
Pass	6♥	All Pass	

2♦	Transfer
4♠	RKCB
5♥	2 keycards + ♥Q

I don't have any convention cards, but when you have eliminated all that is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth. (A good line for a detective don't you think?)

At first glance 6♥ depends entirely on the trump finesse, but absent a diamond lead you might sometimes make it even if the finesse is wrong, via a minor suit squeeze should a defender hold the ♦KQ and four clubs.

In Round 3 this deal was not without interest:

Board 22. Dealer East. E/W Vul.

	♠ K J 3	
	♥ A 8 5 3 2	
	♦ 7	
	♣ Q 7 6 2	
♠ A 10 6		♠ 7 5
♥ K Q 7		♥ J 10 6 4
♦ 6 5 4		♦ K Q J 10 9 3 2
♣ A 5 4 3		♣ —
	♠ Q 9 8 4 2	
	♥ 9	
	♦ A 8	
	♣ K J 10 9 8	

I'll start with the featured match:

Latvia v Romania

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Micescu</i>	<i>Neimanis</i>	<i>Savin</i>	<i>Jansons</i>
—	—	3♦	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

Would a four-card major on the side and a void deter East from pre-empting? Not at all and when West (an old teammate) preferred trying for nine tricks rather than 11 (5♦ is virtually certain to be defeated by a heart ruff) everything hinged on the opening lead.

Naturally North led a heart and declarer won and forced out the $\diamond A$, quickly claiming his contract when South won and switched to the $\clubsuit J$, +600.

I was about to move to the other room when it occurred to me that North might sometimes lead the $\heartsuit A$. On this occasion, provided South's $\heartsuit 9$ is discouraging ('high for hate' as Andrew Robson likes to say) it won't matter which black suit North switches to (provided its not the $\spadesuit 3$).

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bendiks</i>	<i>R Mihai</i>	<i>Romanovska</i>	<i>G Mihai</i>
—	—	3 \diamond	All Pass

South led the $\heartsuit 9$ and North won and switched to the $\clubsuit 2$, declarer pitching a spade from her hand as she won with dummy's ace. Once the $\diamond A$ had been eliminated she had 1 tricks, +150 but Romania had 10 IMPs.

The same thing happened in the match between Slovakia and Croatia, 3NT in the Open Room against 3 \diamond in the Closed, the 10 IMPs going to Croatia.

Lithuania v Serbia

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Zipovski</i>	<i>Gierulski</i>	<i>Radisic</i>	<i>Skrzypczak</i>
—	—	Pass	2 \spadesuit^*
Pass	Pass	3 \diamond	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Dble
All Pass			

2 \spadesuit 5-10, 5+ \spadesuit and 5(4) \clubsuit/\diamond

North led the $\heartsuit 3$, which resulted in -750.

Assuming the convention card I am looking at is correct, a club lead appears to be a better bet.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Olanski</i>	<i>Vujic</i>	<i>V Vainikonis</i>	<i>Altman</i>
—	—	Pass	1 \spadesuit
Pass	2 \heartsuit	3 \diamond	Pass
Pass	4 \spadesuit	All Pass	

West led the $\diamond 5$ and declarer must have won with the ace, ruffed a diamond and played a spade when the best West can do is play two rounds of clubs, East's ruff holding declarer to 10 tricks, +420 and 15 IMPs to Serbia.

Hungary v Czech Republic

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Seker</i>	<i>G Kemeny</i>	<i>Volhejn</i>	<i>Trenka</i>
—	—	3 \diamond	4 \clubsuit^*
4 \diamond	5 \heartsuit^*	Pass	5 \spadesuit
All Pass			

4 \clubsuit Clubs and a major
5 \heartsuit Pass or correct

The non-leaping Michaels 4 \clubsuit would normally promise a much stronger hand – North might even be close to bidding 5 \diamond .

West led the $\heartsuit K$ and given that declarer emerged with 11 tricks it is clear that EW did not find their club ruff, +450.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Argay</i>	<i>Macura</i>	<i>M Kemeny</i>	<i>Vachtarcik</i>
—	—	3 \diamond	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North did very well to find the lead of the $\clubsuit 2$, and although the defenders missed a trick, -100 meant Hungary had 8 IMPs.

Bosnia and Herzegovina v Bulgaria

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Radev</i>	<i>Milovic</i>	<i>Dimitrov</i>	<i>Masic</i>
—	—	Pass	2 \spadesuit
Pass	Pass	3 \diamond	All Pass

South led the $\heartsuit 9$ and declarer finished with 10 tricks, +130.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Martinovic</i>	<i>Rusev</i>	<i>Novosel</i>	<i>Binev</i>
—	—	3 \diamond	Pass
3NT	All Pass		

North led a low heart so that was -600 and 10 IMPs for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the match between Cyprus and Estonia NS reached 4 \spadesuit at both tables, Estonia scoring an overtrick IMP.

Before I move on to Round 4, what do you think South should do if East opens 2 \diamond or 3 \diamond ? Would you consider overcalling 2 \spadesuit /3 \spadesuit ? Certainly risky, but as you can see passing can also be dangerous.

No doubt about the deal of Round 4:

Board 35. Dealer West. E/W Vul.

	♠ Q 8 7 6 2		
	♥ A Q 10 5 3		
	♦ A K 4		
	♣ —		
♠ J 9	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ 10	
♥ K 7 6 4 2		♥ J 9 8	
♦ 10 8 3		♦ Q J 9 6 5 2	
♣ A 4 2		♣ J 9 8	
	♠ A K 5 4 3		
	♥ —		
	♦ 7		
	♣ K Q 10 7 6 5 3		

Slovakia v Hungary

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Argay</i>	<i>Kvocek</i>	<i>M Kemeny</i>	<i>Vdicka</i>
—	—	—	1♣
Pass	1♠	Pass	4♥*
Pass	4NT*	Pass	5♥*
Pass	6♠	All Pass	
4♥	Shortage		
4NT	RKCB		
5♥	2 keycards		

East led the ♦Q and declarer won with the ♦A, played a spade to dummy's ace and the ♣3, West going up with the ♣A which soon resulted in a claim for +1010.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Henc</i>	<i>G Kemeny</i>	<i>Lohay</i>	<i>Trenka</i>
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	4♥*
Pass	5♣*	Pass	5♠
Pass	7♠	All Pass	
2NT	Spade support		
4♥	Shortage		
5♣	Cue		

West led the ♣A and declarer ruffed, went to dummy with a spade, ruffed a club high, drew the outstanding trump and claimed, +1510 and 11 IMPs for Hungary.

Four pairs managed to reach 7♠, all earning a swing.

Cyprus v Latvia

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Bendiks</i>	<i>Ioannou</i>	<i>Romanouska</i>	<i>Fan</i>
—	—	—	1♣
Pass	1♥*	Pass	4♦*
Pass	6♦	Pass	6♠
All Pass			
1♥	Spades		
4♦	Shortage		

That was the regulation +1010.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Frangos</i>	<i>Neimanis</i>	<i>Tillyri</i>	<i>Jansons</i>
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	5♥*
Dble	7♠	Pass	Pass
Dble	All Pass		
2NT	Spade support		

5♥ looks like it was Exclusion Blackwood. West tried to cash his ace, an unlucky -1770 and 13 IMPs to Latvia.

Did I say that was the deal of the Round?

Board 39. Dealer South. All Vul.

	♠ K Q 8 5		
	♥ A 3		
	♦ A Q 4 3 2		
	♣ 4 3		
♠ 4 3	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> N W E S </div>	♠ J 10 7 6 2	
♥ 9 8 4		♥ J 10 5 2	
♦ J 10 8		♦ 9 6 5	
♣ A 8 7 5 2		♣ 10	
	♠ A 9		
	♥ K Q 7 6		
	♦ K 7		
	♣ K Q J 9 6		

If you are going to play in slam it is clearly best to be in 6NT, avoiding the possibility of a club ruff that will upset your apple cart in 6♦. The early appearance of the ♣10 means you don't have to guess what to do if the ♣10 or ♣A don't appear on the first two rounds of the suit. Well done to the 12 pairs who reached the target – commiserations to the two pairs who attempted a minor suit slam – and lost 17 IMPs.

That brings us to my final offering from the last match of day 1:



the $\diamond 5$ was a winner and was two down, -200.

Suppose declarer plays a diamond at trick two?

South will win, but must the find a spade switch to be sure of defeating 3NT – easier for those employing Smith peters.

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Fissore</i>	<i>Ionnou</i>	<i>Catellani</i>	<i>Fan</i>
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT	Pass	3♣*	Pass
3♦*	Pass	3♠*	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
3♣	Puppet Stayman		
3♦	At least one major		
3♠	4♥		

West led the $\clubsuit 4$ and declarer won with the $\clubsuit J$, played a spade to dummy's ace and ran the $\heartsuit Q$. When he continued with the $\heartsuit 6$ South unwisely played the $\heartsuit 3$ so having won with the $\heartsuit 7$ declarer played a diamond for the jack and king. He won the club return and played a diamond, North taking the ace and exiting with the $\clubsuit 10$. When South pitched the $\diamond 10$ declarer won, played two rounds of spades ruffing, came to hand with a heart and played a diamond, +620 and 13 IMPs for Monaco.

As I'm sure you can see, as long as South covers the second heart with the jack (or king) declarer cannot score more than nine tricks.

He other seven declarers in 4♥ were held to nine tricks, but one declarer made 10 tricks in 3NT – The Czech Republics Vit Volhejn, who responded 3NT to Basar Seker's attenuated opening bid of 1♦ which was worth 12 IMPs.

Board 45. Dealer North. All Vul.

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



Cyprus v Monaco

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Frangos</i>	<i>Allavena</i>	<i>Tillyri</i>	<i>Desmoulins</i>
—	Pass	Pass	Pass
1NT	Dble*	2♣*	2♦
Pass	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Dble 1 major and a minor

It looks like East intended 2♣ to be Stayman.

North led the $\clubsuit 4$ and declarer won with the jack and played the $\heartsuit A$ and a heart, North discarding the $\diamond 3$. South won with the jack and returned the $\clubsuit 5$, declarer winning with the $\clubsuit A$ and playing a diamond for the queen and king. Back came the $\spadesuit 9$ and declarer won with the $\spadesuit K$ and played another diamond. North won and exited with the $\spadesuit 3$. Declarer won, came to hand with a club and played a diamond, but he forgot



Day 1 Results

Round 1

1	ESTONIA	SERBIA	16	20	8.50	11.50
2	SAN MARINO	CROATIA	9	27	4.48	15.52
3	CYPRUS	CZECH REPUBLIC	20	20	10.00	10.00
4	FAROE ISLANDS	BULGARIA	25	13	14.00	6.00
5	SLOVAKIA	ROMANIA	14	11	11.14	8.86
6	LITHUANIA	MONACO	6	25	4.25	15.75
7	HUNGARY	LATVIA	30	29	10.39	9.61
8	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	Bye	0	0	12	0.00

Round 2

1	BULGARIA	HUNGARY	18	18	10.00	10.00
2	ROMANIA	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	26	5	16.18	3.82
3	MONACO	LATVIA	32	27	11.85	8.15
4	CZECH REPUBLIC	LITHUANIA	14	25	6.28	13.72
5	SERBIA	SLOVAKIA	9	14	8.15	11.85
6	CROATIA	FAROE ISLANDS	1	18	4.71	15.29
7	SAN MARINO	CYPRUS	12	32	4.03	15.97
8	ESTONIA	Bye	0	0	12	0.00

Round 3

1	LATVIA	ROMANIA	1	29	2.49	17.51
2	FAROE ISLANDS	SAN MARINO	32	11	16.18	3.82
3	SLOVAKIA	CROATIA	12	15	8.86	11.14
4	LITHUANIA	SERBIA	20	28	7.17	12.83
5	HUNGARY	CZECH REPUBLIC	27	16	13.72	6.28
6	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	BULGARIA	13	18	8.15	11.85
7	CYPRUS	ESTONIA	2	15	5.72	14.28
8	MONACO	Bye	0	0	12	0.00

Round 4

1	SLOVAKIA	HUNGARY	31	41	6.57	13.43
2	CROATIA	BULGARIA	18	24	7.82	12.18
3	SAN MARINO	ROMANIA	13	52	0.90	19.10
4	ESTONIA	MONACO	15	22	7.49	12.51
5	CYPRUS	LATVIA	22	22	10.00	10.00
6	FAROE ISLANDS	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	25	29	8.50	11.50
7	SERBIA	CZECH REPUBLIC	18	21	8.86	11.14
8	LITHUANIA	Bye	0	0	12	0.00

Round 5

1	MONACO	CYPRUS	39	0	19.10	0.90
2	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	SLOVAKIA	14	8	12.18	7.82
3	LATVIA	FAROE ISLANDS	27	19	12.83	7.17
4	HUNGARY	LITHUANIA	12	20	7.17	12.83
5	ROMANIA	ESTONIA	36	8	17.51	2.49
6	BULGARIA	SAN MARINO	33	10	14.59	3.41
7	CZECH REPUBLIC	CROATIA	56	30	17.16	2.84
8	SERBIA	Bye	0	0	12	0.00