

Belgian deception
By Herman De Wael and Rutger Van Mechelen

Eric Debus and his junior partner, Rutger Van Mechelen have scaled the heights of the Belgian scene in recent years, but they thought they were team players, not pairs ones.

So they were among the most surprised this year when they won their first Belgian championship in the national pairs' event.

So far here in Sanremo, they had the moderate success of being on the only Belgian team that made it to the A-Swiss, and they are currently lying in the top-10 of the Pairs' Qualification.

This board helped them to a 60% score in the third session:

Board 19. Dealer South. E/W Vul.

	♠	A K 2		
	♥	A Q J 6		
	♦	K J 5 4		
	♣	J 3		
♠	Q 10 9 7		♠	J 6 4
♥	9 8 4		♥	5 2
♦	Q 8 7		♦	10 2
♣	A 8 4		♣	K Q 10 6 5 2
	♠	8 5 3		
	♥	K 10 7 3		
	♦	A 9 6 3		
	♣	9 7		
W	n		e	s
Debus	Malinowski		Van Mechelen	DeBotton
				Pass
Pass	2NT		Pass	3♣
Pass	3♥		Pass	4♥
All Pass				

The lead was the ♣K, which shows an even number if not from AK, something which Eric could read, so he took the Ace. He switched to spades, and declarer drew trumps, cashed the ♠K and threw West in with the spade.

Eric could see that the ruff and discard would cost nothing, but he knew North knew this. Eric also had a count of the points, knowing that North held the ♦KJ. But Eric switched to a diamond anyway. Artur Malinowski knew that his opponents knew the distribution and believed West would not be so stupid as to play diamonds unless he had nothing in the suit. So he played East for ♦Q10 and was one down.