

# Sports Illustrated

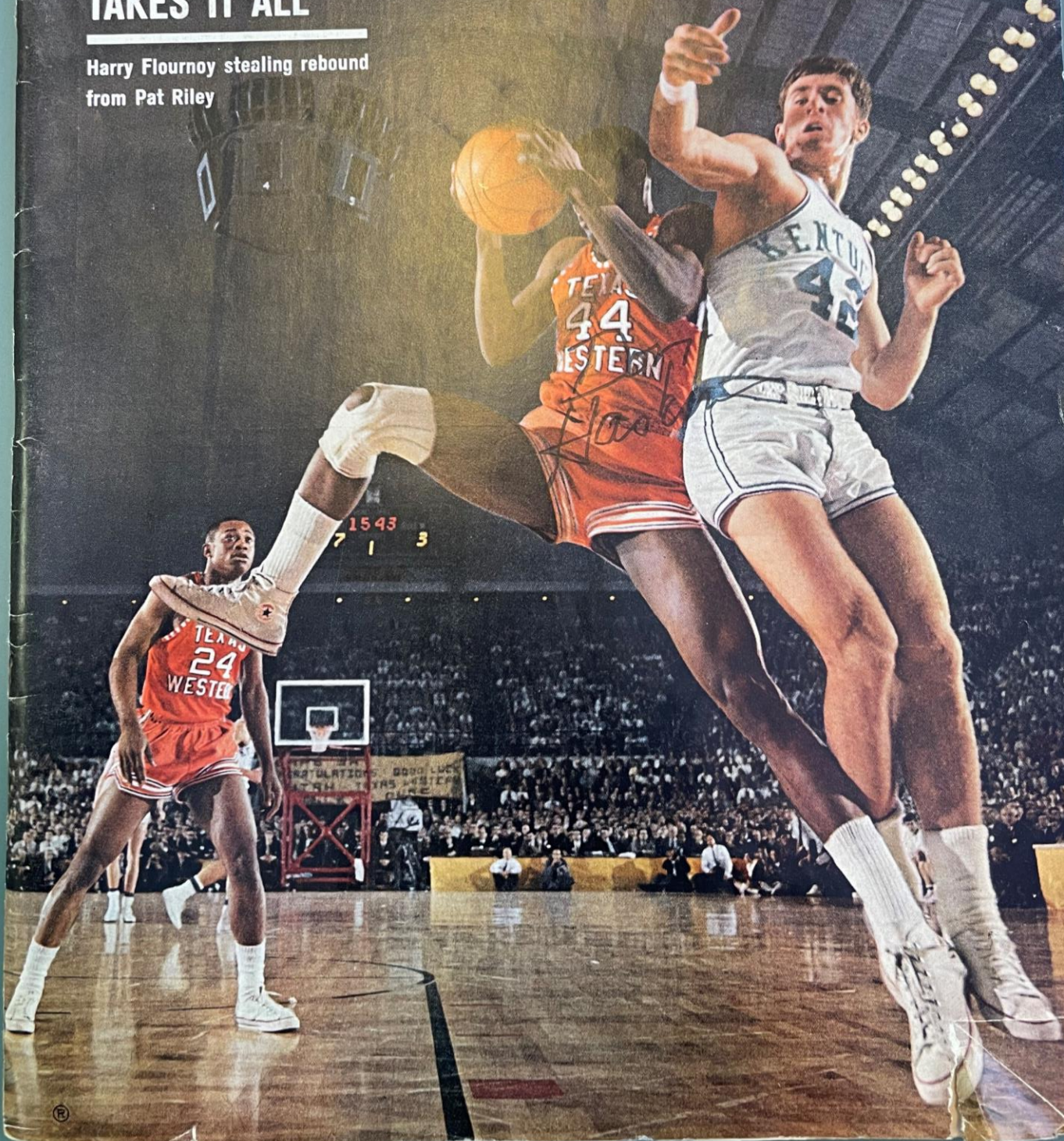
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CLAY-CHUALO PREVIEW

## TEXAS WESTERN TAKES IT ALL

Harry Flournoy stealing rebound  
from Pat Riley





## A call for a redeal shuffled the standings

The new North American International Team competes in its first tournament and by avoiding past errors—poor slam bidding and collapsing in the stretch—pulls off a stunning Vanderbilt Cup victory in Louisville

There used to be places around Louisville—and who knows, there still may be—where it mattered a lot who dealt the cards. It was a wise man who watched how the deck was handled, and a broke one who didn't. This, of course, could never apply in modern tournament bridge, but nonetheless a call for a redeal was heard at Louisville's Kentucky Hotel early last Thursday morning. What followed was a slam-filled climax to one of the most exciting bridge championships in recent memory, and a victory that may well have a bearing on who wins the World Bridge Championship in Italy next month.

The event in contention was the Vanderbilt Cup team championship. It should have ended on Wednesday, but at 12:30 a.m. Thursday the two finalists—one, comfortably ahead by 37 International Match Points, led by Tobias Stone, and the other, our 1966 North American International Team—still had 18 hands to go. While the competitors took a break the few spectators on hand decided to save a little time by shuffling and dealing the last boards. Nothing in the rules prohibits this. In fact, in many tournaments the hands are predealt, sometimes by computer. But when the North American team returned to the table its alternate captain, Edgar Kaplan, announced that he wanted the cards redealt. "Are you going to insult these people by insinuating you don't trust them?" demanded Tournament Director Al Sobel. "No, I'm not," replied Kaplan. "Just tell them my players are superstitious."

The result of this unusual request was a set of 18 remarkable hands and an astounding rally as the International Team, playing those redealt cards, overwhelmed Stone's team 88 IMPs to 5 and won the Vanderbilt Cup by 46 IMPs.

Of course, the cards had to be the

right kind on which to mount such a rally. And perhaps it is a good omen that it was on slam hands—the type on which the Italians usually demonstrate their superiority—that our International squad piled up its heaviest swings. Of five slam hands in this final session, one was a standoff, but the other four rewarded good, aggressive bidding by the International Team. Involved in the action were Stone and his teammates—Ivan Erdos, Len Harmon, Billy Eisenberg (a fifth member, Robert Goldman, sat out)—against four of the six International Team players, Lew Mathe, Robert Hamman, Ira Rubin and Philip Feldesman (Sammy Kehela, their fifth, sat out). The hand below is a sample of the International Team's aggressive play.

As the combined North-South hands contained only 25 high-card points, it was not particularly surprising that in one room Harmon and Eisenberg decided to stop at six hearts. The International

Team, however, got a big break in the bidding when Rubin elected not to open with the South hand. This enabled him to use a jump-shift response of three hearts, showing a good suit and a maximum pass. Feldesman immediately visualized a heart slam and his bid of four clubs had a dual purpose. It would give Rubin the opportunity to show any preference for spades, a development that might have diminished North's enthusiasm because of the danger of a spade loser, and it would reduce the chance of an opening club lead, which might be fatal in six hearts.

The partnership uses Roman Blackwood, which in this case worked out just like regular Blackwood. After identifying two aces and a king, Feldesman was able to bid a grand slam, since it was a near certainty that South's king was in hearts, and it appeared the spade suit could be used for any discards.

The play was straightforward. The opening lead of the club king was taken by the ace. After drawing trump, spades were attacked and the third round ruffed. The diamond ace and a diamond ruff gave dummy the lead for another spade ruff, and a trump lead to dummy enabled South to discard his club losers on the two good spades.

In the final surge, Mathe and Hamman, who played brilliantly throughout, reached two excellent small slam contracts that were missed by the Stone team. In the hand at right Stone and Erdos no doubt thought they had done well when they scored 650 points. At their table, West had opened the bidding with one heart, North jumped to five clubs, East doubled and Stone-Erdos made an overtrick. But Mathe and Hamman did even better.

Mathe's weak two-bid on only a five-card suit was unorthodox, but the vul-

South dealer Neither side vulnerable		NORTH	
		♠ A K 10 7 3 2	
		♥ A Q J 4	
		♦ 8	
		♣ 7 4	
WEST		EAST	
♠ 4		♠ Q J 9 5	
♥ 7 2		♥ 8	
♦ K 9 7 5 3 2		♦ Q J 10 4	
♣ K Q 5 2		♣ J 10 9 6	
SOUTH			
♠ 8 6			
♥ K 10 9 6 5 3			
♦ A 6			
♣ A 8 3			
SOUTH (Rubin)	WEST	NORTH (Feldesman)	EAST
PASS	PASS	1 ♣	PASS
3 ♥	PASS	4 ♣	PASS
4 ♦	PASS	4 N. T.	PASS
5 ♥	PASS	5 N. T.	PASS
6 ♦	PASS	7 ♥	PASS
PASS	PASS		



nerability situation was a factor. When North cue-bid in hearts, the suit in which West had overcalled, Mathe considered the possibility that North did not have good spade support but was interested in one of the minor suits. He tried five diamonds. When North revealed his true intentions by bidding five spades, Mathe reasoned that if Hamman could suggest a slam with no better trumps than the queen, he could hardly have more than a single loser outside the trump suit. He therefore went on to six spades. The defense took a heart trick, and that ended the proceedings. The gain was another eight IMPs.

<i>East dealer</i> <i>East-West</i> <i>vulnerable</i>		<b>NORTH</b> ♠ Q 7 5 2 ♥ 10 ♦ — ♣ A K Q J 9 6 4 2	
<b>WEST</b> ♠ 10 9 ♥ A K J 9 5 3 ♦ K Q 5 2 ♣ 5	<b>EAST</b> ♠ 6 4 ♥ Q 7 6 ♦ A 10 8 7 6 ♣ 10 8 3		
<b>SOUTH</b> ♠ A K J 8 3 ♥ 8 4 2 ♦ J 9 4 3 ♣ 7			
<b>EAST</b> (Eisenberg) PASS PASS PASS PASS	<b>SOUTH</b> (Mathe) 2 ♠ 5 ♦ 6 ♠	<b>WEST</b> (Harmon) 3 ♥ PASS PASS	<b>NORTH</b> (Hamman) 4 ♥ 5 ♠ PASS

The North American team's come-from-behind victory seems to me to be a good omen, especially since it was achieved where we were previously weak against the Italians.

It is also meaningful in another way. The defending champion Italians are famous for their fine performances in the final sessions—just when, in recent years, our own teams have faltered. Our trouble in the past was that our nonplaying captain could not feel equal confidence in all three of his pairs. He was forced to rely on two of them for most of the crucial sessions, which meant he came into the finals with a weary squad. This year North America has three powerful pairs—Eric Murray and Kehela are the third—but illness kept Murray out of the Vanderbilt. Rubin and Feldesman had to play every hand in this exhausting event, but the team still won. So we have staying power, too. We may yet end Italy's hope of winning its ninth world championship.

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