

BRIDGE VICTORIA BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2023

EDITOR: CHRIS HUGHES



EDITORIAL – CHRIS HUGHES

My name is Chris Hughes and I approach this new task with some trepidation.

I have been playing this wonderful game of bridge for many years with some occasional successes. However, I have never edited a bridge bulletin before. Moreover, the previous editor, Dee Harley, has done a fantastic job over the years as all would agree and will be a hard act to follow. This adds to my anxiety.

Picture the scene at the Chicago Bulls basketball stadium the day after Michael Jordan retired. The poor recruit that was drafted was told that you are taking Michael's place in the team. Dee and I are good friends and we have played bridge together in several events and I appreciate his efforts in making this transition as painless as possible but the Chicago stadium flashes through my subconscious.

On a more positive note, I will try and introduce some (hopefully positive) changes to the bulletin whilst retaining most of the tried-and-true sections.

Some of the ideas to be introduced will include the following:

- I will allocate more space to our Congress events so that the convenors and/or the successful players can provide some interesting hands or anecdotes.
- I will have a section on humorous incidents at the bridge table without offending anybody and not supplying any names (the readers assistance in this area would be appreciated)
- I will introduce a feedback column where readers can submit a bidding and/or play problem which will be addressed in the following issue



Above is a picture of Chris Hughes looking puzzled at home.

So, in summary, this bulletin is for all Victorian bridge players whether they play in the country or the city. Therefore, any input that you make will be greatly appreciated and will add to the state-wide nature of this monthly offering.

Submit all your input to my private email address

loganrun@optusnet.com.au

Movie buffs will recognise a subtle reference to a 1976 science fiction film.

BRIDGE VICTORIA PRESIDENT CHRISTOPHER LEACH

The end of 2022 sealed a momentous time for bridge in Victoria with a series of major announcements which completely “change the game” for the future of the pastime we all love.

In the first announcement, the VBA announced a move in January from its premises at Poath Road to a much lower-cost operating environment at Dendy Park in Brighton. This will permit its bridge operations to become financially self-sustaining for the first time since 2009. The losses the VBA has incurred at its oversized Poath Road home have prevented it from functioning as a truly effective state body for many years.

The second major announcement is about administratively separating the operations of the state and club to enable focus on better services. We will be operating under two business names – Bridge Victoria (BV) for the State operations and Victorian Bridge Centre (VBC) for the club activities. These two business areas will report separately to the VBA Council, which is the Board of the Victorian Bridge Association Limited. The organisation to support these separate operations will be implemented over the coming year. In February, the VBA website will transform into the Bridge Victoria website and will be the first stop for affiliate clubs seeking information and support, while the VBC will have its own website.

Lastly, we have excellent news about the site at Poath Road, which has been sold after an extraordinary offer which the directors deemed to be too attractive to ignore in a degrading property market, with further interest rate rises imminent. The bulk of the proceeds of the sale of Poath Road, once fully received, will be placed in a Future Fund. The income from the Future Fund will provide long-term support for bridge in Victoria.

These sweeping changes set the framework for a bright future for bridge in our state. I would like to thank all past and current members of the VBA Council whose assiduous collaborative efforts have overseen this remarkable transformation.



BRIDGE HAND OF THE MONTH

The following hand took place in a recent Swiss Pairs event

NORTH

♠ QJ8
♥ 42
♦ T7
♣ A98765

WEST

♠
♥
♦
♣

EAST

♠
♥
♦
♣

SOUTH

♠ AT965
♥ AK76
♦ AJ9
♣ K

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1♠	P
2♠	P	4♠	P
P	P		

South, over North's 2♠, simply bids 4♠ on the theory that you don't tell the opponents anything else about your hand.

West leads the J♣ and it goes 5♣, 4♣ to your K♣.

At trick 2, South leads the K♥ and it goes 3♥ 2♥ and 8♥.

At trick 3, South leads the A♥ and it goes 5♥ 4♥ and East ruffs this with the 2♠.

At trick 4, East leads the ♦K and it goes ♦A ♦6 and ♦7.

So, West had a six card ♥ suit headed by the QJT9.

Yet West led the ♣J instead – looks like a singleton.

This is now the position.

NORTH

♠ QJ8
♥
♦ T
♣ A9876

WEST

♠
♥
♦
♣

EAST

♠
♥
♦
♣

SOUTH

♠ AT965
♥ 76
♦ J9
♣

You almost certainly must lose a ♠ and a ♦

along with the one trick that you have already lost. Therefore, you can't afford to lose any more tricks.

What is your plan from here?

Submit all your input to my private email address:

loganrun@optusnet.com.au

YOUTH BRIDGE

The highly anticipated Australian Youth Bridge Championships 2023 were recently held face to face in Canberra after a 3-year hiatus. A welcome return for Australian Youth Bridge, the event attracted a range of participants from all over the country aged 14-30.

The sound of shuffling cards and the murmur of strategy filled the room as we commenced Day 1 with the Pairs qualifying giving many players a chance to refine their skill for the rest of the week.

The top 10 pairs from the qualifying played off in the Pairs Final with the remaining 6 pairs battling it out in the Pairs Consolation. After qualifying 1st in the qualifying Victorian Youth Coordinator Rebecca O'Reilly and partner David Gue were well placed going into the final but the experience and skill of her predecessor Jamie Thompson playing with Andrew Spooner were too strong a force.

After narrowly missing out on a spot in the final Victorian pair Damon Flicker and Seb Wright remained focused to top the Pairs Consolation comfortably with 65%.



Day 3 & 4 of the Teams Championships had Team **STONEHAM** (Jamie Thompson, Andrew Spooner, Mitch Dowling, Alan Stoneham) finishing first with 10 wins, 4 draws and 0 losses. Until of course they met their match in the Cliff Wake with our expert players (Renee Cooper, Liam Milne, Jess Brake, Susan Humphries) who won the 4 board BAM (Board-A-Match).

Following the teams was the major event of the week for some, and a reminder of how old you are getting for others...The Australian Youth Squad Selection!

The six pairs who qualified for the Youth Squad this year (including 3x Victorian players) in order of placing are:

- 1st Joshua Tomlin / David Gue
- 2nd George Bartley / Jack Luke-Paredi
- 3rd Sebastian Langdon Macmillan / Tomer Libman
- 4th Damon Flicker (VIC)/ Seb Wright (VIC)
- 5th Jasmine Skeate / Paddy Taylor
- 6th Alex Goss (VIC)/ Bertie Morgan

Keep your eye out for the selected junior team representing Australia in the Netherlands to be announced soon!

Rebecca O'Reilly
Youth Bridge

BRIDGE HUMOUR



My partner and I were playing in a match point pairs event in a country congress. After a run of fairly fortunate results where the opponents were playing Santa Claus, we saw on the published results on the wall that we were leading after the first session before lunch.

Shortly after the start of play in the afternoon session, we played against a couple from the local area. The four hands were very distributional and the bidding got high very quickly in a very competitive auction. After opening a game forcing 2♣ and my partner offering a positive response, the opponents' pre-emptive bidding started. Their aggressive bidding didn't allow the use of Blackwood but I knew we had the tricks for at least a small slam and quite possibly a grand slam. With eleven tricks in my own hand, all I needed was for partner to have the missing ace of spades for his positive response to take all thirteen tricks. 7NT said I.

The lady on my left looked at this bid for a long while and passed as did my partner and the lady's husband on my right. After another long hesitation, she led the ace of spades. Down one.

I asked her why she didn't double. She stated that you seemed such good players that you would probably find a way to make the contract.

I said that we have admirably disproved that theory.



RESULTS

CONGRESS RESULTS FOR JANUARY-VICTORIA

Due to the time of year, there were no congresses held in Victoria that started in January.

However, I would like to congratulate the winners of the two major Victorian State events from 2022.

THE PENNANT TEAMS WAS WON BY A FOURSOME FROM GEELONG

1. Douglas Newlands
2. Denny Newland
3. Arthur Robbins
4. Stephen Lester

THE OPEN PAIRS WERE WON BY A BRIDGE PLAYING PAIR OF BROTHERS

1. Stephen Sharp
2. Danny Sharp

NATIONAL RESULTS

Each January, the National Championships are held in Canberra. For several years now, the venue has been the Canberra Rex Hotel.

In the first week of the event is the Senior and Women's teams. If you don't qualify for the semi-finals, there is a major Swiss pairs event at the end of the week for restricted and open players.

In the second week is the major team's event. If you finish in the top eight, then play continues on the weekend in a knock out format through to the final on Sunday

The bridge is constant, especially if you are performing well. There is enough to satisfy even the most enthusiastic player even if you aren't in the finals with alternate events scheduled.

NOTABLE VICTORIAN RESULTS

- Jenny Thompson played on the Women's team that lost in the final
- Ben Thompson, playing with Renee Cooper, comfortably won the very prestigious Swiss Pairs event at the end of the first week. Then not satisfied with this major milestone, they played in the open teams together and lost in the semi-final
- In the open team's final, there were two Victorian players, Justin Mill and James Coutts, playing on the Ziggy team. After a close contest for most of the way, they lost the final.



UPCOMING EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

VICTORIA

To the best of my knowledge, there is only one Victorian congress in February.

The Yarra Valley Congress to be held on Saturday 4th February starting at 10am as a face-to-face event at the Waverley Bridge Club.

It is a red point event Swiss pairs event. I would request either the director or the convenor to submit the results and a hand and/or an anecdote from the day for March's bulletin to my email address:

loganrun@optusnet.com.au

It would be great to see the names of people who contribute and/or do well in these events to be recognised in print

NATIONAL

The Gold Coast Congress is held in Broadbeach from February 17th to February 25th at the Convention Centre.

There are pairs and team's competitions for all range of levels of experience.

For those who have never played in this event before, even though the bridge is competitive, the Queensland climate ensures that activities other than bridge are prevalent and enjoyed as well.

This event is considerably larger than the national championships of Canberra in January and it is one to enjoy for non-bridge playing family members as well (given that daily trips are organised for these people).

As a matter of fact, the Broadbeach retail outlets do a better business in this week than they do in the Christmas-New Year period.

WHAT NEXT IN DEFENCE?

You are sitting West and you observe the following auction.

1NT is 12-14 hcp

2♦ is a transfer to ♥s and 3♦ is a natural game force

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
		1NT	P
2♦	P	2♥	P
3♦	P	3NT	P
P	P		

Your hand is as follows

♠ A43
 ♥ 54
 ♦ 9832
 ♣ KJT83

Your partner suggests you lead 5th highest from this holding, so to keep 'pard' happy, you lead the ♣3.

You may not agree with the lead but it works out okay

[note: tell partner that his idea worked out well!].

The first trick goes ♣3 ♣2 ♣A ♣5.

At trick 2, East leads the ♣6 ♣7 to your ♣8 and North plays the ♠2.

This is the situation.

You have played the ♣3 and the ♣8

Dummy has played the ♣2 and the ♠2

The two cards that declarer and partner have played are shown.

NORTH

♠ J92
 ♥ AKT76
 ♦ AJ76
 ♣ 2

WEST

♠ A43
 ♥ 54
 ♦ 9832
 ♣ KJT83

EAST

♠
 ♥
 ♦
 ♣ A6

SOUTH

♠
 ♥
 ♦
 ♣ 75

What information do you have about declarer's hand and partner's

What is your plan from here?

Answer on Page 12

OTHER

MOONEE VALLEY WIN AUSTRALIA-WIDE TEAMS

Last year, the ABF established a new, national Gold Point event – the *Australia Wide Teams Club Knockout*. Clubs from across Australia competed in this online, knockout tournament, in categories ranging from open through to under 50 MPs.

The successful team in the open category was George Lovrecz, Leo Saoud, TP Ranasinghe and Gordon McRobert representing the Moonee Valley Bridge Club. They defeated the Nedlands team from WA 73-38 in the final. Congratulations to Moonee Valley on their success in the inaugural event!



One of the great aspects of this tournament is that it encourages players to participate in a team's format, irrespective of their experience. In the under 50 MPs section, Kevin Gu, Nitin Joglekar, Ann Zhu and Marg Ferguson from the Waverley Bridge Club successfully made it through the knock-out rounds but were beaten in the final by a team from Wagga Wagga. Congratulations on making the final. The 2023 *Australia Wide Teams Club Knockout* will commence in July. More information is available on the [ABF website](#). Start putting your team together.

We would love to see Victorian teams continue their success in this national event.

Prominent people playing Bridge in Heaven

I do not wish to display all the bridge players that fit into this category as I won't have a complete list. However, two very prominent people who have left our bridge tables follow.

VALE DR IAN MCCANCE – 1927-2023

The Australia bridge community lost a giant with the passing of Dr Ian McCance on 5th January, aged 95.

Ian won the Victorian Open Teams (Pennant) more than ten times, the Victorian Mixed Pairs with Felicity Beale on seven occasions, and the Victorian Open Pairs five times – with five separate partners.

Ian's leadership was apparent in that he was called upon to captain many teams. In addition to captaining the Victorian Open Team, he also captained the youth team and the women's team.

Ian played for Australia in the world championships, debuting in the 1968 Olympiad in partnership with Fred Altman. They defeated the mighty Italian Blue team 18-2, but narrowly missed the semi-finals after Dick Cummings collapsed and had to be taken to hospital late in the tournament.

VALE DAVID MORGAN – 1959-2023

In his early career he called Canberra home, residing there between 1984 and 2004, although some of that time was spent in overseas postings as he pursued his career in the diplomatic service. During this time, he was a member of the ACT Open Team for ANC1990 and won two state and two club titles. He was a fine bridge player who won the Victorian Pennant in 2009 and played on the Victorian Open Team in 2009, 2010 and 2018.

In addition to being an accomplished player, David was very active in bridge administration. He served on the VBA council from 2012 until 2022 and held the position of Vice President from 2019 – 2022. He served as a member of the ABF Match & Tournament Committee from June 2014, and became its Chairman in June 2015 to late 2018 when he stepped down due to ill health. He was captain of the 2013 Australian Open Team to the APBF Championships.

Internationally David is best known for his role on the International Bridge Press Association's jury panel which selects the IBPA Book of the Year and he was a book reviewer for *The Bridge World* magazine

They were both champions of the game who helped put Victoria on the bridge map but, as importantly, they were true gentlemen who were always well mannered at the table and away from it.

JENNY THOMPSON'S UPDATE

The ABF has set up an Online Bridge Committee to investigate all aspects of on-line bridge in Australia. It is acknowledged that both in-person and on-line bridge are important for the future of our game.

The Committee is very interested in hearing from all stakeholders in our bridge community. An online survey is being prepared which will be sent out shortly. Recently in Canberra the Committee organised a face-to-face discussion session on the topic. This discussion can be viewed on the following link:

<https://www.bridgetv.com.au/uncategorized/abf-online-discussions/>

There will be another face-to-face discussion session at the Gold Coast Congress after play on Sunday February 19th.

The Committee is also calling for people to join a task force to work with them to prepare a draft strategic plan to be presented to the ABF Board in April. If you have an interest in assisting, please email Jenny Thompson, Chair of the Online Bridge Committee, on jtbt@optusnet.com.au.

Thanks



FEEDBACK

In future bulletins, I will attempt to answer questions that people have sent in regarding situations they faced at the table in the bidding or play?

Again, please send any thoughts to my email address

loganrun@optusnet.com.au

As was the case when our house was auctioned several years ago, where the only genuine bid was from the auctioneer, I will propose my own question if there are no queries.

WHAT NEXT IN DEFENCE? - SOLUTION

NORTH

♠ J92
♥ AKT76
♦ AJ76
♣ 2

WEST

♠ A43
♥ 54
♦ 9832
♣ KJT83

EAST

♠
♥
♦
♣ A6

SOUTH

♠
♥
♦
♣ 75

Declarer has a relatively balanced hand with 12-14 points and probably only has two ♥s else they might have bid 4♥

You have 8 points. Dummy has 13 points which comes to 21 points. Partner has shown you 4 points by winning the first trick. Thus, you can see 25 points. By deducting this total from 40 leaves 15 points outstanding. What else can partner have – it must be in the range of 1 to 3 points (as declarer has 12-14). You hope partner has either four ♥s to the Q or QTx (first case) or ♦K (second case).

If you cash the ♣K and lead the ♣T. The best declarer can do is 4-5♦, 2♥s and 1♣ in the first case or 1♦, 5♥s and 1♣ before partner gets in and returns a ♠ to your A. Hence one or two down. Bravo oh well thought out!

Unfortunately, partner held the ♠K. So, declarer made 4♦, 5♥s and 1♣ for an over trick. The thoughtful defence was the best opportunity to defeat the contract but this time the operation was successful but the patient died.