

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

October 2017

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson

First of all, thanks to Christopher Leach for covering for me last month with his interesting and insightful column on



the benefits and future of bridge. It continues to frustrate me, and bridge administrators everywhere, that there is huge government funding for physical sports but very little for other important sports and activities like bridge which support a much broader spectrum of our society.

Here's an example that I still find incredible. I called the Victorian Department of Sport and Recreation, as it was then, and asked what funding programs they had for Recreation. The very pleasant chap I spoke with said that they only funded sports on the Australian Institute of Sport's list of sports. I assumed he'd misunderstood me and thought I was asking only about "sport" so I asked what they did for "recreation". The answer was, basically, nothing.

As Christopher points out, and as governments are well aware, the costs of social isolation are enormous, and the benefits of reducing it are enormous. And bridge is an ideal activity to combat isolation.

Queensland clubs are often successful in getting substantial grants from the government-administered Community Benefit Fund. The Victorian equivalent is heavily biased in favour of supporting physical sports. It is frankly disgraceful that bridge, and so many other important community-oriented activities, have so little access to government support in Victoria.

MELTON FIRE – DO YOU HAVE CONTENTS INSURANCE?

Recently, Melton Bridge Club lost a lot of their equipment in a fire, to the tune of about \$1000 in tables, boards, etc. Club Secretary Rosemary Hare said it was lucky she had taken the computer and bridgemates home or they would also have been lost.

Unfortunately Melton BC were not covered by their Community Centre's insurance (where they play), or the ABF insurance, which covers a lot of things, but not contents. The good news is that Steve Weil of TBIB - insurance brokers to the ABF and its members - came to the party with a donation of \$1,000 to help get Melton back on its feet.

This is a harsh reminder for clubs to take stock of just how much it would cost to replace property and get going again if there was a fire or other cause of damage. Reviewing your insurance costs nothing, but it could save you everything.

Long time ABF sponsor TBIB look after many clubs around the country. If you haven't spoken with them, now might be a good time to make sure you're covered. Contact Steve on 07 3252 5254 or email him at steveweil@tbib.com.au.



Rosemary Hare (right) with VBA Secretary Kim Frazer and the cheque.

FOR STARTERS

Playing for matchpoints, you pick up:

♠ 62 ♥ Q32 ♦ AKQ94 ♣ Q104

The dealer is on your left, and everyone is vulnerable. The auction starts:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♠	Pass	1NT	?

As usual, there are two options: pass or bid. What's it to be?

Passing might be a good idea. To start with, you are vulnerable, there is opening strength on your left and responding strength (6-9 HCP) on your right. Partner might not have too much!

Furthermore, RHO is short in spades. That means she is long in the other suits, in some form. That is not a good sign for your side's suit contract.

If you do choose to bid, then a bid of 2♦ will at least get your partner off to a good lead if LHO ends up as declarer. On the other hand, it does put all your eggs in the diamond basket. A possibly safer alternative is to *double*, which in this auction is defined as *takeout of opener's suit*, spades. That brings the clubs and hearts into the picture, which might be handy if partner has genuine length there.

But on the whole, inserting yourself into a vulnerable auction is dangerous. You decide to pass, and the auction continues:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Now you wish you had bid 2♦. Partner would then lead a diamond, which must be the best start for the defence.

In this situation, I suggest trying telepathic projection: focus your mind strongly on diamonds, and hope that partner picks up the vibes.

It works. Partner leads the ♦6 and you see:

4♠ by South

♠ 75
♥ J96
♦ J8753
♣ AK9

♦6

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 62
♥ Q32
♦ AKQ94
♣ Q104

You win with the ♦Q, and declarer follows with the ♦10. You know declarer could be faking it with that ♦10, holding the ♦2 as well, so you try another top diamond, on which partner throws a club, declarer following suit with his remaining diamond.

Should you play another diamond? And if so, which one?

There's no certain answer to the first question. Playing a third diamond could cost, because it involves making one of dummy's diamonds a winner on which declarer may be able to discard a loser. But the upside of a third diamond play is it might promote a trump trick for partner: imagine partner with ♠Jxx for example.

If you do play a third diamond, it should be a low one, giving declarer his discard whilst partner can ruff. This will only cost if partner has to ruff with a trump trick he already had: perhaps he started with ♠Qxx. On the other hand if you play a top diamond now, declarer might be able to ruff high, draw trumps and then win the promoted ♦J at his leisure.

You play a low diamond, and declarer ruffs with the ♠A. Now he plays the ♠K, ♠Q, ♠J (partner following all the way), and discards a diamond from dummy.

You also have to make a discard which is ...?

This could be tricky, because there may be more spades coming from declarer, as he tries to squeeze you.

An excellent rule of thumb here is: *try to retain parity with dummy*. In other words keep the same number of cards in any suit as dummy has. That means that to a degree, you have dummy's cards 'covered' by your cards. In this case, if dummy throws a diamond, then you throw a diamond.

And if declarer keeps playing spades, then keep throwing the same suit as dummy does.

The full deal:

♠ 75			
♥ J96			
♦ J8753			
♣ AK9			
♠ 1043	N	♠ 62	
♥ 10874	W E	♥ Q32	
♦ 6	S	♦ AKQ94	
♣ 87632		♣ Q104	
	♠ AKQJ98		
	♥ AK5		
	♦ 102		
	♣ J5		

Declarer has 10 top tricks, and if you discard correctly, that's all he gets. But if at any point you allow dummy to have one more card in any suit than you do, then that card will end up a winner. In a matchpoint duplicate, that overtrick is vitally important.

Points to remember:

- Take a close look at the vulnerability when deciding whether to enter an auction where only your opponents have been bidding.
- A double of a 1NT response to a 1-level suit bid is *takeout of opener's suit*. (This bid is much more handy after a 1♣ or 1♦ opening, where you have the majors, and you know the 1NT bidder doesn't.)
- When playing a suit where you hope partner can ruff or overruff, but with the side-effect of making an opponent's card in that suit a winner, lead *low*, giving them that winner immediately, rather than later.
- When discarding, make every effort to keep suit-length parity with the dummy. For example if both you and dummy have 4 cards in a suit, and dummy discards one, then you can discard one.

The same principle applies when sitting under dummy, or when dummy's suit is running and you are trying to keep parity with declarer's suits, although in both scenarios, it can be more difficult!

TEST YOUR BIDDING

Pre-empts upon pre-empts!

Nil vulnerable

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
3♠	D'ble	4♠	?

In this auction, RHO is extending the force of his partner's pre-empt: 4♠ is a bid you usually don't want to see, because your side likely has a winning contract of your own, if only you can find it.

What to do? Praying might help. Bid a suit if you think you can make that contract, or even jump in a suit if you think you can make a slam. And there are two other possibilities:

Double says: "I have points partner: we're not going to let them get away with this." It is not for penalties: it just shows some strength and no long suit to bid. Partner might bid with extra distribution, or more likely pass to get what penalty can be extracted from 4♠ doubled.

4NT says: "I have shape partner: I don't want to play in 4♠, but I don't know which suit we should play in." Typically, 4NT here shows two non-spade suits. Partner should then bid his cheapest 4+ card suit. You will play there if that is one of your suits, otherwise you take him out to the next suit up. Please note: 4NT is not Blackwood, and it is not takeout for the minors. Repeating:

Double is not for penalties, but shows points. 4NT is not Blackwood, but shows shape.

Try dealing with the following hands:

- (a) ♠ 42 ♥ A103 ♦ 52 ♣ KQ9764
- (b) ♠ 542 ♥ A103 ♦ 2 ♣ AQ9764
- (c) ♠ 42 ♥ A103 ♦ KQ52 ♣ Q976
- (d) ♠ QJ92 ♥ 103 ♦ K852 ♣ J76
- (e) ♠ 2 ♥ 103 ♦ AK852 ♣ Q9764
- (f) ♠ K2 ♥ Q532 ♦ J9852 ♣ 76

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
3♠	D'ble	4♠	?

(a) ♠ 42 ♥ A103 ♦ 52 ♣ KQ9764

5♣. Who knows? You could make it, or you could go down. But given partner's takeout double, theoretically showing support for all the non-spade suits, 5♣ should have a play.

(b) ♠ 542 ♥ A103 ♦ 2 ♣ AQ9764

6♣. Who knows? You could make it, or you could go down. But this is a rather strong hand, and your three little spades makes it all but certain that partner has at most one of them. One can at least hope.

(c) ♠ 42 ♥ A103 ♦ KQ52 ♣ Q976

D'ble. You have the majority of the points, but that certainly doesn't mean that you can make a contract at the 5-level. For the moment, you just need to show those points to partner, and retain the option of playing in 4♠ doubled. If partner has extreme shape, he can take it out, and note that he, like you, can bid 4NT to ask you to start showing your suits.

(d) ♠ QJ92 ♥ 103 ♦ K852 ♣ J76

Pass. Yes, you ache to double, but it's not for penalties! Partner has a spade void: as sure as eggs are eggs, he will remove your double. You need to be prepared to play 4♠ passed out: taking a penalty in 50s sure beats going down in your own contract.

(e) ♠ 2 ♥ 103 ♦ AK852 ♣ Q9764

4NT. A 5-level contract in one of your suits should have a play. If partner bids 5♥, that shows a monster hand with hearts: you will raise to 6♥. If partner is stuck with exactly 2-5-3-3 shape, then it's just not your day.

(f) ♠ K2 ♥ Q532 ♦ J9852 ♣ 76

Pass. Who knows whether 4♠ can make or not. And the 5-level is too rich for you anyway, so you don't really have any opinion to express whatsoever.

CONGRESS RESULTS**Ballarat Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 D. Newlands – D. Newland
- 2 P. Jain – M. Stokie
- 3 H. Stewart – P. Blankfield

Swiss Teams

- 1 S. Klofa, A. Czapnik, R. Gallus, S. Weisz
- 2 D. Newlands, D. Newland, D. Harley, A. St Clair
- 3 K. Bailey, G. Bailey, L. Kaszubski, J. Terlecka

Peninsula Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 K. Frazer – J. Ebery
- 2 M. Darling – A. Mill
- 3 D. Scott – F. McConvill

Swiss Teams

- 1 S. Klofa, R. Gallus, M. Gurfinkiel, J. Yang
- 2 N. Ewart, D. Beckett, G. Bailey, K. Bailey
- 3 A. Maluish, A. Mill, M. Darling, S. Read

Macedon Ranges Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 A. McKay – B. Hardy
- 2 D. Wei – V. Zhang
- 3= L. Griffiths – M. Clarke
- 3= T. Gariepy – B. Mill

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 17 (September 2)*

- 1 E. Ramshaw – C. Woodley (Ballarat)
- 2 M. Wilson – G. Branton (Frankston)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS**Albury Congress**

Saturday 7th October, 12 pm: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 8th October, 9:30 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Commercial Club
 Deane St, Albury

Contact: Richard Harman, 0413 010 478

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Warrnambool Congress

Saturday 14th October, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 15th October, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Emmanuel College Sports Complex
 Botanic Rd, Warrnambool

Contact: Janet Attrill, 0439 350 551

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Bairnsdale Congress

Saturday 21st October, 12 pm: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 22nd October, 12 pm: Swiss Teams

Venue St Mary's Parish Centre
 Bairnsdale

Contact: Phillip Goode, 0417 738 406

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Waverley Congress

Friday 3rd November, 10 am: Graded MP Pairs
 Saturday 4th November, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 5th November, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Waverley Bridge Club
 21a Electra Ave
 Ashwood

Contact: Mary Elson, 9807 6502

Enter: <http://waverleybridgeclub.com.au>



UPCOMING BEGINNER LESSONS

Do you have a friend or relative who would benefit from taking up the world's greatest game? We bet you do! Here are some options:

Seniors Week Crash Course

As part of the Seniors Festival, the VBA is running a one-day crash course at its clubrooms on October 13th from 10:30 am to 4:30 pm. Cost is just \$20.

Contact Bianca Gold on 9530 9006 or at bianca@vba.asn.au for more details.

Waverley Bridge Club

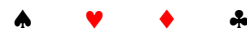
Choose between Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm starting October 18th, or Thursday afternoons at 1:45 pm starting October 19th for this 8 week course (plus two card-play sessions and a free supervised duplicate session). Total cost is \$120.

Contact Mary Elson on 9807 6502 or at office@waverleybridgeclub.com.au for more details.

Dendy Park Bridge Club

A series of 8 lessons, beginning Tuesday October 17th at 7:30 pm. Total cost is \$160.

Contact Boris Tencer on 0414 353 996 or at boristencer@arcon.com.au for more details.



RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Laurie Bjorksten	Sale
Shelley Kaye	Kings & Queens
Shirley Philpott	Royal South Yarra

*State

Dorothy Baenziger	Royal South Yarra
June Breguet	Geelong
Joan Bryant	Moonee Valley
Helen Price	Benalla
Terry Sheafe	Berwick

National

Marianne Beyer	Berwick
Bella Edelman	Dendy Park
Kaye Haebich	Yarrowonga
Bruce May	Moonee Valley

*National

Lucienne Newton-Tabrett	Warrnambool
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**National

Peter Karol	Rye Beach
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Life

Brian Hardy	Waverley
Dot Peacock	Geelong
Janet Reynolds	Melbourne
Jackie Rossiter-Nuttall	Dromana

Gold Life

Kate Bechet	Mornington
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Grand

Sylvia Kudelka	Waverley
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JOAN BUTTS TEACHING WORKSHOP

The VBA Council is committed to supporting the national bridge education objectives of the ABF and, in particular, the program for accreditation of bridge teachers. It is a long-term goal that accreditation should become an essential step to teach bridge in Australia. Since 2011, when the program commenced, dozens of teacher accreditations have occurred and more and more teachers are receiving their certificates as each month goes by. This week, in Victoria, we welcome two excellent new accredited teachers in the persons of Jan Clyne and Stella Hammond. Congratulations to Jan and Stella.

Accreditation is principally obtained by completion of the points-based program set out by the ABF, online and in-person, but may include acknowledgement of prior long-term experience and activities. Anyone interested in becoming a bridge teacher, or proceeding to accreditation, is urged to go to the Australian Bridge Federation website, take the Education tab, and then "ABF Accreditation Program".

On the weekend of September 23, 24, the National Director of Teaching, Joan Butts (right), gave two well-attended and superbly conducted workshops at the VBA clubrooms, both of which enabled participants to gain points towards their accreditation goal. A very nice luncheon was included and the teachers present Saturday mingled with those attending Jamie Thompson's workshop which was occurring at the same time. A big education weekend at the VBA.



Education will be a prime focus of the VBA into the future and many events are in the planning stages. I am delighted that Joan will be returning November 11th for a one-day seminar on modern bidding principles, which will also count towards accreditation. Anybody interested who is not directly contacted by Joan should consult the flyer which will be placed on the VBA website.

... *Christopher Leach*

WE'RE GETTING OLDER!

The World Bridge Federation has decided to raise the age requirement for Senior players to 65 over the next 8 years in accordance with the following schedule:

- Thus from 1st January 2018, a Senior player must be aged 61 in the year of the Championship in which he is going to play
- On 1st January 2020 it will be raised to 62 years of age
- On 1st January 2022 it will be raised to 63 years of age
- On 1st January 2024 it will be raised to 64 years of age
- On 1st January 2026 it will be raised to 65 years of age

It seems likely that the ABF will follow suit with these changes, in due course.

For players affected (those born from 1958 onward) this might be bad news or good news, depending on your perspective. Do you *want* to be considered a Senior, or not?¹

Hughesdale Station Closure 14th October – mid 2018

Hughesdale Rail Station will close in October to enable the existing station to be demolished, and installation of elevated rail spans in the Hughesdale Station precinct and across Poath Road.

Players using rail to commute to bridge will need to change at Murrumbeena and Oakleigh stations to board the train replacement bus to Hughesdale Station.

The new Hughesdale Station will open mid-2018. The station will be rebuilt on the western side of Poath Road.

<http://levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/disruptions> for more information.

¹ A couple of years back, someone asked me to play in a Seniors event with him. I said happily: "I'm not a senior yet." He said "yes, you are." And he was right. It was a bit depressing ... *BJ*

BLACK MAGIC

6♥, South ♠ AK5
 ♥ 1054
 ♦ Q10
 ♣ KJ732

N
S

♠ QJ108 ♠ 97432
 ♥ A8 ♥ 3
 ♦ J9762 ♦ A854
 ♣ 95 ♣ 1064

♠ 6
 ♥ KQJ9762
 ♦ K3
 ♣ AQ8

North/South have been careless, blasting into a 6♥ slam missing two cashing aces. Have they never heard of 4NT? Without Blackwood, Blackmagic is all that's left.

West led ♠Q. How did declarer make it?

South threw sand in West's eyes. He won the ♠A, then played the ♠K, discarding the ♠Q! Now a heart was led, West's ace.

West was sucked in. From his perspective, it seemed that declarer might have:

♠ x ♥ KQJxxxx ♦ Axxx ♣ Q

In that scenario, playing a diamond now would pickle partner's ♦K, so West calmly played back a third spade.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

TEST YOUR DEFENCE

Dlr: North ♠ QJ10932
 Vul: E/W ♥ 8
 ♦ AQ7
 ♣ AQ4

N
W E
S

♠ 6 ♠ AK5
 ♥ 7632
 ♥ -
 ♦ -
 ♣ J107632

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Partner leads the ♠6. You win and ... ?

It might be too late. This spade lead, in the face of North's bid and rebid suit, smells like a singleton. So three rounds of spades, West ruffing, and a diamond return ruffed by you, will put paid to this contract.

But how is partner to know to play a diamond? You can give him a gentle nudge in the right direction by winning the first spade with the ace, followed by the king and another. This is a suit-preference signal, pointing partner to the higher suit (diamonds) over the lower suit (clubs).

♠ QJ10932
 ♥ 8
 ♦ AQ7
 ♣ AQ4

N
S

♠ 6 ♠ AK5
 ♥ 94 ♥ 7632
 ♦ K98543 ♦ -
 ♣ K985 ♣ J107632

♠ 874
 ♥ AKQJ105
 ♦ J1062
 ♣ -

Clearly the suit of AK5 opposite singleton 6 has hidden depths ...

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dlr: South ♠ AK5
 Vul: all ♥ K3
 ♦ AQ4
 ♣ A9732

♠2 led

N
S

♠ 6
 ♥ AQJ1098
 ♦ 732
 ♣ 864

West	North	East	South
Pass	6♥	All pass	2♥

The ♠2 is led to your slam. Plan the play.

Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

<p>♠ Q1032 ♥ 764 ♦ J985 ♣ KJ</p>	<table style="margin: auto; border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	S	<p>♠ AK5 ♥ K3 ♦ AQ4 ♣ A9732</p> <p>♠ J9874 ♥ 52 ♦ K106 ♣ Q105</p> <p>♠ 6 ♥ AQJ1098 ♦ 732 ♣ 864</p>
N				
S				

Let's see: there are 2 spades tricks, 6 hearts and 2 minor suit aces. Some extra tricks from clubs, and maybe the diamond queen, can make up the deficit.

To maximise your chances, play low from dummy at trick 1! East will be surprised as he wins his ♠J, but what can he do now? Suppose he returns a spade. Pitch two clubs on the spades, play ♣A and ruff a club, cross to the ♥K and ruff another club.

On this layout, that gives you two club winners: tricks 11 and 12 for you. If clubs turn out to be 4-1, you will need the diamond finesse (and a 3-2 trump break).

The danger with winning the first trick is that you may have to concede a club trick to West. Then a diamond through will put you at the mercy of the diamond finesse.

JUST FOR CLUBS ... TRANSITIONING TO SESSION PLAY Sandra Mulcahy

Transitioning players from supervised/help with play sessions to an 'open' session is when most clubs lose members. People either stay in supervised play for an unnecessarily long time or they attend one session, get spoken to rudely or dismissively, and then don't return.

To ease their transition you could consider:

- offering them a mentor for 3 sessions to ease them into session bridge (mentor plays free). The mentor will make sure the new player is comfortable with the

use of scoring equipment and movements and will intervene if the person is treated inappropriately. Make sure that each mentor has the necessary interpersonal skills to effectively undertake the role.

- have the session Director announce their participation and welcome them. Ask players to be mindful of their status and to be patient. (My understanding is that new players like this but do not like to be identified to the broader group.)
- for larger clubs, consider introducing a novice row (say, for people with 0-5 masterpoints). Many clubs do something similar and it seems to work.

Before they transition consider:

- having a Director talk to their beginner group and explain their role
- ensure that you assist them to fill out a system card
- explain to them how your club's scoring system works
- conduct a 'mock' session so that they are familiar with either a Howell or Mitchell movement
- remind them that they can't refer to notes or ask questions in an 'open' session; and
- advise them that if they don't understand a person's bid, they can ask that person's partner (when it is their turn to bid).



Essentially, take the fear of the unknown away as much as possible and make sure that your members treat them with respect and dignity.