

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

December 2019

Editor: Dee Harley

WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION BEN THOMPSON

It has been my privilege to serve as President of the Victorian Bridge Association for the last 7 years. Bridge in Victoria has grown strongly over that time, and in many ways become a friendlier more welcoming game – something of which everyone involved in running, promoting, supporting and playing our beautiful game should be proud.

I am grateful for the support and friendship I've enjoyed from so many people while I've been President. You cannot achieve anything in this kind of role without many people voluntarily working with you to continually improve the game for everyone. I have been truly fortunate.

I regret that I cannot name and thank everyone individually here, but I do want to thank my wife Jenny especially. She has been amazing me for 25 years, not least of all for her ability to get me to listen to reason when I am completely unwilling to do so. Thank you Jenny, I love you.

I would like to wish Christopher Leach the very best of luck as our presumptive next President (he is unopposed for election, so I like his chances). I know he will do a fine job because he has done a fine job standing in for me several times this year while I have been travelling on business.

Finally, thank you to every Victorian bridge player. I took this job on for you. The overwhelmingly positive feedback I have received throughout my term has made it an absolute joy and pleasure. I look forward to seeing you at the table and enjoying together this game we all love!

STATE RESULTS

Victorian State Teams (Pennant)

1. Neil Ewart, Simon Henbest, Chris Hughes, Dee Harley
2. Jamie Thompson, David Thompson, David Beckett, Andrew Macready-Bryan
3. Douglas Newlands, Gary Ridgway, Denny Newland, Stephen Lester

Victorian Swiss Pairs

1. Martin Willcox, Kevin Chan
2. Annette Maluish, Andrew Mill
3. David Thompson, Jamie Thompson

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS

VBA Summer Congress

December 7th 10 am Swiss Pairs
December 8th 10 am Teams

Gardenvale Summer Congress:

December 26 to January 6. Red masterpoints in all sessions. Light refreshments provided.
Contact: Jeff Fust 9530 6622

SUIT COMBINATION

How would you handle A653 in hand opposite J872 in dummy if you need three tricks from the suit.

This combination arose during a practice session on BBO This was your trump suit in a slam (ashamed that it was) with no outside losers What would you need?

Secondary question: What are your chances if you only need two tricks from this suit?

You can assume that in both cases above that you have as many entries to either hand as you require.

[Solution](#) on P6.

THE BRIDGE BRAINERY
LAURA GINNAN AND PETE HOLLANDS



On December 12 Laura and Pete will be launching the Bridge Brainers. This new and innovative live session will provide customised teaching and development opportunities. The Brainers is a niche bridge learning environment to complement your bridge playing experiences. Of course, you will be playing but it's all about understanding and appreciation of the game that you love and having a great time while doing it! The sessions for the Brainers will be at Pixel Cafe Bar in Huntingdale. Pixel has the capabilities to deliver a bridge venue like no other. The tech setup is amazing and this very "Melbourne" venue is conducive to the Brainers atmosphere. Every session will also feature complementary tea and coffee and plenty to graze on. Most importantly it's not just a place to play bridge, it's a place that you won't want to leave as you sit and talk all things bridge (maybe even with a wine in hand because you can buy from the bar).

The launch on December 12 will provide a sneak peek at what the sessions will provide and what is to come in the future. Bookings are essential and can be made online at www.bridgevid.com/thebrainery or by emailing bridgevid@gmail.com. The cost of the launch day is \$20 including all workshops and activities, catering and a \$10 voucher to use in February 2020.

Regular weekly sessions will commence on Thursday February 6.

See www.bridgevid.com/thebrainery for more information.

PLAY PROBLEM #3
DEE HARLEY

Last month I gave a solution to Play Problem #2, which while elegant was not correct. Daniel Mao of Williamstown and Bill Jacobs pointed out, that if the first diamond holds the trick (or indeed the second), you now have enough tricks to switch back to clubs and make the contract easily. Thanks to Daniel and Bill.

I would like to remind you that whilst I have a great set of problems, I do not have the "official" solutions to them, so these problems should keep you on your toes. In fact, these responses have given me an idea.

I will not publish my solution until next month, and I will invite you to submit your solutions to me at dee_harley@hotmail.com.

So, this is problem #3 for you:

Dir: South	♠ AK
Vul: All	♥ 7653
	♦ A6
	♣ 98543
♠ J?	♠ ?
♥ ?	♥ ?
♦ ?	♦ ?
♣ ?	♣ ?

N		
W	E	
	S	

♠ Q2
♥ AK
♦ K1098732
♣ AK

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	Pass	2NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	6♦
Pass	6NT	All Pass	

Lead: ♠ J

Here is your starter: South must find 12 tricks. If the diamonds are 3-1 or better, then it's an easy 12 or 13 tricks. What can you do if the diamonds break badly?

Decide on your line and then email me with your solution. I will publish the best answer next month. (If I get one that agrees with my definition of "Correct").

MASTER POINT PROMOTIONS	
Gold Life	
Trish Henderson	Waverley
Bronze Life	
John Lawrence	Bairnsdale
Jan Rothlisberger	Waverley
Lanny Chan	Moonee Valley
**National	
Barbara Hyett	Bendigo
*National	
Nafty Van Der Hoek	VBA
National	
David Hudson	Sale
Lorrie Read	Phillip Island
Alice Green	Rye Beach
Tim Legge	Yarra Valley
*State	
Larry Allender	Northern
Trisha McGregor	Bendigo
Chris Nixon	MCC
Linda Baynham	VBA
Ev Fallshaw	Moonee Valley
Elaine Newcomen	Bairnsdale
Linda Peacock	Lakes Entrance
Susan Gilmour	Waverley
State	
Millicent Henry	Macedon Ranges
Vicki Szpak	Gardenvale
Mary Mackinnon	Sunbury
Kerri Sheppard	Ocean Grove
Kay Grey	Rye Beach
Adam Roberts	Moonee Valley
Julie More	Moonee Valley
Janice Meldrum	Moonee Valley
*Regional	
Adrienne Butler	Bayside
Regional	
Douglas Bell	Kooyong
Margaret Pearson	Torquay
Paul Penman	Waverley
Meredith Landale	Deniliquin
Jenny Andrews	Whittlesea
Michael Finn	Waverley
Sue Kinnear	Royal South Yarra
Judith Foreman	Royal South Yarra
Norm George	Waverley

EDITORIAL
DEE HARLEY

This month heralds the end of my first year as Editor of the bulletin. It's difficult having to make decisions sometimes. I have had a few letters this month, but I have decided against printing them.

The secret shopper is greatly missed.

What a life of coincidences. Yesterday morning I put together the [Suit Combination \(see Page 1\)](#) which features a slam played in a suit of A653 opposite J872. Last night we played in the Christmas Teams at the VBA and with these hands:

Dir: North	♠ 872										
Vul: E-W	♥ Q3										
	♦ J7632										
	♣ 1096										
♠ AQJ93		<table style="border: none; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S	
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ A852		♠ K									
♦ 4		♥ J764									
♣ K84		♦ AK8									
		♣ AQ532									
	♠ 10654										
	♥ K109										
	♦ Q1095										
	♣ J7										

We (as East/West) bid smoothly to 6♥. We weren't alone, as 7 other pairs landed in this inelegant slam. I just could not believe that this was the very suit combination (apart from a pip or two) that I had just written about. Needless to say, no one made it. One pair bid the very reasonable 7♣ slam which rolls home.

Last month Judith Thomson was shown as being promoted to Regional Master. Her club was shown as Ovens and Murray, when it should have been Wangaratta Bridge club. My apologies Judith, my data was out of date, but it has been corrected now.

email me at: dee_harley@hotmail.com

CONGRESS RESULTS



Tivoli Congress - Winners of Under 300 masterpoints. Tim Legge and Alex Jones

Tivoli Bridge Club

Pairs

1. Andrew Hegedus, Justin Mill
2. Helen Stewart, Mary Allison
3. Chris Fernando, Lindsey Robinson

Under 300 MPs

1. Tim Legge - Alexander Jones
2. Sari Irlicht - Louis Cukierman

Waverley Congress

Swiss Pairs

1. Sylvia Gluck, Ben Kingham
2. Steven White, Frank Kovacs
3. Kim Frazer, Jamie Ebery

Teams

1. Jamie Ebery, Leigh Gold,
Danny Sharp, Stephen Sharp
2. Kim Frazer, Robert Gallus,
Neil Ewart, Michael Gurfinkiel
3. Andrew Hegedus, Justin Mill,
Annette Maluish, Andrew Mill

South Gippsland Bridge Club

Swiss Pairs

1. Penny Corrigan, Kae French
2. Dianna Middleton, Frank Vearing
3. Jean Barbour & Greg Nicholson

Teams

1. Penny Corrigan, Kae French,
Dianna Middleton, Frank Vearing
2. Bob Geyer, George Lovrecz,
Raji Muir, Ian Muir
3. Jack Kuiper, Arendina Drury,
Richard Moss, Deborah Anglim

Donald Bridge Club

Swiss Pairs

1. Margaret Copland, Frank Vearing
2. Faye Symons, Denis Upsall
3. Enid & Brian Brasier

Kooyong Tennis and Bridge Club

Pairs

1. Sue Read, Prithiraj De Zoysa
2. Marina Darling, Justin Mill,
3. Eva Samuel, Rex Livingston

A COUNTRY BRIDGE CLUB

JENNY MONGER

Would you like a trip to rural Victoria? Leave the traffic and pollution behind and take the Hume Freeway to Benalla, or the more scenic route via Lilydale and Yea. The former is 2 hours 15 minutes from the centre of Melbourne, and with the latter you can take as long as you like!

Benalla is a picturesque town situated on Lake Benalla. There is an excellent regional Art Gallery, and the Costume and Kelly Museum which has the best costume collection outside the capital cities, and for history enthusiasts there is Ned Kelly's green cummerbund and other items.

Oh, you want to play bridge as well as being a tourist? There is a thriving bridge club of 75 members. Our "home" is the Senior Citizens Facility in the centre of town and there is plenty of parking, even for caravans. The club is well-run and we have playing directors at the two duplicate sessions of 8 – 9 tables each week, Mondays at 7.30pm and Wednesdays at 1.00pm.

Do come and visit. We are friendly and welcoming, and the table fees are the cheapest in Australia - \$2 per person!

BIDDING – GAZZILLI DEE HARLEY

Gazzilli is a useful convention to agree to play with your partner. It enables you to stop low when necessary, and also allows you to fully define High Card Points (HCP) and distribution after a 1 of a major opening. Gazzilli ONLY applies after the following beginnings to an auction (with no opposition bidding)

1♥ 1♠, or 1♥ 1NT, or 1♠ 1NT.

So, after any of those openings the Gazzilli bid is 2♣. The 2♣ bid says:

Either

- I have a limited hand (a bad 15 HCP or less) with 5 of the major I opened, and 4 (or more) clubs

OR

- I have a powerful hand (could be void in clubs!) and 16 or more HCP (good 15 allowed).

Response to the Gazzilli 2♣:

With 8 or more HCP bid 2♦. We look at that later.

With less than 8 HCP

Any bid other than 2♦ show less than 8 points and allows for early termination of the auction. With a doubleton in partners Major you try to sign off in 2 of his major. If your hand is more distributional, you bid as naturally as you can, bearing in mind that ANY bid other than 2♦ shows less than 8 points and is an attempt to sign off. If Partner's Major is Hearts and your response was 1NT, you can bid 2♠ now to show at least 5-5 in the minors. You can bid 2NT with 3-1-(5/4) distribution,

If partner's Major was Spades, you can bid 2♥ with 5 or more Hearts.

You can bid a 6 card or longer minor directly. Once you have shown less than 8 points you pass the auction out as soon as you can. Opener must decide where best to play and bid whatever he judges best after hearing your shape.

Now let's look at the artificial 2♦ response to the Gazzilli 2♣. This shows 8 or more points and nothing much about distribution. If the opener returns to their Major, then they have a minimum hand with 4 clubs. You now attempt to place the final contract armed with this information.

Finally, we get to the Game Forcing situation. If the 2♣ response to Gazzilli was met with 2♦ (8+HCP) and now opener bids anything other than 2 of their Major, then you have 16+ opposite 8+ and are now in a Game forcing situation. Opener can show their distribution bearing in mind partner will not pass below game, and your objective is to find the best spot.

There is one foible to remember and it only arises in this auction

1♥ 1♠ 2♣ 2♦ 2♥

Now what has happened is that opener has shown a limited hand with hearts and clubs, and is looking to sign off as soon as possible, but the responder here is still unlimited and could have a very strong hand indeed. (Note this situation is not possible if responder had responded 1NT to the Major opening, since responder would already have limited their hand). To force to game in this auction responder now bids 2♠. This is an artificial bid saying: "We do not stop bidding below game". Again, natural shape bidding should occur thereafter.

A corollary to using Gazzilli is that you can now use jump rebids by opener to show shapely but limited hands. The Auction 1♠ 1NT 3♣ should now be at least 5-5 but not forcing – usually about 14-15 HCP). Similarly, 1♥ 1♠ 3♦ can be non-forcing 5-5, although some people now use that bid to show 4 card spade support with a shortage in diamonds. You need to decide which is more useful for you.

You should also agree how to proceed after interference. We play Gazzilli is on after a double, but off after any bid by the opponents. The above Gazzilli system is my interpretation of it. If you wish to seriously take up Gazzilli with your partner, then I recommend you to refer to the online articles below before agreeing on which version you will play:

<http://youth.worldbridge.org/gazzilli-by-frederick-staels/>

<https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/gazzilli-an-introduction/>

<http://bridge-tips.co.il/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The-Gazzilli-Convention.pdf>

♣♣♣ KNAVE OF CLUBS ♣♣♣
It's not as bad as it looks!

This hand occurred in a recent session at the club and the auction was simple. South having only four or five losers, after an opening bid which shows seven losers, and had an easy raise to game.

Teams:

Dir: South

Vul: All

	♠ 764		
	♥ Q64		
	♦ KJ		
	♣ Q8753		
♠ Q1052	N	♠ -	
♥ A103	W E	♥ J987	
♦ 982	S	♦ Q7643	
♣ J62		♣ A1094	
	♠ AKJ983		
	♥ K52		
	♦ A105		
	♣ K		

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	-	1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Lead: ♣2

West led the ♣2. South could see ten tricks in the form of two diamond tricks and a diamond ruff, one club and one heart trick and five trump tricks if they could be held to one loser. East won the first trick with the ♣A and returned a small club. The third diamond is not a loser, since it will be ruffed, so it is clear to discard a heart. Declarer then played a trump to the ace and found the bad news that there appeared to be two trump losers.

Since there was no way of avoiding the heart loser, declarer has to endplay West in trumps to avoid two trump losers. The priority in this kind of play is for declarer to reduce their trump length to the same as that of the defender by taking some ruffs. So declarer needs two ruffs. Only one of these can be a club ruff because East returned a small club showing an original holding of two or four cards.

Also, West played the ♣J and not the ♣9 or

♣10, so the club position is clear, and declarer can only ruff one club without being over-ruffed and, so, needs one heart ruff. So, play the king of hearts which West will take and will play another heart. Win with the queen and ruff a heart. Then play ♦K, ♦A, ruff a diamond and ruff a club. Now, with only three cards remaining the only trumps left are:

Dir: South

Vul: All

	♠ 7		
	♥ -		
	♦ -		
	♣ -		
♠ Q105	N	♠ -	
♥ -	W E	♥ -	
♦ -	S	♦ -	
♣ -		♣ -	
	♠ KJ9		
	♥ -		
	♦ -		
	♣ -		

Now exit with either the ♠J or ♠9 and, after winning that trick, West is forced to lead away from the other honour. This trump endplay reduces the trump losers to just one, but declarer must realize the urgency of reducing their trump length to be the same as that of the defender. Although it is unlikely East has the ♥A, it is safer to avoid ruffing a club and then find East with the ♥A whereupon he leads a fourth club to defeat you.

Opening light

Have you noticed that some people are opening hands these days which are ultra-light (some 9 point hands). I guess there are pros and cons, in that if your partnership open light you must not press on to game with 12 or 13 HCP. Bridge is still evolving. I remember when Precision Club changed the game forever with its new-fangled concepts. Then the sweeping changes that arose when the Law of Total Tricks was propounded and adopted. I enjoyed reading this article on opening light: <https://bridgewinners.com/article/view/an-exhortation-just-open-the-bidding/>

A STRIP SQUEEZE TO LOSE AN IMP
JAMIE THOMPSON

Playing in the recent Victorian Swiss Pairs I found myself declaring a delicate 3NT.

(hand rotated for convenience (Board 21))

Teams:

Dir: E

Vul: E/W

<p>♠ 984 ♥ K2 ♦ QJ1065 ♣ 1032</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	<p>♠ A652 ♥ 1094 ♦ 72 ♣ KQ84</p>	<p>♠ K73 ♥ QJ98765 ♦ 43 ♣ 96</p>
N						
W E						
S						
	<p>♠ QJ10 ♥ A3 ♦ AK98 ♣ AJ75</p>					

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥ ¹	Dbl ²	1NT ³
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

1. 1♥ = Spades
2. Dbl = Hearts
3. 1NT = 18-19 balanced

Lead: ♥K

I am a big advocate for transfer responses but unfortunately this hand was a big loss for them! At most tables, N/S had an uncontested auction to 3NT, and West made the normal looking lead of the ♦Q. At my table the lead directing double of hearts allowed West to make the much more awkward lead of the ♥K!

There are 8 top tricks and it looked like my only chance was to take a spade finesse. I took the ♥K with the Ace immediately because there would be no point in holding up if my only chance on the hand is to take a spade finesse. The other advantage of taking the Ace immediately is that it keeps your options open for a potential endplay. I proceeded to cash my 4 club tricks on which East discarded an encouraging ♠3 and a diamond. The spade finesse was almost certainly not working now unless East had found a sneaky false card which I thought was unlikely. I cashed the ♦AK and East threw a heart. With the ♥K lead

likely to be a doubleton I could place East with 6 hearts, 2 clubs, 2 diamonds and 3 spades. This was the 7-card ending:

<p>♠ A652 ♥ 109 ♦ 7 ♣ -</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S
N				
W E				
S				
<p>♠ K7 ♥ QJ987 ♦ - ♣ -</p>	<p>♠ QJ10 ♥ 3 ♦ K98 ♣ -</p>			

When I cashed the ♦K, East was squeezed. East either had to bare the ♠K or pitch a winning heart. I exited with a heart and then claimed!

Declarers that got a diamond lead instead were able to take a spade finesse immediately while they still had a heart stopper, making an easy 10 tricks. My measly 9 tricks lost me an imp. Bridge can be a cruel game!

Solution to Suit Combination (page 1)

You A653 Dummy: J872

Needing 2 tricks:
 This is not a good slam! Unless you get a misdefence, you should play for KQ doubleton in either hand, so Lead the Ace and hold your breath. Your percentage success is low I'm afraid, 6.78% or thereabouts. In practise however you should prefer to lead low towards the Jack, which may induce lefty to hop up with Qxx, then you cash the Ace on the second round dropping annoyed Rightey's King.

Secondary problem: To make 2 tricks from the suit lead small towards the Jack. When that loses you can lead towards the Ace covering any card that Rightey plays. You will make 2 tricks any time the suit breaks 3-2, or when Lefty started with a singleton 10 or 9. That works out at nearly 84%.

**POKER OR BRIDGE?
DEE HARLEY**

Here is a hand which cropped up in the Pennant Final.

Dir: West	♠ K		
Vul: None	♥ KQ84		
	♦ 87		
	♣ AJ9653		
♠ J10532	N	♠ AQ874	
♥ 9	W E	♥ 532	
♦ AKJ95	S	♦ Q10643	
♣ 108		♣ –	
	♠ 96		
	♥ AJ1076		
	♦ 2		
	♣ KQ742		

The Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	1♣	1♠	3♥ ¹
4♦ ²	4♠ ³	6♣ ⁴	Dbl
6♠	7♣	Pass	Pass
7♦	Dbl	Pass	All Pass

Lead: ♠K

- 1 3♥ showed a big club fit and a good ♥ suit
- 2 4♦ showed a big spade fit and a good ♦ suit
- 3 4♠ Keycard for Clubs
- 4 6♣ Void showing Interference

Quite a hand! Jamie Thompson was sitting North and decided that East/West may well be making something with their Spade/Diamond fit, so he interjected an RKC bid of 4♠. Sitting East, I elected to show my diamond support for partner with a void leap.

At this stage it is not clear to anyone who is bidding to make and who is sacrificing. It's a bit more like poker than bridge with bluff and double bluff in the bidding. In the end Chris Hughes as West had to decide whether North had the ♠A and a void ♦, or whether we could defeat their Grand Slam.

Since at this early stage of the final it was evident that 7♦ was not going to fail by very

many tricks, he elected to "Take Insurance" and take the fall in 7♦x. One down was -100 for our team. In the other room East West did not find their diamond fit, and North/South took the cheap save of 6♣ (not doubled), so we lost 50 in one room and 100 in the other. For a -4 IMPs swing.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN TEAM PLAYOFF

The qualifying rounds of the playoff for the Australian Open team had several Victorians involved this year. Most of the matches were broadcast on BBO, and some of it was really fascinating viewing.

Losing out in the quarter-finals were Chris Hughes, Simon Hinge, and Stephen Lester (not all in the same team).

Ben Thompson and Leigh Gold both lost out in the semi-finals (not in the same team!) and James Coutts and Justin Mill were both in the Coutts team which performed valiantly in a close final to finish runners-up. The winning team was the same team that won last year (Peter Gill, Andy Hung, Sartaj Hans and Nabil Edgton). I see from the ABF website that they have been joined by Michael Courtney and Paul Wyrer.

The six players will form the Australian Open Team who will contest the 2020 World Bridge Games (dates and venue to be announced by the World Bridge Federation).



Wishing all readers of the bulletin a very merry Christmas, and much success at the Bridge table.