

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

May 2021

Editor: Dee Harley

**VBA PRESIDENT
CHRISTOPHER LEACH**



As I write, I have just returned from Canberra, where I attended the AGM of the Australian Bridge Federation. As you might expect, last year's meeting had been a relatively brief Zoom affair, so everyone had a lot of catching-up to do and there were long discussions, as we took stock of the impact of COVID-19 on bridge in Australia.

What is clear is that different parts of the bridge community in Australia have been impacted in different ways, with the western half of the continent (W.A., S.A. and N.T.) plus Tasmania, emerging fairly unscathed, with very little time under lockdown and almost no virtual bridge occurring, while there have been big losses of players in the larger population states. Overall, the total number of registered bridge players has fallen 8% in Australia, compared to a year ago. This has happened in a time period

when bridge numbers had been slowly dropping for many years, so there are now about 20% less people playing the game than five or six years ago. Moreover, the demographic trend is worsening, with a slowly aging population of players and fewer and fewer young people taking up the game. Not good news, needless to say!

As you can imagine, these sorts of figures set alarm bells ringing loudly, but the highly decentralised nature of bridge administration in this country means that there are limits on what the national body can do to arrest this type of decline. Ultimately the biggest influence on the growth or otherwise of bridge occurs at the club level. The ABF Council however has pledged to greatly ramp up its budget on youth development and a very productive workshop took place to provide ideas for the best use of this initiative.

Why do people leave bridge including not pursuing the game after a beginner's course? While we all understand bridge is a tough game and inevitably there will be some new players who decide it is more complex and demanding than they bargained for, the surveys undertaken across the country (including last year's by the VBA) are unequivocal with regard to the biggest reasons we can control. These are all connected to the club environment the new player finds themselves in (including, for advancing players, the club congress environment). It is very simple. New players expect and deserve a welcoming, comfortable and non-critical place to play bridge. They do not like to be the recipients of rude, boorish and critical behaviour or to witness other pairs engaging in same, including berating each other for mistakes. The biggest reason people leave bridge is because of bad behaviour and a non-welcoming environment. The biggest reason for the success of some clubs is precisely because they create a place to play bridge where such things don't occur or have been eradicated under the influence of a

warm, welcoming culture, completely averse to anti-social behaviours.

In my long journey through the game, I am sad to say that I have observed that, although some top players can be aloof and unfriendly (and we are working hard to change that), the worst behaviours are often exhibited by intermediate pairs, lording it over beginners. This is a total turn-off! The ABF workshop on this subject was replete with such stories and the negativity about bridge such people and incidents engender.

As a club proprietor, club committee member or Director, you need to be profoundly aware of the impact that various types of rude and unfriendly behaviour has on your cohort of new players. Perpetrators need to be spoken to, monitored and, if necessary, sanctioned, because they are inordinately destructive to the growth of your club and indeed to the growth of our game everywhere. And beyond ensuring that good behaviour prevails, you should implement a cultural overhaul that ensures friendliness, player comfort and a safe and welcoming environment. One of the biggest factors alluded to at the ABF meeting was the benefit to clubs of having someone other than the Director to be "meeter-and-greeter" and who initially makes everyone comfortable and is there throughout to iron out any transitory flare-ups or other issues.

The ABF research reveals again and again that you can have top teachers, spick and span clubrooms and every creature comfort, but that will hold little weight if the culture is "off". We all need to pay close attention.

Best wishes to all,
Christopher Leach.

COMPETITION RESULTS

VICTORIAN DAYTIME SWISS PAIRS

1. Kim Frazer & Jamie Ebery
2. Michael Phillips & Neil Ewart
3. Erica Windmiller & Thea Cowie

VICTORIAN OPEN BUTLER PAIRS

1. Eva Samuel & Peter Hollands
2. Charles Huang - John Yang
3. George Lovrecz - Stan Klofa

COMING SOON!

Victor Champion Cup

Victoria's flagship Teams competition will take place from 10th to 14th June.

[Here is a link](#) to the Website:

Where you will be able to view the programme of events, and enter online

Australian National Championships

This year, the ANC will be taking place in Perth in July.

Each of the states or territories is invited to send representative teams for the categories: Open, Senior, Women, Youth.

The Open team has been decided:

Neil Ewart & Simon Henbest
Chris Hughes & Dee Harley
Peter Hollands and Justin Mill

A non-playing Captain for the Open Team has yet to be elected.

The Senior, Womens, and Junior Teams are still being determined.

Running alongside the main competition will be a number of other tournaments. The full schedule can be found from the [ABF website](#):

**THEY GOT ME!
DEE HARLEY**

Playing in the South Gippsland online Friday competition I was dealt a mortal blow on the slam hand which follows. I play most Fridays with Phill Fent, and we have a lot of fun. This hand was a bit of a cracker!

Dlr: South ♠ KJ964
 Vul: N/S ♥ 9
 ♦ KQ963
 ♣ KJ

♠ Q87	<table border="1"> <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		♠ 52
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ 10642	♥ J873										
♦ A104	♦ J85										
♣ 1092	♣ 8543										

♠ A103
 ♥ AKQ5
 ♦ 72
 ♣ AQ76

Lead: ♦A
 Bidding:

W	N	E	S
			2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	5NT	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

2NT was 20-21, and 5NT was 'Pick a slam' Naturally, with my small doubleton Diamond holding, I chose 6♠ as the final contract.

West led the ♦A and I thought – if I can avoid a diamond ruff, then all I need to do now is find the Queen of spades.

West the provided me with the answer to my dreams! West switched to the ♠8! I thought about it and played the ♠9 from dummy, which won the trick. I thought, if East held ♠Q752 initially then it would be correct to play low when I play the ♠9, and so I lead a small spade from dummy and put in the ♠10. Imagine my horror when the ♠Q appeared on my left!

I was left gasping for breath, but it did make Phill laugh!

**DOUBLE DISCARD AND DISCARD
THILAK RANASINGHE (AKA TP)**

TP provided me with a wonderful example of a double discard and discard. He didn't provide an auction, but I expect South opened 1♠, West bid a quiet 4♦ and North bid 4♠. East was apparently scared of a misfit and passed, so 4♠ became the final contract.

Dlr: South ♠ 107632
 Vul: Love all ♥ 742
 ♦ 76
 ♣ A84

♠ J54	<table border="1"> <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									
♥ 8	♥ KQJ1096										
♦ KQ1095432	♦ 8										
♣ 2	♣ KQJ1096										

♠ AKQ98
 ♥ A53
 ♦ AJ
 ♣ 753

Lead: ♦K

West leads the ♦K against your 4♠ contract, all you can see is losers.... 2 club losers, one diamond loser, 2 heart losers....so should you be in 2♠? Nope – today is your lucky day. I expect with the help of the title of this article you will be able to make 4♠.

If you haven't seen it yet, here is the full answer:

Win the ♦A, draw three rounds of trumps, then cash the ♣A and then the ♥A. Then lead your ♦J to throw West in. He has only got diamonds left, so when he leads, you let him win the trick, as you throw a heart from dummy and a club from hand. He has to lead yet another diamond, and again you throw a heart from dummy and a club from hand. You have now lost your three tricks, and you can happily cross-ruff the rest of the hand.

Pure Joy!

**BRIDGING ACADEMIA, POLICY AND
PRACTICE CONFERENCE
28 JUNE-1 JULY 2021 (ONLINE)**

Bridge: A MindSport for All (BAMSA) is hosting a free online international conference designed for academics, bridge players, teachers and organisers. The overall aim of the conference is to push the boundaries of current academic thinking and shape a future research agenda. Broadly speaking, the sessions on the first and third day are theoretical in focus, and those on the second and fourth day are more practical. In addition to the live sessions, recordings will be available on the BAMSA website from May 2021. The full programme and more information (including the registration form) are on the [BAMSA website](#).

[1A] Mindsports in Academia & Society

Mon 28 June 2021 13:00-15:00 (BST UK) / 08:00-10:00 (EDT)

[1B] Wellbeing & Bridge

Mon 28 June 2021 16:30-18:30 (BST UK) / 11:30-13:30 (EDT)

Keynote Address Prof Martin Seligman (University of Pennsylvania, USA)

[2A] Impact of a Global Pandemic on Bridge

Tues 29 June 2021 11:30-13:30 (BST UK) / 06:30-08:30 (EDT)

[2B] Digital Bridge & Cheating

Tues 29 June 2021 19:30-21:30 (BST UK) / 14:30-16:30 (EDT)

Panelists: Jan Kamras (EBL), Boye Brogeland and Steve Weinstein (World Champions)

[3A] Ageing, Intergenerationality & Bridge

Wed 30 June 2021 10:00-12:00 (BST UK) / 05:00-07:00 (EDT)

Social Identity, Ageing and Third-Places Polly Fong (Queensland, Australia)

[3B] Gender, Sexism & Bridge

Wed 30 June 2021 15:00-17:00 (BST UK) / 10:00-12:00 (EDT)

Panel 1 Women's Bridge: Segregation Pros & Cons

Panel 2 Sexism within the Game: Solutions?

[4A] New Approaches to Teaching & Recruitment

Thurs 1 July 2021 13:00-15:00 (BST) / 08:00-10:00 (EDT)

Panel 1 Learning & Teaching Bridge

Panel 2 School & Youth Bridge: Retaining Learners

Case studies: Czech Republic, Denmark, UK, India, Japan, Norway and USA

[4B] Marketing Bridge and Conference Close

Thurs 1 July 2021 16:30-18:30 (BST UK) / 11:30-13:30 (EDT)

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Marketing Bridge (Bridge 2 Bridge)

Tuesday 29 June 2021 **Conference Pairs, Prize-Giving and Q&A with RealBridge**
15:00-17:30 (BST UK) 10:00-12:30 (EDT)

Wednesday 30 June 2021

Bridge Taster for First-timers

18:30-20:30 (BST UK) 13:30-15:30 (EDT)

Any queries to bamsa@stir.ac.uk

Prof. Samantha Punch | Bridge: A MindSport for All (BAMSA)
Faculty of Social Sciences | University of Stirling

Colin Bell Building, Stirling, FK9 4LA, Scotland

[Bridge A MindSport for all – Connects People, Challenges Minds \(bridgemindsport.org\)](#)

Access our recent BAMSA paper:
(Per)forming identity in the mind-sport bridge: Self, partnership and community

at <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690220959648>

Dr. Samantha Punch

VICTORIAN RESTRICTED BUTLER PAIRS

The Victorian Bridge Association

invites you to enter the

2021 Victorian Restricted Pairs Butler (on Saturday 8th May 2021)

For those not familiar with the Butler format this is an event scored by International Match Points (IMPs).

This exciting event qualifies 2 Pairs for entry to the **ANC Restricted Pairs Butler** to be held in Perth on the weekend of the 17th July 2021 which runs beside the **ANC Open Butler Pairs**, one of the most prestigious events on the Australian Bridge calendar.

To qualify for the restricted event each player must have had less than 300 Masterpoints as of 31st December 2020.

A Red Master Point Event

Cost \$40.00 per player

Prizes

Qualifying pairs are awarded Flights, Accommodation and Entry to the ANC Restricted Butler in July.

Valued at \$2,000 per pair.

This is a fabulous opportunity for rising players to compete against their peers here in Victoria ahead of taking on Australian National Championship event at little or no expense.

What a great story that makes for family, friends and club-mates alike.

Pair Registration: by 6th May
via [the VBA website](#):

VICTORIAN OPEN IMP PAIRS

The Victorian Bridge association will also run a separate (Victoria-wide) Open IMP Pairs Event to be run alongside the 2021 Victorian Restricted Butler Pairs on the same day - Saturday the 8th May.

A one-day pairs event format dependent on number of entries.

A Red Master Point Event

Cost \$40.00 per player

Prizes

Entry to a VCC Swiss event of your choice Open, Womens, Seniors or Restricted for the winning partnership:

valued at up to \$260 per pair

We will award one free entry for every 10 Pairs entered up to a maximum of 3 entries.

For those regulars on the Congress circuit, you will know this represents great value and potential return on investment.

We hope to make this a great day of bridge with something on offer for players of all bridge levels. We especially hope to see players from Regional and Metropolitan clubs coming to the events together with their club mates and enjoying our great game. Making some new friends along the way.

Pair Registration: by 6th May
via [the VBA website](#):



Both Events will be held on Saturday 8th May at the VBA Clubrooms:
131 Poath Road, Murrumbena

Start Time: 10:00am

Phone enquiries: Andrew Macready-Bryan at the VBA (03) 9530 9006

Email: info@vba.asn.au

**EDITORIAL
DEE HARLEY**

I am so looking forward to my first "live" bridge challenge in over a year. The Autumn Nationals are on in Adelaide from 29th April – 3rd May.

It will be really good to visit Adelaide again and to compete in the Autumn Nationals will be the icing on the cake.

Following on from that I am hoping to be competing in the Victorian main event – the Victor Champion Cup. There are a restricted number of entries to this competition, so get entered as soon as you can [here](#). Note also that you can win your entry fee to this event by performing well in the Victorian Open IMP Pairs ([see Page 4](#)).

Then comes the trip to Perth in July to compete in the ANC.

Over the past year I have been playing a lot of online bridge. We had the VBA Bulletin Cup and the VBA Bulletin leagues, I have also been playing regular 'friendly' teams matches at various level of ability (and results).

I have occasionally played in the daily "Schafer" competition (mornings at 10am – subject to the whims of Summertime clock changes).

And have played hundreds of BBO challenges with friends.

All these online events have kept my bridge senses keen – ready for the return to Live bridge.

Just recently I have played a couple of times at the VBA (The Butler Pairs) and it is quite nostalgic to see the players once more, and I am delighted to see that congresses are starting up again.

Bridge is such a great way of life.

dee_harley@hotmail.com

**WAVERLEY BRIDGE CLUB
BRIDGE LEAGUE - CANCELLED**

Regretfully, due to a lack of participation, we have decided to cancel the Bridge League event scheduled for Friday May 7th start.

The Waverley Bridge Club will try again to instigate a similar event, along the lines of a Bridge League or an Inter Club Bridge League, in the near future.

Andrzej Krolikowski

CONGRESS RESULTS

DENDY PARK CONGRESS SWISS PAIRS

1. Les Ajzner, Paul Kron
2. Larry Norden, John Adams
3. Sally Murray-White, Geoff Whiting

FRANKSTON CONGRESS SWISS PAIRS

1. Margaret Copland, Martin Willcox
2. Kae French, Geoffrey Johnson
3. John Yang, Charles Huang

FRANKSTON CONGRESS SWISS TEAMS

1. Leo Saoud, Mohamed Ghatwari
Gus Ghali, Victor Zhang
2. Kim Frazer, Jamie Ebery
Kitty Muntz, Terri Kay
3. Edward Lin, John Yang
Kevin Chan, Martin Willcox

PLAY PROBLEM #17 - SOLUTION

You had to make 3NT by South after no opposition bidding.

Dlr: South ♠ A2
 Vul: N/S ♥ Q62
 ♦ 8763
 ♣ AK64

♠ Q5	N W E S	♠ K8
♥ ?		♥ ?
♦ ?		♦ ?
♣ ?		♣ ?

♠ 1043
 ♥ AK7
 ♦ A54
 ♣ Q1032

Lead: ♠Q

West leads the ♠Q which you (rightly) duck in dummy. East plays the encouraging ♠8. West continues with the ♠5, and East drops the ♠K under the Ace.

Daniel gave a great reply, Stephen not so much.

TP provided me with this devious (but, I believe correct) version of a solution:

Obviously if Club suit is breaking or if ♣J is known to be with East, there is no problem to score 9 tricks. Therefore, it is important to cater for West holding ♣Jxxx or ♣Jxxxx. If West's Spade suit is 5 carder and ♣ are 4 or 5 to the J with the West, you can eliminate red suits and endplay him by throwing him in with the ♠10.

If the plan is obvious to West, he can discard a Spade and keep a Diamond exit card. So after ♠A, play a Diamond to the Ace, and cash ♣AK. If Clubs are not breaking and ♣J is with West, play ♥Q, followed by ♥A and ♥K. Then exit with ♠10. By first playing ♦A you can make West think that your weakness is not in the Diamond suit. That will prevent him holding on to a Diamond as an exit card by discarding a Spade.

PLAY PROBLEM #18

I had some comments that the problems I have been setting are too easy. Well now I have moved up to my "category 2" problems, I still don't know the solutions, so I have to work them out for myself. I can tell you that this first category 2 problem is more difficult than the previous problems I have set. See how you get on:

Dlr: West ♠ KQ7
 Vul: E/W ♥ 975
 ♦ A643
 ♣ KQ2

♠ ?	N W E S	♠ ?
♥ ?		♥ ?
♦ ?		♦ ?
♣ ?9		♣ ?

♠ 32
 ♥ KJ10864
 ♦ K7
 ♣ AJ5

Lead: ♣9

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

Send me your solution please:
dee_harley@hotmail.com

SUIT COMBINATION

Try this one:

You: AK10943 Partner: 2

How would you play this suit for 5 tricks

Assume you have plenty of entries to both hands.

Decide how you would play before peeking at the [Solution](#) on [P8](#)

♣♣♣ **KNAVE OF CLUBS** ♣♣♣
ONE TRICK SHORT

One theme that causes much angst for club players is whether to raise partner with only three card support. Part of the perceived difficulty is being able to steer the bidding back into No Trump if the fit is only 4-3 and the other part is the average player's fear of playing 4-3 fits. Nonetheless, it often lets the auction flow more freely if the three-card major raise is made.

Indeed, one Australian international player, the late Bobby Richman, asserted that "more points are lost by not raising partner's major with three card support than by any other action".

Most pairs who raise majors freely with three card support, use 2NT to enquire whether the raise was three or four cards and to show either the range or whether there is a singleton. A simple scheme is that 3♣ shows three card support and the rest show four card support with a new suit showing a singleton.

Over 3♣, 3♦ can be used to ask for a singleton. On today's hand, there was no need for such an enquiry.

Teams:

Dlr: North

♠ K107

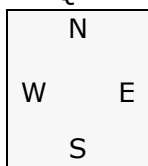
Vul: E/W

♥ AKJ103

♦ 742

♣ Q2

♠ Q42



♠ 8

♥ 95

♥ Q72

♦ AKQ8

♦ 10963

♣ 10643

♣ J9875

♠ AJ9653

♥ 864

♦ J5

♣ AK

Bidding:

	W	N	E	S
		1♥	Pass	1♠
	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠

All Pass

Lead: ♦ A

The defence started with three rounds of Diamonds and South ruffed. Having nine trumps, declarer played the Ace and then the King but the Queen failed to drop.

Declarer had to fall back on the Heart finesse, but this also lost and declarer finished one down.

The hand is a lesson in playing suits in combination. There are plenty of trumps, so an elimination theme is what to look for. After ruffing the third diamond, play the Ace of Spades and Ace and King of Clubs. Now lead the second trump and when West follows small, take the finesse. If it loses, the trumps were 2-2 and East is endplayed into giving a ruff and discard or leading into the Heart suit.

If, as happens here, the trump finesse wins, then the contract is safe.

Lastly, if West shows out on the second round of trumps, win the ♠K and cash one top Heart before playing the third Spade. East should not return a Heart. After ruffing the minor suit return, declarer can take the Heart finesse and will have played the Heart suit as well as possible.

The lesson is to play suits in combination and not to depend on simple finesses.

Solution to Suit Combination ([page 7](#))

How do you best play this suit for five tricks?

You: AK10943 Partner: 2

The best shot is to play towards the Ace and then the king, hoping for any 3-3 break or any doubleton Honour if the suit breaks 4-2.

Suitplay gives the percentage success rate as 64.6%

Interestingly if you only need 4 tricks to come from this suit your best play is to lead towards the honours and play the 9 (or 10) unless Left Hand opponent plays a Quack (Queen or Jack).

Chances of 4 tricks are 91.2% playing that way