

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

October 2021

Editor: Dee Harley

RECENT RESULTS

Champion Of Champions State MP Pairs

1. Mohamed Ghatwari - Leo Saoud
2. Denny Newland - Stephen Lester
3. Dee Harley - Anna St Clair

Victorian Open Pairs Final

1. Bill Jacobs - Ben Thompson
2. Stephen Sharp - Danny Sharp
3. Neil Ewart - George Gaspar

Macedon Ranges Online Congress

Open (IMP) Pairs

1. Gary Ridgway - Piyush Jain
2. Thea Cowie - Erica Windmiller
3. Peter Shaw - Lyndall Shaw (3)

Restricted (IMP) Pairs

1. Ruth Frydman - Dan Craine
2. Jennifer Matheson - Sue Beckman
3. Barbara Callan / Hilary Keefe

COMING EVENTS

Victorian Individual will be held on October 13th and October 20th at the VBA (or online via RealBridge).

Victorian Masters MP Pairs

Mon: Oct 25, Nov 01, 08 at the VBA (or online via RealBridge).

Seniors Day - free bridge at the VBA

Tuesday: Oct 26

EDITORIAL

Another month has flown by. We are approaching two years of the pandemic, and the situation, if anything, is becoming less clear. Online bridge is fast becoming the norm, and yet RealBridge is a curious mix of online and face-to-face bridge. The VBA is currently playing all of its competitions via RealBridge, although with the vaccination target of 80% of Victorians now within reach, it is entirely possible that the state – and even the country – will open up again and we can return to some sort of normal life. Except everything has changed – permanently.

All during the pandemic, we have been trying to imagine how the next few months will play out. I do not think we have been very successful so far in predicting the roadmap of the future. The twists and turns have been truly devious. Although Australians were proud of their incredibly small number of cases and their combined response to the initial onslaught, it possibly led to complacency and a distinct lack of urgency to get vaccinated.

When the Delta variant struck it was a scunner! We again had significant numbers of cases daily, many of which had been active in the community for days before being picked up.

Vaccination rates have improved, but that will not stop the spread of the disease, it will just diminish the impact on the Health Service.

So shortly now, perhaps we will be opening up the State to all-comers (perhaps dependent upon having a vaccination passport of some sort), and we may even hope for a semi-normal Christmas.

Maybe the Christmas Teams will be played once again face-to-face in the VBA this year?

How wrong will this prediction prove to be? Send me your thoughts!

dee_harley@hotmail.com

HAND TO DEFEND

TP is still entertaining me; recently by sending me some problems and (later) some newspaper article clippings giving solutions.

He sent me this hand which I am sharing with you. How would you defend 5♦ with the bidding as shown? You hold the West hand and lead the ♠A.

Dir: West	♠ 7	
Vul: Both	♥ A754	
	♦ J76	
	♣ AQJ63	
♠ AJ1065	N	♠ ?
♥ K963	W E	♥ ?
♦ A3	S	♦ ?
♣ K8		♣ ?
	♠ ?	
	♥ ?	
	♦ ?	
	♣ ?	

Contract 5♦

Lead: ♠A

The bidding:

W	N	E	S
1♠	Dbl	1NT*	3♦
4♠	Pass	Pass	5♦
All Pass			

- Apparently the 1NT response shows a Strong raise to 2♠

Decide how you would defend this hand before looking at the (glorious!) solution on [Page 5](#)

BRIDGE JOKE

An engineer and an anti-vaxxer walk up to a bridge. Seeing as the bridge is the only crossing over a notoriously crocodile-infested river, the two prepare to cross. Just before they set foot on the bridge the anti-vaxxer halts the engineer. "How safe is it to cross this bridge exactly?" He asks. "99.97%," the engineer replies confidently. The anti-vaxxer thinks for a moment before turning around.

"Guess I'm swimming then."

HOW DO YOU BID THIS ONE?

Anna and I play most Sunday afternoons in the ABF national Match Point pairs. (It Is held on BBO). I was recently faced with this monster of a hand: ♠KQJ9762 ♥ - ♦AK5 ♣AKJ After 2 passes I had to find an opening bid.

Here the full layout and the bidding at our table:

Dir: East	♠ A3	
Vul: E/W	♥ AQ32	
	♦ 92	
	♣ 65432	
♠ KQJ9762	N	♠ 10
♥ -	W E	♥ KJ1097
♦ AK5	S	♦ Q83
♣ AKJ		♣ Q1098
	♠ 854	
	♥ 8654	
	♦ J10764	
	♣ 7	

The bidding:

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

Contract 6♠

Lead: ♠A

The 2♦ opening is our Big game going hand, 2♥ was a relay and 3♠ set the suit and invited cue bids. The 3NT response showed some scattered values (at least half stops in the other suits) but not much in the way of a spade fit. 5♠ was a general slam try. Anna's values (and the valuable ♠10) were good enough for a raise to 6. After the ♠A held the trick the opponent tried the ♥A, but I was able to claim the rest of the tricks immediately. TP suggested I was lucky I didn't get a club lead as North can give partner a club ruff when in with the ♠A. TP however got a much better score when he played as declarer, as his opening bid was 6♠ ! North doubled and tried the ♥A at trick one. It was a crackin' hand but just Wow!

BIDDING: EVERYTHING REVERSE DEE HARLEY

Learner drivers often have trouble with reversing. Bridge players have fewer problems with reverses once they grasp the concept – as set down here.

What is a reverse?

Technically it is any bid which forces partner to give preference to your (Opener's) first bid suit at the 3 level.

Openers first bid suit must be longer than the second bid suit (at least 5-4 but even better 6-4). Opener's hand should also contain at least 15 High card points, since you are forcing to at least the 3 level. Note also that if you are 5-5 then you can open the higher-ranking suit and rebid (jump rebid) the lower ranking suit, so this is why the first bid suit in a reverse MUST be longer than the rebid suit.

How to proceed after a reverse? It is important to have a good discussion with your partner about how to proceed after a reverse. It is vital to know which bids are forcing, and which are sign-offs. I describe below a common agreement called Blackout which is a very effective method of handling reverses.

Blackout is a descriptive name. Using Blackout the responder says to partner "I hear you have a reverse – but I want to stop the bidding as soon as possible - be prepared to make your next bid your last in this auction".

The Blackout bid itself can be described as "the lower of the 4th suit and 2NT" and it requests that partner "pattern out their hand".

If instead of making a Blackout bid, responder rebids their own suit – it merely shows a 5-card suit (or longer) and while it is forcing for 1 round it may be weakish or quite strong. (see top of next page).

Here are all the possible reverse bids, along with the Blackout response:

Opener	Responder	O's rebid	Blackout
1♣	1♥/♠	2♦	2♠/♥
1♣	1♠	2♥	2NT
1♦	1♠	2♥	2NT

Let us look at some examples:

You (Responder) hold:

♠J872 ♥A10 ♦5 ♣J98764

Your partner opens 1♦ you respond 1♠ and your partner bids 2♥ - a reverse showing a hand with 15+ points and 5+♦ and 4+♥ Where would you like to play? The answer is... you don't know yet! but you do not think game is very likely with your measly 6-count, so you bid the Blackout bid of 2NT (the fourth suit would be a 3♣ bid and 2NT is lower than that so the Blackout bid is 2NT).

Let us look at some possible hands for Opener and see how they would respond after the sequence 1♦ 1♠ 2♥ 2NT(Blackout):

Hand 1 ♠K103 ♥KQJ8 ♦AQJ10xx ♣x

Since responder has denied 5 spades you bid 3♦ and expect to play there

Hand 2 ♠x ♥QJxx ♦AKJ10x ♣KQx

In this case you bid 3♣ (even though it is only a 3-card suit) patterning out your hand. Partner will be able to place you with short spades and may pass 3♣, or convert to 3♦, or perhaps even 3♥ expecting that you will pass.

Hand 3 ♠A ♥KQJx ♦AKJ10xx ♣K10

This hand is too strong to play in a part score, so you just bid 3NT and let partner know you have a big hand (with a club stop!).

Hand 4 ♠ - ♥KQJxx ♦AKJ10xx ♣Qx

This time you are too shapely to play in a part-score. Bid 4♥ letting partner know your hearts are rebiddable, and your diamonds are longer! Partner should either pass or convert to 5♦.

So, to come back to our sample responder's hand of ♠J872 ♥A10 ♦5 ♣J98764

Facing Opener's hand 1 you pass 3♦.

Facing Opener's hand 2 you happily pass 3♣.

Facing Opener's hand 3 - delightedly pass 3NT.

Facing Opener's hand 4 you flip a mental coin and pass 4♥ or bid 5♦.

(Continued on next page...)

EVERYTHING REVERSE...CONTINUED

Note that when responder rebids their suit it just shows 5 cards and is forcing for one bid, so in the auction 1♦ 1♠ 2♥ 2♠ opener can now bid 3♠ with 3 card spade support – which may be passed, so if you have a very sturdy reverse you should bid more strongly. Responder who has shown 5 spades may be weak and pass 3♠ (if it is bid) – or may pass any of the other rebids opener may make, however if responder bids on after the Opener's rebid (patterning out his hand), (e.g. 1♦ 1♠ 2♥ 2♠ 3♣) then any bid is now game forcing.

Note that if opener has primary (4 card) support for your suit they should support you strongly rather than going through a reverse (which denies 4 card support).

Having got Blackout bids out of the way – now any bid other than the blackout bid and responder rebidding their suit is constructive and forcing to game.

1♣ 1♠ 2♦ 3♣ Responder should have at least 3 clubs and 9+ HCP. It agrees clubs as the trump suit and you can start to cue bid (or show stops below 3NT – which may later turn out to be advance cue bids) or bid keycard or minorwood of whatever style you have agreed.

1♣ 1♠ 2♦ 3♦ similarly agrees diamonds (Responder now needs 4+♦ and 9+ HCP).

1♣ 1♠ 2♦ 3♥ is a fourth suit forcing type hand: Responder is not weak, has only 4 spades and is unclear about what to do next, there is no clear bid available, perhaps something like ♠AKJx ♥Qxxx ♦Jxx ♣Kx

1♣ 1♠ 2♦ 3♠ would show a very good 6 card spade suit and is of course game forcing.

1♣ 1♥ 2♦ 2NT is forcing to game since 2♠ would be Blackout. Note that responder might bid 3NT instead with a weaker all-round hand, so 2NT is potentially looking for more!

Have fun with your reverses!

HAND TO DEFEND

On [Page 2](#) you were asked how you would defend 5♦.

Dlr: West	♠ 7		
Vul: Both	♥ A754		
	♦ J76		
	♣ AQJ63		
♠ AJ1065			♠ K984
♥ K963			♥ J82
♦ A3			♦ 52
♣ K8			♣ 10742
	♠ Q32		
	♥ Q10		
	♦ KQ10984		
	♣ 95		

Contract 5♦

Lead: ♠A

The bidding:

	W	N	E	S
	1♠	Dbl	1NT*	3♦
	4♠	Pass	Pass	5♦
	All Pass			

- Apparently the 1NT response shows a Strong raise to 2♠

It looks like East was having a little joke to himself, however he does have 4 spades, including the vital King.

Before reading on, see how your defensive plan would have worked out on the full hand as shown > - did you defeat the contract?

I didn't get this one right. Here is how to defend...Continue with a spade, declarer must ruff (as otherwise he loses 2 spades and a diamond). The best declarer can do is play a trump towards his hand... which you can win and play another spade which again declarer must ruff in dummy. Now he will have to lead a club or a heart (since he has no other cards now), and you must come to one of your kings to defeat the contract. I think it is glorious!

PLAY PROBLEM #22 SOLUTION

Last month you had to make 4♠ on this hand?

Dlr: North ♠ AQ76
 Vul: N/S ♥ A32
 ♦ A7654
 ♣ 7

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ ? ♠ ?
 ♥ ? ♥ ?
 ♦ K? ♦ ?
 ♣ ? ♣ ?

♠ KJ109
 ♥ 984
 ♦ 2
 ♣ A10865

Contract 4♠

Lead: ♦K

Bidding

W	N	E	S
	1♦	Pass	1♠
2♣	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West overcalled in clubs so you can bet he had 6. So - if your solution involves ruffing a club low in dummy early in the play – go and think again! (especially TP and Lindsey!)

Try this instead: Win the ♦A, ruff a diamond ♣A and ruff a club HIGH, ruff a diamond, Heart to the ♥A, ruff a diamond, and then ruff another club HIGH and now ruff your last diamond!

Now you’ve made 3 aces, four trumps in your hand, two (high) trumps in dummy. That’s 9 tricks and the ♠76 remaining in dummy is bound to be worth at least one trick once the ♠8 is out of the way!

A beautiful solution - very difficult to see though (I had to get some help with this one!)

PLAY PROBLEM #23

I’m sure you like slams... try this one...

Dlr: South ♠ KJ764
 Vul: All ♥ AQ64
 ♦ K
 ♣ Q102

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ ? ♠ ?
 ♥ ? ♥ ?
 ♦ 10? ♦ ?
 ♣ ? ♣ ?

♠ A1095
 ♥ K102
 ♦ AJ32
 ♣ AJ

Contract 6♠

Lead: ♦10

South opened a strong NT and North transferred into spades and heard a Superaccept showing a maximum and 4 card spade support. Keycard showed that the only missing keycard was the trump Queen. There was no opposition bidding.

How are you going to make this?

Send me the best line please:
dee_harley@hotmail.com

Suit Combination:

This month you hold QJ108 opposite your partner’s singleton 2

How would you play this suit for 2 tricks?

Care to estimate your chances of success?

Assume you have plenty of entries to both hands.

Decide how you would play before peeking at the [Solution](#) on [P6](#)

♣♣♣ **KNAVE OF CLUBS** ♣♣♣
IS IT FORCING?

This hand caused considerable discussion regarding West's third bid in a pairs event.

♠ KQ102
♥ AJ7
♦ K1085
♣ 54

West opened 1♦ and rebid 1♠ over partner's 1♥ response. When partner then rebid 3♦, West found they had a difficult bid. The important question was how forcing is the 3♦ bid? The problem was that East and West had read textbooks from different eras. Older Standard American texts all suggest that a jump rebid by responder is game forcing but more modern texts have switched to the Acol method where it is invitational (since 2♦ would be weak). You may recognize this as being in line with the adage that "old" suits (i.e. ones which have been bid before) are non-forcing and new suits are forcing. Well you ask, what do the proponents of each view do with the wrong hand for 3♦?

Pairs:

Dir: West
Vul: N/SI

♠ KQ102	♠ A98		♠ J									
♥ AJ7	♥ Q1032		♥ K864									
♦ KJ85	♦ 643		♦ A1097									
♣ 54	♣ 1063		♣ AKJ9									
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	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ 76543											
	♥ 95											
	♦ Q2											
	♣ Q872											

Bidding:

	W	N	E	S
1♦		Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠		Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥		Pass	3NT	All Pass

The modern view is that 3♦ is non-forcing and you bid fourth suit forcing (to game) and then raise diamonds. The older method played fourth suit forcing to introduce the invitational hand and jump with the FG hand. To confuse the issue, some US experts, like Richard Pavlicek, think that the older method is theoretically better and still write advising it. Let the reader beware! No matter whether 3♦ is invitational or game forcing, 3♥ looks like a good bid. With good clubs, East will select 3NT and, with bad clubs, they can play 4♥ in the 4-3 fit. As the cards lie, both contracts are easy, and declarer might make 11 tricks in hearts and even 12 tricks in no trumps. At teams, in 4♥, one might win the opening lead and play the ♠J and then king and ace of hearts followed by more spades. This is safe against any 3-3 or 4-2 trump break but makes too few tricks to score well against 3NT when the game is matchpoints as here. Declarer has to finesse the hearts but can never make more tricks than those who have made the better choice of 3NT.

Solution to Suit Combination ([Page 5](#))

This month you hold QJ108 opposite your partner's singleton 2

Needing 2 tricks: Desperate times require desperate measures. You can guarantee one trick by leading from the top, and on a good day the doubleton or trebleton 9 will appear by the end of the third round of the suit giving you a second trick in the suit – but how likely is that?

Missing 8 cards in the suit you know that they break 5-3 most often (47%) however the chances of the 9 being in the hand with the 3 cards is 3/8 of that (and it is 5/8 chance of being in the 5 card suit). If the suit breaks 4-4 (less likely than 5-3 at 32%) then the 9 should not drop. So the 50% finesse of the 8 is a big favourite.

Answer – lead towards the 8 and play it unless LHO plays a higher card. Your chances of success are 51%. (The extra 1% comes from the times that your LHO holds any combination of AK9 and no lower cards)