

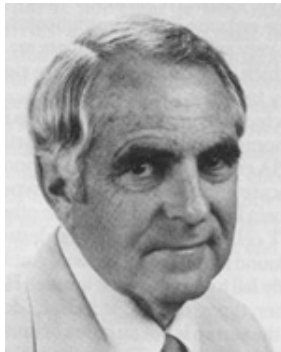
Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

December 2004

Editors: Ian McCance & Bill Jacobs

David White 1931 - 2004

Victorian bridge players were saddened by the death of Prof David White AO, a player of great ability for more than a generation.



David played in six Victorian teams in the 60s and 70s (his best result being second in 1975) and won the Australian Open Pairs in 1975 and the Victorian Open Pairs in 1986, both with John Horowitz. He also won the Victorian Mixed Pairs with the late Gabi Tabak in 1971.

With the institution of Seniors' events he played on Victorian Seniors' teams in 1999 and 2001. The 1999 team won the Australian title.

David will be remembered as one of the last exponents of the *psychic*, a bid in a short, weak suit. While this may confuse partner, the argument goes, you have twice as many opponents. He remained an enthusiastic player and a challenging opponent to the time of his death.

Outside bridge, David was a noted teacher, researcher and administrator in the field of Microbiology, specialising in Virology. In 1967, he was appointed Professor of Microbiology at Melbourne University, a position he held until his semi-retirement in 1994. He also had a stint as Pro Vice Chancellor of Melbourne University from 1975 to 1978.

David received the Order of Australia in the 1992 Australia Day Honours List. In 1996, he won the International Congress of Influenza Award for virology.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

BIDDING QUIZ

1. ♠ Q532 ♥ KQJ642 ♦ 105 ♣ 6

Imps, nil vulnerable, you are the dealer. Do you bid, and if so, what?

2. ♠ 6 ♥ K8652 ♦ AQ98 ♣ J43

Imps, all vulnerable. RHO deals and opens an Acol 1♦. Your bid.

3. ♠ - ♥ A1085 ♦ Q9752 ♣ AKQJ

Imps, nil vulnerable. Partner deals and opens 3♥. Next hand passes. Your bid.

For the full story, go to page 3.

And one more quickie:

♠ K52 ♥ 8 ♦ 10864 ♣ KQJ82

All vulnerable, RHO deals:

LHO	Pard	RHO	You
		2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	?

2♣ shows a minimum opening with clubs, or weak with both majors – RHO's pass confirms the latter.

What do you do at IMPs? At matchpoints? Full hand on page 8.

2005 BEGINNER'S LESSONS

Tell your Friends and Family



When?	Thursday 7.30 pm-9.30 pm starting 17th February
Where?	VBA Clubrooms, 131 Poath Road, Murrumbena
Cost?	\$115 per person, includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 8 weeks of 2 hour lessons- Certificate on completion- 5 Free Supervised Playing Sessions upon completion of course
Teacher:	Cathie Lachman
Phone:	9530-9006
	E-Mail: info@vba.asn.au

BRIDGE AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Last year, we published the result of a study that indicated that mind sports such as bridge could be an effective counter to the onset of Alzheimer's Disease.

Well, bridge may have therapeutic effects elsewhere. Have you ever been unwell (perhaps a cold or stomach upset), turned up for a session of bridge, and discover that your symptoms miraculously disappear whilst playing? Maybe it's not laughter that is the best medicine ... but bridge.

Professor Marian Diamond at Berkeley University conducted a study in 2000 showing that bridge players have increased numbers of immune cells after a game of bridge.

Diamond interprets the findings as strong evidence that an area of the brain - in this case the frontal lobe - involved in playing bridge stimulates the immune system, in particular the thymus gland that produces white blood cells called T cells, or T lymphocytes.

"People are aware that voluntary activities like positive thinking and prayer work to keep us healthy, but no one has had a mechanism," said Diamond, a professor of integrative biology in the College of Letters & Science. "These data, though preliminary, show that brain activity affects the immune system, and support the possibility of us learning to voluntarily control the level of white blood cells to help combat disease and other illnesses."

Diamond chose to study bridge players because bridge is a game likely to stimulate an area of the brain - the dorsolateral cortex - that she suspected influences the immune system.

Diamond divided 12 women, all in their 70s and 80s, into three groups, and had each group play a one-and-a-half hour bridge set. Blood samples were drawn before and after the bridge, and the numbers of immune cells measured.

Only the levels of CD-4 positive T cells changed in the 12 subjects. In two of the groups, levels increased significantly.

Because the brain's cortex is under voluntary control, Diamond hopes her findings lead to ways to educate the brain to improve health. "If we could find out how to regulate our immune system voluntarily through the brain's cortex, I would feel extremely happy," Diamond said.

PARKING INFRINGEMENTS

The following vehicles have been reported parking in Stewart St or Lydson St recently:

- **RCJ 568**
- **369 369**
- **V2 888**
- **SW 1935**
- **QID 373**
- **QDO 444**
- **SQO 914**
- **RNZ 477**

As part of our permit, VBA patrons are **NOT PERMITTED** to park in Stewart St or Lydson St at any time.

The VBA Parking Policy provides for fines and/or suspensions for repeat offenders.

If you are in any doubt as to where to park during the day or at night, please refer to the VBA Parking Policy flyer (on front and side doors and at front desk) or ask David or Cathie (9530 9006/9530 9008) during work hours.

David Costelloe ... **General Manager**

Victorian Bridge Association Annual General Meeting

Date: Monday 6th December
Time: 6:30 pm
Venue: VBA clubrooms, Murrumbeena

This is an important opportunity for members to participate in the democratic process!

(Free duplicate after the AGM)

ATTACK OF THE UNDERDOG

Bill Jacobs

It is the second night of the Christmas Teams. Having been assisted by a favourable draw, you have won your first two matches, and now find yourselves up against the number 1 team. Last time you played this team, you lost by 40 imps.

And that was an 8 board match.

This article is designed to help you do better this time, with the application of five simple principles. I have too often seen these principles applied *in reverse* by underdog teams, with predictably poor results. Following the rules below won't guarantee victory, but you never know, it might help.

1: Preempt, preempt, preempt.

Like a dustbowl pitch in cricket, preemption is the great bridge leveller. There is an element of guesswork in coping with an enemy pre-empt that even World Champions cannot avoid.

Speaking of world champions, the Italian Lancia team visited Australia in 1976: three multi-world-champions: Giorgio Belladonna, Pietro Forquet and Benito Garozzo, plus one other (Omar Sharif, of whom you may possibly have heard). They visited the VBA and played a Pairs session and a Teams session.

The Teams consisted of 12 2-board rounds, and the Lancia team lost only one of their 12 "matches". On the critical board, Garozzo, with no one vulnerable, was dealt (something like)

♠ KJ10765 ♥ J53 ♦ 102 ♣ 87

As dealer, he made a disciplined pass, and David Smith and Ailsa Tandy had an uninterrupted auction to a cold 6♥. Now Garozzo "overcalled" 6♠ as his first entry into the auction (maybe thinking that the opponents would be intimidated into passing this out?). Well Ailsa Tandy didn't double, which would probably have netted about 1300, but she did bid the cold 6NT.

At the other table, Rob van Riel held this hand, and he opened 2♠ against Belladonna and Forquet. LHO overcalled 4♥, passed out. Both Italians were top-of-the-range for their

bid, and the result was 11 imps for the underdog Victorians.

The pre-empt had done its work.

As for being intimidated by your superior opponents ... don't. Anyone, even the world's best player, can suffer a disaster in the bidding, and you must be prepared to take advantage of it. Don't be like the apocryphal opponent of the great British player Harrison-Gray. Harrison-Gray strayed into 7NT one day, and the player on lead with an ace did not double (he did however lead the ace). When asked later about the failure to double, he replied: "you don't know Mr Harrison-Gray – he always redoubles!".

Having read all this, what is your choice with:

♠ Q532 ♥ KQJ642 ♦ 105 ♣ 6

in first seat, nil vulnerable? It's not textbook, but I suggest a 3♥ opening. This is a bit naughty with a side four-card major, but the hearts are OK, and here is an opportunity to stick it to your strong opponents.

2: Don't bid light.

When it comes to opening bids, responses and overcalls, I strongly recommend that you wait until you have ultra-solid values before entering the auction.

This advice might seem somewhat contrary to Principle 1, but there is quite a distinction between a pre-empt and a bid at a low level. A pre-empt is designed to inhibit the opponents' bidding, whereas low level entry into the auction is designed to assist your own bidding. That's a big difference.

There are three good reasons why you should not bid light as an underdog. Let's look at them as they apply to:

♠ 6 ♥ K8652 ♦ AQ98 ♣ J43

after a 1♦ opening by RHO. If you are the underdog, I recommend that you *pass*, and *not bid 1♥*.

First, a 1♥ overcall inserts information into the auction that your opponents can take advantage of. Opposition bidding like this is fuel to a good pair's auction. They know how

to bid against the overcall, and they will use the information in both bidding and play. Better just to keep quiet and let them find their own contract.

Second, by passing, you don't warn your opponents of a few bad breaks that might be heading their way, perhaps in diamonds or spades in this example. There is nothing more irritating to them than scientifically bidding to a lovely contract, and then having it wrecked by an unlucky break. But if you come in here, you squeal on those bad breaks.

Third and most importantly, when you *do* make a bid, your good old partner will be able to trust you to have full values and bid with confidence. This is just so vital against a strong pair, where your natural (and losing) inclination is to pull in a notch because "they defend so well".

So even though it might seem a sensible strategy to bid ultra-light when you are outgunned in the hope of creating swings, you are far better off keeping mum and hoping that your opponents will get unlucky.

Conversely, take a look at the problem for a moment from the perspective of the "overdog" – the better team. This hand will overcall 1♥ when playing against inferior opponents. This inserts complexity into the auction which is to the stronger team's benefit, as they are better prepared to cope. After a 1♥ overcall, they can hope for a misunderstanding. (Does 1♠ by responder now show 5? Do negative free bids apply? Is system on after a 1NT rebid? What does a 2♥ cue bid mean – a raise, or asking for a stopper, or what?).

3: KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid).

Don't get fancy. Try to steer the bidding along well understood and familiar paths. This is probably good general advice, but it's of particular importance when you are outgunned. A simple auction to a contract will give your expert opponents less to work with in defence. And the simple auction will assist with your own concentration levels.

Because if you really want to do well in this match, you are going to have to concentrate like there is no tomorrow.

If your partner opens 3♥ and you hold:

♠ - ♥ A1085 ♦ Q9752 ♣ AKQJ

I suggest a nice simple 6♥ bid. (If you insist, and play key card Blackwood, then 4NT is ok as well). Don't try to invent some method that will find out whether you have two diamond losers. In fact, *you don't want to know, because if you know, then the opponents will know.*

If a diamond isn't led, then you are almost certain to make 6♥. Indeed, if I am the underdog, and you ask me which I prefer: that partner has two little diamonds, or he has a diamond control, I will answer that I bid 6♥ and hope that he has two little diamonds! I wouldn't back the opponents to necessarily find the killing diamond lead, and here is a chance for my underdog team to strike a huge blow – a blow that is not available if 6♥ is a routinely making contract.

The fact is, I expect "superior" opponents to bid to 6♥ when it is cold, and stay out when it is off two fast diamond tricks. As an aside, if you are interested in a little technology, here is a mechanism by which it can be done. When a three level pre-empt is opened by your side, a response in the lower minor asks partner to cue-bid a first or second round side control. So after a 3♥ opening here, a 4♣ response asks partner for a cue. If he doesn't respond 4♦, then you stay out of slam. This is a very neat convention.

Put together hands 1 and 3, bid 3♥ - 6♥ and you are well on the way to giving your opponents a very nasty time in this match.

4: Shutup

Now we head from the technical to the behavioural realm. To help maintain concentration through the match, it is vital to avoid post-mortems, involving either partner or the opponents.

It can be tempting to chat with your strong opponents about the hand just played, and they will oblige, either through politeness or via the subconscious belief that their concentration will last better than yours. You may get some good tips from them if you post-mortem a hand, but it won't help you in this match.

Many improving players are afflicted with a serious case of post-mortemitis when facing expert opposition. They could be dealt a Yarborough, hear the opponents bid to 3NT, follow suit throughout the play, and when 9 tricks are made, will ask the opponents: "what should I have done?" It shows an admirable desire to learn, but is not good tactics.

5: Don't keep score

The best way to score a match as underdogs is for none of your four players to keep score; then after the match, wait for your opponents to score up, and ask them what the result was.

OK, it's not going to happen, but the fact is that keeping the score is one of the most damaging and wasteful parts of a teams match. Your scorecard is a magnet to the mental post-mortem. You glance at it, and think about that missed vulnerable game three boards ago – should you have got there? Or, I wonder how much we will lose when partner misplayed 3♦.

Or, you get to the last board, look at your running score, decide that you are down a bunch of imps, so swing from the trees and generate another away swing. And it's just too bad that when you meet your teammates after the game they say: "we've had a good set."

Many articles and sections from books have been written advising players to keep a running tally of how they are going in a teams match. It's all codswallop. If you estimate you are down 20 imps at some point, who can say that exactly the same things haven't happened at the other table, and in fact you are all square. In a short match, sometimes all the nasty problems apply to just one direction, say East-West. So East-West come to the score up all depressed, only to discover that their counterparts at the other table did just as badly or even worse.

* * *

Now go out there and surprise them!

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: S ♠ 43
 Vul: N/S ♥ 1063
 ♦ AQ842
 ♣ KQ10

♠ K10
 ♥ QJ52
 ♦ K975
 ♣ J95

West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

You lead ♣5 to the 10, 2 (standard count) and 3. Declarer goes to hand via ♥A (partner playing ♥9) and leads ♦J, allowing your ♦K to win. You return a club, won in dummy, and declarer plays three more diamonds to your ♦9. Partner discards ♠5 and ♠2, declarer discards ♥4 and ♥8.

What next?

Problem 2:

Dealer: E ♠ 108
 Vul: E/W ♥ A9765
 ♦ A7542
 ♣ A

♠ A9532
 ♥ Q10
 ♦ 986
 ♣ J72

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Partner leads ♣5 to dummy's ♣A. Next comes ♠10. How will you defend?

Solutions on next page.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS

Ian McCance

Problem 1:

Dealer: S	♠ 43	
Vul: N/S	♥ 1063	
	♦ AQ842	
	♣ KQ10	
♠ K10		♠ A86552
♥ QJ52		♥ 97
♦ K975		♦ 103
♣ J95		♣ 862
	♠ QJ9	
	♥ AK84	
	♦ J6	
	♣ A743	

Declarer looks to be coming to 4 clubs, 3 diamonds and 2 hearts, but your futile-seeming attacks on clubs have borne fruit. If you now get out a heart you will cut declarer off from dummy – either the long club or the long diamond must wither on the vine (to remain in agricultural mode).

Declarer had messed up. After the diamond finesse works South should take the 75% chance that ♠AK are not with West and look there for the ninth trick.

Problem 2:

Dealer: E	♠ 108	
Vul: E/W	♥ A9765	
	♦ A7542	
	♣ A	
♠ J4		♠ A9532
♥ J843		♥ Q10
♦ J10		♦ 986
♣ KQ865		♣ J72
	♠ KQ76	
	♥ K2	
	♦ KQ3	
	♣ 10943	

There are two good 5-suits and declarer, who holds at least 3 diamonds from the auction, is going after neither. Rat, anyone? South is going after trick 9. You need to pop ♠A and return ♣J.

Did declarer mess this one up as well? Decide for yourself, and then turn to page 8 for the editors' view.

RECENT RESULTS

Toorak Travel 2004 Victorian Open Pairs

Championship

- 1 A. Sarten – C. Hughes
(Adam and Chris win the Toorak Travel prize)
- 2 D. Smith – R. van Riel
- 3 M. Doran – J. Fust

Plate

- 1 S. Gerdan – R. Szabo-Bencze
- 2 G. Pick – H. Blakeman
- 3 R. Gallus – W. Jacobs

Consolation

- 1 R. Livingston – Q. van Abbe
- 2 G. Wikinski – B. Gesundheit
- 3 H. Wilk – M. Obenchain

Victorian Open Interstate – Stage 3

- 1 I. McCance – B. Thompson
- 2 R. Lel – A. Czarnik
- 3 A. Mill – J. Stark

VBA Swiss Pairs

- 1 E. Hardy – R. Ellery
- 2 S. Klofa – J. Collins
- 3 N. Ewart – C. Snashall

Victorian Individual

- 1 M. Chrapot
- 2 G. Lovrecz
- 3 G. Pick

October Duplicate Champions

Mon morning: Donald Gradie & Madelaine Zafir

Mon evening: Peter Kriksciunas & Alkmini Segal

Tue evening: Lilli & Ray Allgood

Thu afternoon: Les Morris & William Ross

Thu evening: Lilli & Ray Allgood

Sat afternoon: John & Rae Harband

70% Solution

10-Nov Mary Bertuna & Val Daly 74.2%

(Mary has just finished VBA classes with Cathie Lachman – let's hope she's aware that she may never get a higher score!)

Spring Nationals – Sydney

Three excellent Victorian results here. Chronologically:

1. Meredith Woods, partnering Margaret Bourke, was part of the winning Spring Nationals Womens team.
2. George Gaspar, partnering Bobby Richman, was part of the winning Spring Nationals Open team.
3. The Geelong-based team of Denise Newland, Doug Newlands, Arthur Robbins and Gary Ridgeway won every qualifying match to make the final of the Grand National Open teams, going down to the number 1 seeded Sydney team.



INTERSTATE SELECTION TRIALS Andrew Halmos

For the first time ever, I made it to the third round of the Interstate Selection trials (Butler Pairs). It was quite an experience. First, the scoring is against the field average of the 12 pairs involved. Having been used to the usual Swiss pairs before, one gets the comfort that if you just bid the games and slams, you will win. A game is often worth 5 IMP and a slam 7 or 8. Wrong! In this field, everyone bids the games and slams. So if you are not bidding even the very skinny games, you will lose. You have to work very hard at winning a match by even a few IMPs. What a culture shock!

You hold

♠ xxxxx ♥ Kxx ♦ xx ♣ xxx

and your right hand opponent opens 1♥, pass, 2♥, double from partner, 3♥ on your right, reluctant 3♠ from you, and pass from your left. Your partner raises to 4♠ on

♠ AKxx ♥ xx ♦ AKxxx ♣ xx

I thought that was really pushy, but spades broke 2-2 and everything else was favourable. One of my opponents thought that I should have bid 4♠ myself. I did not think of it, but then it's a new experience for me and I have a lot to learn.

The two day event was held behind screens. That in itself was an experience. I should say

a pleasant experience. The question of hesitation and body language is gone. Only one of your opponents knows whether you hesitated or not. Of course everything has to be alerted. No more ceiling of 3NT, and you alert your own bid to one of your opponents. You then have to explain it in writing. Therein lies a problem depending on the neatness / readability of your hand writing.

Of course, penalties for insufficient bids are also reduced. If the insufficient bid is noticed on the original side of the screen, the bidding slip is simply re-written and nobody is the wiser. No penalties. However, if N/S makes the mistake of pushing the bidding through without noticing the insufficient bid then the rules are somewhat different. The first question asked by the director is who pushed the bidding under the curtain. If it was N/S, then they are at fault. It is N/S's responsibility to push the bidding under the curtain. The insufficient bid is cancelled, the bidding pad is re-written so there is no record of it happening, and the "offender" is allowed to bid anything they like with no penalty on their partner. Of course the offender's partner is under ethical expectation not to use the unauthorised information. If the bidding slip was pushed through by E/W, it would have been an infringement and full penalties apply. In fact there may be penalties for E/W for doing something that is not their role. Did you know this?

The screens I found reduced the tension at the table, and with one opponent in such a close isolated environment, it gave us some opportunity to share a joke, or a grimace. On one occasion, after our side passed, there was a long delay in the bidding slip coming back. We were starting to joke and wonder what happened. Then my partner raised the curtain and said: "Don't panic, he went for a toilet break".

I also found some of the more experienced players were happy to give you advice (after you made the mistake) in a generous and pleasant manner.

I can unambiguously say it was a great experience which I hope to repeat, regardless of the result. I only have to get there. I certainly would encourage everyone to try these events. After all, the intellectual challenge is the basis of bridge.

