

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

August 2005

Editors: Ian McCance & Bill Jacobs

FROM THE VBA PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

The VBA Council has taken steps to rectify the financial position of our Club. Many of you will have heard that the accounts show a substantial deficit year to date. We believe this is because the costs involved in employing a full time Manager cannot be sustained given the total Club income.

Table numbers and revenue have increased and the outlook is positive. We have terminated the Manager's contract effective 30th June. This will reduce our expenses by \$60,000 during the next year. So, although we will incur a loss of approximately \$40,000 this year, the next year should see the Club return to a reasonable surplus.

To meet current expenditure commitments we have been forced to utilize some of the funds held in reserve. However, we should be able to restore the reserve position over the next few years.

When this Council came into office in December 2004 we inherited a carry forward of substantial amounts of unpaid accounts. Mostly these were related to the ANC in so far as the previous Council had estimated a profit from hosting the event. As you know, during the final stages of convening the event a new venue had to be obtained at quite expensive rates. Money previously spent on promoting the event was not recouped and deposit monies for various side events was not refunded.

As a result of the General Manager's departure, Cathie Lachman has been appointed to the role of Manager and has accepted increased responsibility for the smooth operation of the VBA and the clubrooms. Cathie has worked very well during her time with us and has introduced and streamlined many administration procedures. She has excellent support from volunteer staff Hazel Schwerdt and Jenny Atkinson. Our thanks go to these girls and


we would welcome any offers from members who would be prepared to help out at the VBA.

Together with Laurie Kelso, the Sessional Directors and her staff, Cathie is well placed to improve the membership services and other general areas of bridge administration.

Jeannette Collins

ENTER AND TRY THIS NEW EVENT
ON MONDAY EVENINGS

Team-of-Four Combo
(August 8th, 15th & 22nd)




This is a 3-session 'Team of Pairs' event comprising one Butler (IMPed) Pairs session, one Matchpointed Pairs session and one Teams (IMPed) session. Contestants enter as team units consisting of at least four members and must field two pairs for each of the three sessions.

Overall placings are determined via the Team's performance over the three disciplines using the following formula:

Overall Score = $2(A_{pr1} + A_{pr2}) + 12(B_{pr1} - 50\% + B_{pr2} - 50\%) + 3(C_{Team})$

Where:

- A_{pr1} = IMP Score (Against Butler Average) of Pair 1 (Session One)
- A_{pr2} = IMP Score (Against Butler Average) of Pair 2 (Session One)
- B_{pr1} = Percentage Score of Pair 1 (Session Two)
- B_{pr2} = Percentage Score of Pair 2 (Session Two)
- C_{Team} = IMP Score for the Team comprising Pairs 1 & 2 (Session Three)



THE TWELFTH TRICK

- ♠ Q63
- ♥ AK932
- ♦ AJ64
- ♣ 3

- ♠ AJ10987
- ♥ 64
- ♦ -
- ♣ AJ1052

West	North	East	South
			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	3 ♣
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♠	All pass	

West leads ♦K You win the ace (discarding a club), and play a club, to the king, ace and four. You return the club five, six ...

Over to you. Solution on page 8.

**FIRST IN AUSTRALIA
THE VBA VIRTUAL BRIDGE ROOM**

**THE SETUP
Cathie Lachman**

Over the past 3 months, Blaine Howe, one of your Council Members, has been a regular visitor to the club rooms. He's had me very busy with one of his ideas. Single handedly Blaine (well almost – we used duplicate players, my son and other helpers) has organized the rearrangement of the upstairs rooms, disposed of rubbish and all of the old chairs, consolidated the board dealing room and created Australia's first Virtual Bridge Room. He sought donations of computers, purchased network cards, got technical assistance from various individuals and now it's operational. The other day he approached me and asked if I could spare 5 minutes (hmmm... another 5 minutes I thought) but I must say it was one of the best 5 minutes of my life. Blaine had served a table on Bridgebase and asked me to sit E&W whilst he sat N&S. We had an auction and I arrived at an inglorious contract of 2♦ down 2 vulnerable. I was the first person to play a hand in the VBA's Virtual Bridge Room. It was fun watching Blaine defend busying himself between the defender's tables but his grin was his own reward. He'd done it!

Congratulations Blaine and as Charlie Snashall says "Blaine, you thought of it, you researched it, you made it happen!"

It will be a wonderful training room for beginners as well as players who would like to come along and use our facilities. Already Blaine is planning a competition against one of the clubs in Italy who also has a virtual bridge room.

Watch this space for the official opening announcement and how to book and play online with your friends, practice for national events and enjoy Australia's first Virtual Bridge Room.

**VISION
Blaine Howe**

The Internet Bridge Room is now ready to roll – if you want to use it just ask.



"I'm telling ya – it's the best thing since sliced bread!"

We want to arrange practice matches and eventually matches against all-comers in the world but right now we want to provide an environment where Victorians can learn and practise internet bridge.

We want to get Victorians learning the skills and using the teaching and playing services that we project will become a small but important component of the bridge hours for many players.

As of August 1st we will be providing demos of the room that can be watched by anyone attending the club plus reports and instructional documents on the VBA Website. Details of when you can book the room will also be provided.

The service that provides the playing environment will be BridgeBase Online. Connect to www.bridgebase.com and download the software – you will not regret it. Many of you will have already seen this through VuGraph Displays at the VBA and on the internet.

Those of you who have downloaded the software and want to have a look online will be told via the VBA Website how and when to go to the VBA BridgeBase Demo Table and talk to the participants. Where possible a monitor will be available to explain what is going on.

The project has been carried out to have a minimal effect on the VBA Budget. However, the financial and verbal support of the VBA Foundation, the VBA Committee and various members of the bridge community have made a big difference to the things

happening now rather than later. As often happens in bridge, many highly qualified and unpaid hours have made something happen for the Victorian bridge community.

As well as people wanting to learn we will want participants to play, teach and monitor the games. If you do not volunteer to do anything, I may volunteer you – beware...

Finally, following is the quoted first paragraph from the July 2005 edition of *Bridge World* which is the world's premier bridge publication¹. It is an indicator of the changes already being made which will provide additional rather than replacement services for the game as we know it now. The editorial is entitled **A New Partnership**.

"The Bridge World is pleased to announce that it has entered into a cooperative arrangement with Bridge Base Online (BBO), a premier provider of bridge services over the internet. By combining the strengths of the two companies in the development, adaptation and review of bridge products, we will work towards these goals: (1) To make available online material that is now appearing only on paper, or has only been partly published, or is out of print. (2) To facilitate translation among languages. (3) To specialize some of the common online bridge activities to forms of particular interest to *Bridge World* readers. (4) To expand the availability of and simplify the searching of online bridge archives. (5) To develop products aimed at helping bridge regain its earlier degree of popularity. (6) To work toward standardizing methods of communicating bridge information."

The editorial ends:

"The availability of many of these products and services is related to BBO's philosophy of doing things that promote the game, independent of any immediate gain to a particular enterprise. *The Bridge World* shares this philosophy, and we hope that other organizations follow suit."

The VBA says, count us in.

¹ ... well, apart from the VBA Bulletin of course ... BJ

CHEATER'S NIGHTMARE
Bill Jacobs

No doubt to ensure adequate coverage in the Bulletin, Blaine invited Ian and myself to play an inaugural hand against him and Neil Ewart in the Virtual Room one Wednesday night before bridge (Cathie – your 2♦ doesn't count). This was it:

Dealer: S ♠ Q
 Vul: nil ♥ AJ653
 ♦ 10975
 ♣ KQ8

♠ 98652	♠ KJ104
♥ 10	♥ 74
♦ KJ842	♦ AQ63
♣ 53	♣ J94

♠ A73
 ♥ KQ982
 ♦ -
 ♣ A10762

West	North	East	South
Neil	Ian	Blaine	Bill
			1♥
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♣
3♥!	4♥	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

You see? The hands are more spectacular on-line.

Should we have reached the grand?



"Surely he could have done more than just bid 6♥!"

In addition to its other benefits, the Virtual Bridge Room gives a glimpse into how top-level bridge events will be played in the future. No doubt you have heard about the latest cheating scandal from Tenerife. In a major European event, Italian player Buratti had to play the following trump suit for no losers in 6♦:

AK9x Jxxxx

After some "thought", he led the jack, and ran it ... successfully as South had Q10x. This anti-percentage but winning line was

found because dummy, Lanzarotti, had taken a look at a defender's hand, and made a signal with his hands to indicate the winning line. Even though screens were in operation, Buratti was able to see his partner's hands.

Luckily, the Italian cheats were rumbled, because a defender noticed dummy's gesture and complained ... when Buratti was unable to explain his play, the committee threw them out of the event, and effectively, of bridge.

With a Virtual Bridge Room, this couldn't happen. Sitting at a computer screen in different rooms, all possibility of illicit communication between partners is removed.

The advent of screens has reduced the level of cheating in top events, but not eliminated it. First there were the Italian foot soldiers of 1975 (tapping each others' feet), then two Americans were convicted of using coughs and sniffs to communicate, and now this latest incident. A Virtual Bridge Room would take anti-cheating methods to a new high ... and there would be several other benefits:

- you explain your own bids, so the problem of mis-explanations is avoided
- the software can measure the duration of hesitations (although a virtual screen, resulting in bids being announced to players two at a time, will also assist here)
- and of course ... no revokes, insufficient bids or bids out of turn



MORE ADVENTURES AT THE 5 LEVEL (II) Ian McCance

This is the second article about the "non-double" (=ND). I use this term for a partnership agreement that reverses the meanings of double and pass in competitive auctions where the partnership has agreed a suit, perhaps by implication.

Take the auction 1♠ – (2NT) – 4♠ – (5♣) - ?

Opener's options are pass, double, 5♠.

I think that at present your partnership would agree:

Pass is forcing on partner, and

Pass = nothing to say, but prepared to go on
Double = terminal (I've had enough)
5♠ = slammish or very shaped

Reversing pass and double gives you:

Pass (a) = I've had enough, OR
 (b) = very strong, will remove a double
Double = I want to progress but don't want to cross your intentions
5♠ = shaped, competitive

We now have 4 categories rather than 3, the progression to 5♠ has been sharpened and by doubling directly, we can suggest progression without committing to it.

Very little information is available about the use of this agreement. Part I of this series showed that it can be effective when used by a hand that has already pre-empted. The other situation explored there was a very limited set of situations where the auction starts 1♠ – (Pass) – 4♠ – (opponent bids), or the same in hearts.

This last article deals with a more extensive use of the ND by Eric Rodwell and Jeff Meckstroth, maybe the best pair in the world. It is discussed in Meckstroth's book *Win the Bermuda Bowl with Me*.

Their agreement is summarised as follows:

"We have reversed the meaning of pass and double in these high-level competitive situations. Thus, a double would suggest a spade fit* and a suitable offensive hand, whereas a pass is usually regressive, asking me to double, a strong suggestion that we should defend. If he then pulls a double it is a slam try. The method works well in clearly forcing auctions."

(*see examples 1, 2, below)

Here are 2 examples from *Win the Bermuda Bowl with Me*. Unfortunately in both opener starts with a strong 1♣, unfamiliar territory for many of us.

Example 1

Meckstroth (West), vul vs not, holds:

♠AQ109763 ♥K3 ♦K2 ♣75

West	North	East	South
		1♣*	3♦
3♠	5♦	Pass#	Pass

* artificial, 15+

Rodwell's pass is conventional, as above

Meckstroth goes on to argue that despite his good suit and the vulnerability, if partner has opted to defend that's what he'll do. So *double*.

The complete deal is not given – it reconstructs something like this:

	♠ 85	
	♥ AJ42	
	♦ 853	
	♣ A942	
♠ AQ109763		♠ KJ
♥ K3		♥ Q10
♦ K2		♦ A96
♣ 75		♣ KQJ1086
	♠ 42	
	♥ 98765	
	♦ QJ1074	
	♣ 3	

The defence cashed a heart prematurely to let South out for 500, but 5♠ went off at the other table via the club ruff.

Comment: this sequence got the auction "right" but there seems to be no clear advantage over a more conventional auction where opener would double 5♦.

Example 2

Meckstroth (East), vul vs not, holds:

♠K1052 ♥AK87 ♦QJ97 ♣K

West	North	East	South
		1♣*	2♣
2♠	5♣	Dble#	Pass
Pass	Pass		

* artificial, 15+

suggests progression, as above

Here the double shows "both the spade fit and uncertainty". West saw no reason for heroics. +500.

	♠ A8	
	♥ 106	
	♦ A53	
	♣ 109762	
♠ J9743		♠ K1052
♥ QJ43		♥ AK87
♦ K64		♦ QJ97
♣ J		♣ K
	♠ Q6	
	♥ 52	
	♦ 1082	
	♣ AQ8543	

At the other table 4♠ failed when declarer finessed North for ♠Q.

Comment: this seems a good result for the convention: many pairs would progress to 5♠, given that West is permitted to bid 2♠

The third example from the book is trickier:

Example 3

Meckstroth (South), vul vs not, holds:

♠AKJ6543 ♥AQ82 ♦6 ♣5

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	Pass	Dble
2♣	2♦	4♦	4♠
5♦	Dble*	Pass	5♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

*The text says "Eric doubles, saying 'let's defend'!"

Hey Jeff! What's going on here? 5♦ must be forcing. Playing the Non-Double it's *Pass* that says "let's defend".

I found this explicable only because *WTBBWM* is a composite of various Bermuda Bowls, and must conclude that between examples #1, #2 and #3 the partnership abandoned the Non-Double.

I have been unable to contact Meckstroth to sort this out. The Meckwell system from Malmo (with 42 notes and 2 brown sticker announcements) has no reference (that I can see!) to the ND.

Here Meckstroth decides 5♦ doubled is not profitable enough and progresses to 5♠.

♠ 8 ♥ K9 ♦ AJ1092 ♣ AJ432	♠ Q102 ♥ J1076 ♦ K87 ♣ KQ8
♠ AKJ6543 ♥ AQ82 ♦ 6 ♣ 5	♠ 97 ♥ 543 ♦ Q543 ♣ 10976

This makes with both minor aces onside and they gain 4 IMPs.

The only other reference to the Non-Double that I have come across is in an article by Matthew and Pamela Granovetter in the *ACBL Bulletin* of September 2001.

In the case in question both opponents are in the auction:

Dealer: S	♠ KQJ2
Vul: Nil	♥ QJ96
	♦ J2
	♣ KQ4
♠ A9753	♠ 10864
♥ 10	♥ 4
♦ AQ873	♦ 1094
♣ 92	♣ AJ865
	♠ -
	♥ AK87532
	♦ K65
	♣ 1073

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

Matthew explains the ND, and says that this hand illustrates how *double* from South (after his side has bid a major suit game) would convey a preference for progression to 5♥.

Pamela Granovetter rubbishes the convention, pointing out that it could be South who holds ♠KQJ2.

That exhausts my information on the Non-Double. Comments from readers would be welcome. I do think that the treatment has one significant flaw.

If you treat *Double* as meaning *please go on*, then you are likely to run into calls for the director when the *Double* called for consideration. This can probably be met by having the Non-Double listed as *pre-alertable*.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: W	♠ A983
Vul: Both	♥ KQJ106
	♦ 42
	♣ K3

♠ J7
 ♥ 87
 ♦ AQ9752
 ♣ J72

West	North	East	South
2♦*	Dble	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

* weak

You start ♣2 to ♣K and partner's ♣A. Partner cashes ♣Q and switches to ♦K. This looks like money for jam – how are you going to defend?

Problem 2:

Dealer: W	♠ KQJ2
Vul: Both	♥ 92
	♦ 6
	♣ AK6532

♠ A854
 ♥ 43
 ♦ AQ9
 ♣ J984

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

Partner starts with ♠7 – declarer plays ♠2. How do you plan to defend?

Solutions on page 8.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

The position of ABF Office Manager, advertised last month to be located in Canberra, has been opened up to consider candidates working outside of the ACT.

RECENT RESULTS

Rothfield Swiss Teams

- 1 W. Jacobs, A. Sarten, C. Chua, S. Hinge,
I. McCance, B. Thompson
- 2 J. Collins, J. Thompson, P. Schroor, D.
Sheather
- 3 G. Gaspar, J. Gaspar, H. de Jong,
S. Arber, J. Alexander

Victoria at the ANC Teams

Open: fourth
 Women: third
 Seniors: fourth
 Youth: fourth

More next month!

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to the following members who have been recently promoted to a higher grade of Master:

Graduate Master	Mary Bertuna Eugene O'Rourke Boris Rozenblat
Local Master	Molly Carman Margaret J Inglis
Regional Master	Christine Macquarrie
*State Master	Frances Engleman
Grand Master	Andrew Blecher Jane Leach

And some masterpoint trivia:

- President Jeannette Collins is leading the 2005 McCutcheon (most masterpoints in a year) as at June 30.
- On-again off-again Victorian Bob Richman has overtaken Tim Seres as the top Australian masterpoint earner of all time, with 8373 points.
- Several entrants in the Restricted Pairs event at the recent Victor Champion Cup now are the proud owners of Gold masterpoints, *without having yet won any Green or Red masterpoints!*

GNOT HEAT FRANKSTON BRIDGE CLUB

(last of the qualifying heats)

Saturday 13th August 2005

St Francis Xavier Centre
 Cnr. Davey & Baxter Streets
 Frankston
 Melway Ref: 102 D3

Good supply of nibbles & drinks all day
 BYO Lunch
 Cost \$25.00

Limited to 30 Tables

mintonym@optusnet.com.au

Tel: (03) 9787-4848

NEW FACES AND OLD

The VBA warmly welcomes the following new and re-activated members:

Kim Hoff	Jenny Hoff
Paul Penman	Marian Burns
Rob Stewart	Henry Goldberg
Esther Goldberg	



SPRING into...
BEGINNER'S BRIDGE LESSONS
 at the VBA



Join the Bridge Frenzy and learn to play bridge

When?	Thursdays 7.30 pm-9.30 pm commencing 1 st Sept 2005
Where?	Victorian Bridge Association Clubrooms 131 Poath Road, Murrumbena
Cost?	\$115 per person, includes: - 8 weeks of 2 hour lessons - Certificate on completion - 6 Free Supervised Playing Sessions upon completion of course (value \$42)



Teacher:	Cathie Lachman
Phone:	9530-9006

E-Mail: info@vba.asn.au

TWELFTH TRICK – SOLUTION
Bill Jacobs

<p>♠ Q63 ♥ AK932 ♦ AJ64 ♣ 3</p> <p>♠ K ♥ 87 ♦ KQ75 ♣ Q98764</p> <p>♠ AJ10987 ♥ 64 ♦ - ♣ AJ1052</p>	<p>♠ 542 ♥ QJ105 ♦ 109832 ♣ K</p>
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This puzzler came up in the recent Victor Champion Cup (round 5, board 15).

The trick here is to do something that only the top players do. That is to mentally put yourself in an opponent's shoes and ask yourself: "why would he do that?" In this case:

"Why would RHO put in the club king?"

Because he has KQ to some number? No – he would never do that, because clubs is your second suit, and splitting the honours when he *knows* you are about to play the club ace would be silly.

Because he has Kx? No – he would never do that, because with Kx, he would think that you are about to take a ruffing finesse.

That leaves only one possibility: RHO played ♣K because it is singleton (or doubleton ♣KQ, in which case nothing can go wrong). You should ruff the second club with the *queen*, then when RHO doesn't overruff, play a spade to the *ace*, making the contract when RHO started with ♠xxx, ♠x or ♠Kx. (If the ♠A draws only low cards, you continue with a ruffing finesse in clubs.)

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS
Ian McCance

Problem 1:

<p>Dealer: W Vul: Both</p> <p>♠ J7 ♥ 87 ♦ AQ9752 ♣ J72</p>	<p>♠ A983 ♥ KQJ106 ♦ 42 ♣ K3</p> <p>♠ 1054 ♥ 9532 ♦ K ♣ AQ984</p> <p>♠ KQ62 ♥ A4 ♦ J1086 ♣ 1065</p>
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This one is too easy – unless you take your eye off the ball – as easy as $2 + 2 = 4$. Overtake ♦K with ♦A to cash ♦Q, else three diamonds go away.

Problem 2:

<p>Dealer: W Vul: Both</p> <p>♠ 9763 ♥ J875 ♦ K865 ♣ 7</p>	<p>♠ KQJ2 ♥ 92 ♦ 6 ♣ AK6532</p> <p>♠ A854 ♥ 43 ♦ AQ9 ♣ J984</p> <p>♠ 10 ♥ AKQ106 ♦ J10752 ♣ Q10</p>
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Partner's lead is consistent with a weak 4-card holding. In any case, it cannot help to win the first trick, as no switch is appealing. If South holds ♠10 singleton, he will be unable to develop tricks in spades for lack of entries. Play low and let him get on with it.

BRIDGE IN THE 2000s

The recent Croft Teams event included a team that had one very nervous beginner: Alex Cameron from Morning Bridge Group, playing in her first congress.

Overheard at table 9 during the event: Heather Flanders to Alex: "Welcome to Hell!".

(Thanks to Maggie Callander for this snippet)