

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

October 2005

Editors: Ian McCance & Bill Jacobs

EDITORIAL

Good news:

VBA Web Site

Over recent weeks, there has been a steady series of innovations on the VBA web site. The results are truly impressive.

Here are some of the highlights:

- Looking for a duplicate to play in next Thursday? All Affiliated Clubs' calendars are entered into a database, and you can easily find clubs near you that have a duplicate session on any particular day, including full contact and location details.
- Need to enter the next VBA event? Enter on-line, and check out current entries at the same time.
- Wondering how you could be -25 imps in last week's Butler? Click on the Results for that night, and you can see every score for every table, and discover just why the averages were such an unpleasant surprise!
- Want a quick bridge fix? Click on Virtual Bridge, and play the latest bridge movie. (The movie that was loaded at time of writing forms an excellent and educational problem.)
- Time for a new partner? Or a new job? Open up the Classified section to see what's available, or place an ad in it yourself.

There's a lot more too. And it's quite well organized via the series of menus at the top of the page. The VBA's web site <http://www.vba.asn.au/> is fast becoming a sine-qua-non for all Victorian players. Rumour has it that the tireless Blaine Howe and Margaret Yuill are the forces behind many of these improvements.

Bad news:

Arrogant Experts

There have been several recent complaints about so-called top players giving unwanted bridge advice to their opponents at the table.

Stop it!

Exciting news:

CNBC



Entry forms for the forthcoming Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championships Swiss Pairs are now available.

Don't miss this opportunity to play against international representatives.

Advance news:

Annual General Meeting

Members are advised that the 2005 Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 6th December not as gazetted in the VBA Calendar 2005.

Formal notification of the meeting will be sent out in November.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: S ♠ J1064
 Vul: nil ♥ K5
 ♦ 82
 ♣ A9732

♠ A53
 ♥ AJ10
 ♦ 9653
 ♣ K84

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT*
Pass	3NT	All pass	

* 15-17 points

Partner leads ♥6, to ♥K, your ♥A and declarer's 4. Partner plays ♥3 on your ♥J, declarer winning ♥Q. Now comes ♣Q, allowed to win, and ♣J, which you have to win. Partner shows 2 clubs. When you cash ♥10 declarer follows ♥8 and partner plays ♥2. He/she must have started hearts from 4 small. What next?

Problem 2:

Dealer: S ♠ K10752
 Vul: Nil ♥ Q96
 ♦ AJ54
 ♣ Q

♠ 98
 ♥ 1032
 ♦ Q873
 ♣ A843

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♠	2♣	4♥
5♣	5♥	All pass	

You win partner's ♣J, ♣Q with ♣A. How to come to two more tricks?

Solutions on page 6.



Vu-Graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan:

“It is always a good idea to make only six when you've missed a grand slam. The opponents don't know how good a result they have.”

“If you're a good player, you can get away with making mistakes, because nobody will believe it.”

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dealer: E ♠ Q82
 Vul: nil ♥ K62
 ♦ KQ5
 ♣ AK43

♠ AKJ9764
 ♥ Q8
 ♦ -
 ♣ 8762

West	North	East	South
		3♦	3♠
Pass	5♠*	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* Asks for diamond control

♦2 is led. Plan the play. Solution on page 6.



RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

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

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Graduate Master | Osman Senhanli |
| Club Master | Sara Bell
Bert van Eijk |
| *Local Master | Ken Trolland |
| *National Master | Betty Forbes
Charles Forbes |





LAST TRAIN

ANC Interstate Butler

On the weekend of October 29-30 there will be a 'Last Train' type event held at the VBA. This will be open to any pair who wishes to attempt to qualify for Stage 3 of the ANC Interstate Butler selection cycle.

This event thus provides an alternative route to qualification for all those pairs who have been eliminated via the normal Stage 1 - Stage 2 processes. Only one 'Last Train' pair will gain entry into Stage 3.

Entry Forms will be placed on the noticeboards following S2 elimination.



further than 2♥. East would have bid 3♣, West given a 3♥ cue-raise, and now East is endplayed into 3NT, like the rest of the field.

Victorians don't pre-empt enough, in my opinion.

Talking of common threads, most players know about the concept of a Lightner double against a slam, calling for an unusual lead, typically in dummy's first bid suit. Often this indicates the ability to ruff in that suit.

It's a rare beast, but a powerful one. Not so rare in this event ... take a look at the following three (!) hands, the first two from Session 3, the final one from Session 4.

Dealer: W ♠ 8
 Vul: nil ♥ KQ6
 ♦ AKQ9543
 ♣ 104

♠ 10973	♠ A642
♥ J8	♥ 10942
♦ 8762	♦ -
♣ Q72	♣ J9653
	♠ KQJ5
	♥ A753
	♦ J10
	♣ AK8

West	North	East	South
Gallus	Howard	Jacobs	Hu
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass(?)	

As East, I was sleeping peacefully. I passed out 6♥ in tempo, and then glanced at my hand. Possibly the wrong order of doing things. East's hand is the one they would put in the Lightner chapter of any text book. Double 6♥ for a diamond lead (dummy's first bid suit), take your ruff and cash ♠A.

As Gallus pondered his opening lead, I shrivelled in my chair. Sure enough, out came a miserable club. But as you can see, it didn't matter – declarer had a trump loser anyway, to go with the spade ace, and we picked up 14 imps.

And if I had found the double? Then perhaps both North and South would have had good reason to remove to 6NT. It's a travesty that

such a bad bid by me (the pass of 6♥) could work out so well.

Later in the night:

Dealer: S ♠ Q10
 Vul: nil ♥ A10532
 ♦ AQ965
 ♣ 2

♠ J7	♠ A986542
♥ 7	♥ 84
♦ K108743	♦ -
♣ 10763	♣ KQ54
	♠ K3
	♥ KQJ96
	♦ J2
	♣ AJ98

West	North	East	South
Gallus	Murray-White	Jacobs	Snashall
Pass	3♦*	4♠	1♥
Pass	Pass**	Pass	5♥

* fit-showing
 ** after long thought

With the benefit of the wake-up call on the earlier hand, I was primed to double 6♥ for a diamond lead – strange that all the key suits were the same as the previous hand. Alas, the opportunity didn't arise, as Sally eventually decided to pass ... a good decision given her doubleton spade.

As if this wasn't enough, in Session 4:

Dealer: N ♠ KJ4
 Vul: N/S ♥ AJ986
 ♦ J4
 ♣ KJ9

♠ Q97532	♠ A1086
♥ K	♥ 2
♦ Q98632	♦ 7
♣ -	♣ Q1076432
	♠ -
	♥ Q107543
	♦ AK105
	♣ A85

West	North	East	South
Ewart	Hardy	Howe	Paul
	1♥	Pass	4NT
5♥	6♥	Pass	7♥
Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass

North-South bid the hand to the hilt. But Neil Ewart was awake, and Blaine Howe, who no doubt had been fingering the spade ace for his opening lead, had little difficulty in diagnosing partner's club void: 15 imps.

I could report a dozen more slams from the four nights (including the set of five boards which produced two grand slams and a small slam, all East-West), but for some variety, here is a game hand:

Dealer: W ♠ 732
 Vul: N/S ♥ 2
 ♦ 72
 ♣ KJ98632

♠ AJ9	♠ Q10864
♥ QJ9	♥ K1085
♦ 10863	♦ Q54
♣ Q75	♣ 4

♠ K5
 ♥ A7643
 ♦ AKJ9
 ♣ A10

After a Precision auction, Dan Hohor declared 5♣ as South. The lead was a diamond to the queen and ace.

Even with that strong South hand, there aren't enough entries to set up the long heart, so it seems that declarer needs to either not lose a club, or find the spade ace onside. But Dan, who would be a strong contender for the VBA's Deep Thinker award, found a great line.

He played ♥A and ruffed a heart, back to ♣A and another heart ruff. The ♣K revealed a trump loser. Now Dan exited with a trump (pitching a heart from hand), and West was endplayed – forced to give Dan the 11th trick in either spades or diamonds. That was neat!

Having played a few events with Dan, I know he *loves* to endplay people. Read next month's "Twelfth Trick" for more on that subject.

Further down the scale of "excitement", here is a very tricky part-score defence. You be the judge ... who was at fault here?

Dealer: S ♠ J104
 Vul: nil ♥ K875
 ♦ Q952
 ♣ KQ

♠ A92	♠ K765
♥ 62	♥ Q109
♦ KJ	♦ 87643
♣ 1098762	♣ A

♠ Q83
 ♥ AJ43
 ♦ A10
 ♣ J543

West	North	East	South
			1NT*
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	All pass	

* 12-14

Here's the defence.

West leads ♣10 to the ace. East returns ♦8 to West's ♦K. West plays ♣9, which East ruffs. East returns ♠5 to South's ♠8 and West's ♠A.

Now West played another club – declarer ruffed that with the king, drew the trumps with a finesse, and discarded his two spade losers on the long diamonds. Making 3.

Well, who do you blame? I'll let you ponder on West's fatal return of a third club. There are layouts on which that play is necessary, for example, declarer with:

♠ Kxx ♥ A10xx ♦ A10 ♣ Jxxx

However, that holding may not be consistent with East's return of a *low* spade, apparently encouraging spades.

But one clear error was made: East can work out, if he takes the time, that after ruffing a club, partner needs ♠A for this contract to go down. Therefore, East can build a wall around partner, by switching to the spade *king* at trick 5, and safely cashing the defence's two spade tricks. That would have been an inspiring partnership defence.

What did East-West pay out for their misdefence to 3♥? A measly 3 imps. At matchpoints, at least half a top would have been at stake. In a team's match, this is a 5 imp swing. But in imp pairs, these sort of hands are nothing more than noise, when

compared to all the slams and vulnerable games.

Pairs with imps scoring is my least favourite form of the game ...

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS Ian McCance

Problem 1:

Dealer: S	♠ J1064	
Vul: nil	♥ K5	
	♦ 82	
	♣ A9732	
♠ 9872		♠ A53
♥ 7632		♥ AJ10
♦ KJ7		♦ 9653
♣ 106		♣ K84
	♠ KQ	
	♥ Q984	
	♦ AQ108	
	♣ QJ5	

You are going to make 4 tricks in your own hand, so partner has to contribute one more. He/she can't have much – where are his/her high cards? If you have been attending you have an answer – in diamonds. Partner had frugally retained ♥2 for signalling.

Problem 2:

Dealer: S	♠ K10752	
Vul: Nil	♥ Q96	
	♦ AJ54	
	♣ Q	
♠ A63		♠ 98
♥ -		♥ 1032
♦ K62		♦ Q873
♣ KJ109752		♣ A843
	♠ QJ4	
	♥ AKJ8754	
	♦ 109	
	♣ 6	

That spade suit looks ominous, but if there is an inescapable loser in spades you need to have set up a cashing diamond. So ♦3 it is. Partner's ♦K removes ♦A and you come to ♦Q and partner's ♠A.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

TWELFTH TRICK – SOLUTION Bill Jacobs

Dealer: E	♠ Q82	
Vul: nil	♥ K62	
	♦ KQ5	
	♣ AK43	
♠ 103		♠ 5
♥ AJ943		♥ 1075
♦ 1062		♦ AJ98743
♣ Q105		♣ J9
	♠ AKJ9764	
	♥ Q8	
	♦ -	
	♣ 8762	

In 6♠ there are two losers, the heart ace and a deep club. You can overcome this problem with a device called the Morton Fork.¹ The trick is to lead through the hand with the heart ace ... if the ace pops, then you have two pitches (long heart and a diamond) for your club losers, whereas if the ace is not taken, your second heart is discarded on the high diamond.

The only question is: who has the heart ace? Surely West, as East is less likely to pre-empt with two aces. So, after ♦K, ♦A, ruff, draw trumps, and play a heart towards the king. Whatever West does on this trick, your two losers are telescoped into one.

Well played, but sadly you went one down. Can you work out why? Go to page 8.




The Bridge Players Café
Will be closed

10th to 15th October inclusive

Whilst Alex and Eve are on
holidays

¹ Cardinal Morton argued that rich people could afford to pay taxes because they clearly had plenty of money, and poor people could also afford taxes because they clearly lead frugal lives and must have plenty of money saved away.

WHAT IS GOING ON? Ian McCance

It is undeniable, though regrettable, that bridge players wear out. Should we simply accept this and retreat to the ranks of the Seniors? Not that there is respite there: the core of this year's Seniors Team in Estoril was the core of our (second string) Open Team in Seoul, suggesting that some players wear out more slowly than others.

Old age brings arthritis and failing eyesight. These we fight, with drugs and spectacles. Searching for ways to fight declining performance in bridge, I came across an article from the University of Illinois² describing the results of what appeared to be an undergraduate project on "The effects of aging on brain activity during a focused attention task".

Older subjects (mean age 68) and younger subjects (23) carried out a task (that was not 100 miles removed from bridge) and their brain activity was scanned. Experiments like these (*fairy light physiology*) produce coarse findings, since the regions of the brain that light up contain millions of nerve cells and there is no indication of what they are up to. Nevertheless I thought the findings were encouraging: *Older humans appear to incorporate additional brain tissue when selectively attending to a target and simultaneously ignoring task-irrelevant distracters.*

My conclusion is that there is no reason to throw up the hands and say "I've lost too many brain cells, the cause is hopeless". This experiment says the brain tries to compensate. Further, since additional areas are recruited, it must be that responses in older brains are slower and less reliable. So what is needed is some way of assisting or training the new pathways.

To identify what this might entail, it seemed a good idea to identify the nature of the failings. So I went back to my hand records from the 2005 ANC and found 5 hands where my bridge brain produced excruciating errors. I expose these with diffidence (they are truly awful) but from a position of some strength,

as (long-suffering) Ben Thompson and I had a respectable ANC.

Match 1, 2nd round robin versus Tasmania:

Dealer: W	♠ KJ987		
Vul: nil	♥ 109843		
	♦ -		
	♣ K82		
♠ 532		♠ Q1064	
♥ KJ52		♥ Q6	
♦ 543		♦ KJ1096	
♣ QJ9		♣ 107	
	♠ A		
	♥ A7		
	♦ AQ872		
	♣ A6543		

West	North	East	South
Pass	2NT ¹	Pass	4♥ ²
Pass	Pass	Pass	

- 1 majors or minors, 5+/5+
- 2 I was pleased to have found 4♥, since although 3NT was obvious there appeared to be no source of tricks. Alas North's 3-0 minor split meant there was, and at the other table a diamond lead provided the ninth trick.

Play: ♣A, ♦A, ♠A, ♦ ruff, ♣K, ♠K ♠ ruff, ♦ ruff (East follows ♦10), ♠ ruff, leaving

	♠ J		
	♥ 1098		
	♦ -		
	♣ -		
♠ -		♠ -	
♥ KJ5		♥ Q6	
♦ -		♦ KJ	
♣ J		♣ -	
	♠ -		
	♥ -		
	♦ Q8		
	♣ 65		

At this point I led a club. Train of "thought" – *West led ♣Q so can't hold ♣K so I can safely ruff a club in dummy.*

I had forgotten dummy had held ♣K. I can also remember "thinking" *that ♦10 looks dangerously big (!)* – the only diamonds missing were ♦K, J.

East overtrumped and led a trump, down one.

² http://www.life.uiuc.edu/Hughes/undergrad_prog/abstracts/summer_01/korschgen.html

We won this match 112 to 27 (our datums +34) so the chuck was concealed.

What sort of error is this?

To be continued ...



RECENT RESULTS

VBA Grand Prix Pairs

- 1 M. Weinberg – A. Halmos
- 2 L. Hickman – P. Corrigan
- 3= H. de Jong – L. Meyer
- 3= J. Magee – T. Strong

Victorian Butler Stage 1

North-South

- 1 S. Gerdan – R. Szabo-Bencze
- 2 F. Beale – D. Smart
- 3 D. Hohor – T. Chira

East-West

- 1 S. Lester – A. Mill
- 2 R. Gallus – W. Jacobs
- 3 M. Yuill – E. Linton



Melbourne Contract Bridge Centre

Rumours regarding the future of MCBC are completely without foundation. Salisbury Bridge Club is subletting our premises on Thursday and Friday evenings but we continue to offer our regular bridge programme. We fully support Lorraine and Peter in their efforts to establish the Salisbury Bridge Club and hope they will have a successful operation.

For the foreseeable future we will continue to welcome members and visitors to any of our functions.

George Rogerson

TWELFTH TRICK – CONTINUED
Bill Jacobs

Dealer: E ♠ Q82
 Vul: nil ♥ K62
 ♦ KQ5
 ♣ AK43

♠ 103	♠ 5
♥ AJ943	♥ 1075
♦ 1062	♦ AJ98743
♣ Q105	♣ J9
	♠ AKJ9764
	♥ Q8
	♦ -
	♣ 8762

At trick 1, after the diamond 2 was led and you put on the king, East (who was Benito Garozzo in disguise) played low! Now your Morton's Fork disappeared in a puff of smoke, as you were forced to take your discard prematurely.

Benito worked out from the bidding and his partner's lead that you were void in diamonds, and therefore could be made to pay for your tiny misplay.

If Benito had been playing the hand himself, he would have played a *low diamond* from dummy at trick 1, ensuring that he could take his discard at a time of his own choosing.




Freda Street

Parking Restrictions

MEMBERS & PATRONS

PLEASE NOTE:



FREDA STREET
(Running alongside the Video Ezy Store)

Is a
PERMIT PARKING ZONE

You will be booked if you park in
Freda Street