

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

December 2006

Editors: Ian McCance & Bill Jacobs



A Special Thank You Cathie Lachman

2006 has been a wonderful and gratifying year for me. I completed my first year as Manager of the VBA a challenging, varied and sometimes frenetic role and represented Australia in the PABF Championships in Shanghai.

The highlight of the year was being part of the VBA team that turned the Club around financially and resulted in a profit. Thanks for this achievement must go to YOU, the members, supporters and all players who participated in the VBA State and Club events. Notably there are 35 teams playing in the Xmas Teams currently running on Wednesday night. Without your support the outstanding result of 2006 would not have been achieved.

The Council members give many hours of tireless volunteer time to ensure your Club runs well. There are many issues, requests and suggestions offered by players that need attention. They are a passionate group and have been a wonderful support to me throughout the year.

Laurie Kelso, our Chief Tournament Director is often challenged but remains

calm and professional through all events - he is a true asset as are our other staff members, Terry Crawford, Valerie Daly, Mary Elson, Jeff Fust, Jenny Atkinson and especially Hazel Schwerdt who volunteers 3 days per week and is a tremendous and valuable asset.

Indeed there needs to be special mention about the Victorian Affiliated Clubs. My exchanges with you have been great and I do hope that you have benefited from the relationship you have with the VBA. We are here to help you at any time, so please call, email or fax at anytime. The team is here for you!

So I raise my glass to you all, wish you all a great festive season and good bridging in 2007.



MEMBERS ARE INVITED
TO ATTEND THE AGM
ON TUESDAY 5TH DECEMBER
COMMENCING AT 6.30 P.M
FOLLOWED BY A FREE
GAME OF DUPLICATE BRIDGE
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL
BE SERVED

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

Responding to Takeout Doubles

Here's this month's auction:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♦	D'ble	Pass	?

This is one of the least understood areas of bidding. Let's start to understand it.

What does partner's double mean? There are three possible hand-types:

1. Opening or near-opening values, with shortage in diamonds and support for the other three suits – the classic "takeout" bid.
2. A very strong hand with a long suit – too strong to make a non-forcing overcall.
3. A no-trump hand stronger than 18 points – therefore too strong to bid 1NT directly (which would show about 16-18 points).

We'll start with a nightmare hand, which strangely enough, points to the entire method. You have:

♠ 975 ♥ 843 ♦ 10872 ♣ 654

How do you respond to the double?

First things first, *don't pass*. It is verboten to pass partner's takeout double unless you have long strong diamonds and a healthy expectation of defeating 1♦. Passing 1♦ doubled is just giving up before the kickoff.

The hand is no-trump oriented in terms of shape, but *don't bid 1NT*. 1NT won't make (or if it does make, partner is probably going to put you into 3NT next). 1NT should be played as showing values and a stopper – typically about 7 to 10 points.

That leaves bidding a 3-card suit – unpleasant but the best you can do. The usual compromise is to bid 1♥, and partner needs to expect no strength, and probably at

least 4 hearts, but *could be three*, to cater for this disaster hand.

For contrast, what's the response here?

♠ K94 ♥ J43 ♦ A1093 ♣ Q86

1NT is the obvious move – nothing else remotely fits.

If your methods over a takeout double require you to bid 1NT on both

♠ 975 ♥ 843 ♦ 10872 ♣ 654

and

♠ K94 ♥ J43 ♦ A1093 ♣ Q86

then you cannot expect consistent results, as the takeout doubler will truly be guessing.

Let's give you a major suit next ...

♠ A5 ♥ J873 ♦ 982 ♣ K652

What's your response to partner's takeout double?

I recommend a 2♥ bid. A jump in a suit should show about 8 to 11 points and at least a four card suit.

Are you nervous about jumping in a suit with such a poor holding as J873? You shouldn't be – when partner makes a takeout double of 1♦, he is in a sense bidding spades, hearts and clubs all at once. Your J873 is perfectly adequate *support* for his presumed hearts.

Once again, if you bid 1♥ on both of:

♠ 975 ♥ 843 ♦ 10872 ♣ 654

and

♠ A5 ♥ J873 ♦ 982 ♣ K652

then partner is going to have a tough time of it, sorting out what to do.

Are you beginning to see why takeout double auctions are difficult (and therefore important)? Because you are being forced to bid on any hand from zero points up, the strength ranges for your bids have to be carefully chosen to be not too wide.

Last one:

♠ KJ43 ♥ J9 ♦ K6 ♣ KQ872

This hand is worth forcing to game, but where? You should start with a cue-bid of 2♦, planning to follow up with a 3♣ bid if partner bids 2♥.

A cue bid asks partner to describe his hand, and any subsequent new suit bid by you is forcing.

In summary, here are the basic rules for responding to a takeout double of a one-level opening:

Simple bid in new suit: 0-7 points, probably at least 4 cards in the suit, but could be a 3-card suit if stuck.

Jump bid in new suit: 8-11 points, at least 4 cards, non-forcing.

1NT: 7-10 points with a stopper

2NT: 11-12 points with a stopper (invitational)

Cue-bid: 12+ points.

Just for fun, let's propose a hand for partner, and see how the auction should develop opposite each of the four hands in this article:

♠ Q1086 ♥ AK62 ♦ Q5 ♣ AJ9

My recommended auctions can be found on page 8.



Summer Series 2007
BEGINNER'S BRIDGE LESSONS
at the VBA
Class size limited to 24
FREE if you are under 30 years of age

When?	Thursdays 7.30 pm-9.30 pm commencing 8 th February
Where?	Victorian Bridge Association Clubrooms 131 Poath Road, Murrumbena
Cost?	\$125 per person, includes: - 8 weeks of 2 hour lessons - Certificate on completion - 6 Free Supervised Playing Sessions upon completion of course (value \$42)
Registration?	Only by deposit of \$50 - MasterCard and Visa accepted
Teacher:	Jeff Fust
Phone:	9530-9006 E-Mail: clachman@vba.asn.au



SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: S ♠ 3
 Vul: N/S ♥ A74
 ♦ AK10843
 ♣ K108

♠ KQ8
 ♥ KQ8
 ♦ Q95
 ♣ 5432

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

* 12-14 HCP

Partner has found dummy's shortage when he begins with ♠5. South ducks your ♠Q and also allows ♠K to hold, following ♠6, ♠2. Time to assess prospects – what will be your next card?

Problem 2:

Dealer: S ♠ 54
 Vul: N/S ♥ K97
 ♦ Q97642
 ♣ Q7

♠ K1072
 ♥ A542
 ♦ K10
 ♣ 1096

West	North	East	South
D'ble Pass	1♦ 3NT	Pass All pass	1♣ 2NT*

* 17-18 HCP

Your ♠2 goes to partner's ♠Q and declarer's ♠A. Next comes ♦A. How are you going to defend this contract?

Solutions on page 7.

NEW FACES AND OLD

The VBA warmly welcomes the following new members:

Toni Alfredson	Jeremy Goldberg
Tim Lee	Patricia McAuley
Martin Willcox	

GNOT WRAPUP

Another "close but no cigar" outcome in an Australian National event. After the knockout phase of the recent Grand National Open Teams on the Gold Coast, the two unbeaten teams, hence automatic semi-finalists, were both from Melbourne:

Michael Dilks, Bob Gallus, Blaine Howe and Neil Ewart, and

Felicity Beale, Diana Smart, Grant Kilvington, Charlie Snashall, David Smith and Rob van Riel.

Dilks went on to comfortably defeat Sydney 1 in their semi-final, whilst Beale lost to Canberra. Then in the final, the strong Canberra team defeated Dilks by 45imps.

This result was a re-run of the Open ANC, where Victoria crushed the opposition in the preliminary rounds, only to lose in the final.

And just as a sequence of slam losses contributed to our loss in the ANC, there were a number of slam swings against us in semi-finals and final of the GNOT. It looks like slam bidding might be a subject for the VBA Newsletter in 2007!

Nevertheless, congratulations to both the Dilks and Beale teams on a fine performance.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

MEANDERINGS Bill Jacobs

Where the author, fresh out of ideas, substitutes for two sessions in the first stage of the Butler trials.

Bad things come in threes

For me, a bad thing is a minimum opening bid, 4-4-4-1 shape, and a singleton black suit, while I'm playing Acol.

There's no way to bid this beast – if you open a four card suit, and partner bids your singleton, there's just no rebid that is any good at all (NT would show 15+).

So what happens to South (me) on Night 3? Board 3, as dealer:

♠ QJ63 ♥ J864 ♦ AK76 ♣ 3

Board 11, as dealer:

♠ A1073 ♥ J542 ♦ AQ83 ♣ 5

Board 25, pass, pass to me in 3rd seat:

♠ 8 ♥ J1074 ♦ QJ92 ♣ AK62

How freaky is that? By the time the third one arrived, I was glancing around the room, trying to work out whether I'd actually died and was playing at a table in Hell.

Well at least they were all 11 counts – I passed the lot of them and ended up only minus 7imps on the averages.

Dozens of years ago, the Victorian Acolites actually played that a 2♦ opening showed these hands: minimum opening, 4441 with a black singleton. 13th September 2006 would have been that convention's day in the sun.

On switching off

This quiet 1NT contract carried a very instructive point for the defence:

♠ Q8	
♥ 1062	
♦ J62	
♣ K10732	
♠ 10974	♠ J53
♥ J54	♥ AK3
♦ AQ9	♦ K1054
♣ QJ8	♣ 965
♠ AK62	
♥ Q987	
♦ 873	
♣ A4	

South opened a 12-14 1NT and played it there.

West led a spade; declarer won in hand and played club ace, club to the jack and ducked. West continued spades, and declarer won the queen in dummy, and cashed the club king, splitting the suit.

I can tell what happened next: the defence switched itself off. Both defenders thought: "what a lucky guy: clubs are 3-3, and this is going to make". Understandable emotions, but wrong, wrong, wrong.

Declarer *does* have 7 tricks, 4 clubs and 3 spades, but he lacks an entry to take the third spade. The two defenders were easily good enough to realise this, but their emotions got in the way. On the run of the clubs, they hung on grimly to all their spades, and inevitably had to give declarer his undeserved spade trick.

If instead the defence had thought about it, they would have pitched all their spades, and taken the remainder of the tricks in the red suits, for down 1.

Women are from Venus ...

This hand from night 4 caught my eye:

♠ A653	♠ K
♥ 109	♥ Q85
♦ Q2	♦ KJ1054
♣ K10932	♣ J854
♠ Q109	♠ J8742
♥ A763	♥ KJ42
♦ 963	♦ A87
♣ Q76	♣ A

South played 4♠ and the lead was a club. At trick 2, declarer played a spade to the ace, and as East dropped the king with a smile, she turned to South and said: "does that help?"

The honest answer was "no", but South would now have had a fair idea that the ♠K was singleton, rather than ♠KQ doubleton. Loose lips sink ships.

Anyway. declarer ran ♥10 to West's ace, who now switched a diamond, queen, king, ace. The correct play from here is to hope the heart queen drops: ♥K, heart ruff, then if the queen has dropped, back to hand with a club ruff, and ♥J to pitch a diamond. A bit lucky, but clearly the correct play and easier when you "know" spades are 3-1.

This reminds me of a theory of Ishmael Del Monte, currently Australia's #1 player. He says that men, holding touching doubleton honours, such as KQ or QJ always drop the higher one; whereas women play the lower one. In this case, the play of the spade

king would have marked the female East with a singleton – right!

I don't know about the gender politics behind that theory, but if you ever get into that situation against Ish, you will now know how to send him astray!

Victorian Bridge Association

invites you to the

VBA Summer Congress

to be held

Saturday 9th December and
Sunday 10th December

at the

VBA, 131 Poath Rd, Murrumbena

A Red Master Point Event

Convenors - Lyndy Hickman &
Margaret Yuill

Phone Enquiries: 03-9530-9006

VIVE LE MATCHPOINTS – III

Sick of my diatribes about matchpoints? I don't blame you. But when Sid Dunk sends me a cutting from Paul Marston's column in the Weekend Australian of October 28, what can I do?

Paul writes:

"What a joy it is to see a key event (the Dick Cummings Open Pairs ... Ed) scored at matchpoints once again, and not IMPs. Matchpoints is a more exacting form of the game, and it is not as subject to luck as IMPs".

... BJ

BOOK REVIEW
THE BRIDGE PLAYER'S BIBLE
BY JULIAN POTTAGE

Bible : A copy of the Scriptures, hence *fig* a textbook, an authority: a sacred book. (SOED).

An ambitious claim.

This is a curious book (Alice might have found it curiouser as it goes along). The format is unusual – it is wire-bound, so that the pages open out for easy reference. (Almost) every page contains one or more illustrative hands, which are, except for the dummy, displayed as a fan, in a left hand with a well-manicured thumb.

Goodness knows why: to have to peer into West or East to see what they hold is irritating because eye-swings are horizontal not semicircular and the suits are sorted for colour, usually, but not always, SHCD, i.e., the presentation is not the universally familiar SHDC.

Auctions are shown in 2 columns (uncontested) or 4 columns (contested) as is customary, but the 3-column ones, omitting the one silent hand, are curious.

It is hard to decide what readership the author had in mind. The text starts at the very beginning “you need four players”. That suggests that you might give BPB to a beginner, but many would have given up before p. 239 illustrates when a ruff-discard doesn't cost.

Explanation of basic concepts is lacking: the section on **bidding** gives the mechanics of both Standard American (SA) and Acol, but nowhere is it explained what a *system* aims to do and why one is required. The same is true of the concept of *forcing* – some bids are flagged as forcing, never is it explained why the flow of information should be assured. And a *reverse* requires extra strength but what does the term imply?

Bidding takes you right through to competitive decisions and the Law of Total Tricks (p. 113) “the total [trumps] *should be* the same as the number of tricks...” (my

emphasis). Not even Larry Cohen says “should be”.

The section on **play** is comprehensive and entertaining, but there is the same lack of explanation. Terms like *finesse* (p. 137) and *squeeze* (p. 185) turn up before they are defined or illustrated. I found *Yarborough* used twice without explanation – poor beginner.

This section reminded me of being taught cricket. We went through the motions of, e.g., a forward defensive stroke, but I never found out how to tell when to play it. Our beginner may have difficulty deciding which of the various techniques to employ.

There is a serious error under **Probabilities** (p. 149). The chances of success of a contract depending on 2 of 3 finesses is not 37%. The author has omitted the joyous outcome when all 3 finesses win. The true percentage is 50. The *non-material squeeze* on p. 213 looks a bit material to me.

Nicely got up, visually attractive, but.

... I. McC



RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

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

Graduate Master	Patricia Farney
Club Master	Gabi Fulop Pam Fulop Esther Goldschlager
Local Master*	Kamara Nainanayake
Local Master**	Ann Bednarz
State Master	Every Hechtman
State Master *	Pam Brown
National Master*	Andrew Hegedus David Sharman
Gold Life Master	Alexander Ivanyi Margaret Yuill
Grand Master	Jill Magee
Gold Grand Master	Rob van Riel

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS

Ian McCance

Problem 1:

Dealer: S ♠ 3
 Vul: N/S ♥ A74
 ♦ AK10843
 ♣ K108

♠ J10754		♠ KQ8
♥ 10652		♥ KQ8
♦ 76		♦ Q95
♣ 76		♣ 5432

 ♠ A962
 ♥ J93
 ♦ J2
 ♣ AQJ9

Partner cannot hold ♠A, so the spades are out of further consideration – partner will have no entry. The obvious switch will be to hearts, but which? If partner has ♥Jxx you can start ♥K and all will be well. But maybe partner has ♥10xx (or even 10x). Declarer isn't clairvoyant, and would finesse ♥9. So the low heart it must be.¹

If declarer has ♥J10x nothing works. If ♥Jx doubleton - tough.

Problem 2:

Dealer: S ♠ 54
 Vul: N/S ♥ K97
 ♦ Q97642
 ♣ Q7

♠ K1072		♠ Q983
♥ A542		♥ Q10
♦ K10		♦ J83
♣ 1096		♣ J843

 ♠ AJ6
 ♥ J863
 ♦ A5
 ♣ AK52

Partner can have very little, but would likely have entered the auction with 5 spades. So declarer's ♠J is guarded. To defeat 3NT you need partner to return a spade through declarer. The only possible chance is that partner has ♦Jxx, and accordingly you unblock ♦K on ♦A.

¹ What a difference a spot makes! Change ♥KQ8 to ♥KQ9, and the correct play against a *competent* declarer is to switch to the king, because now there is no jack-nine misguess possible.

TAKEOUT DOUBLES FOR ADVANCERS

Bill Jacobs

Here are a couple of more advanced thoughts on takeout doubles. Partner makes a takeout double of an opponent's 1♣ opening. What should be your response on:

1. ♠ 1032 ♥ 865 ♦ 943 ♣ Q652
2. ♠ Q982 ♥ K763 ♦ 2 ♣ J542

Sorry to give you such bad hands like 1. but these things happen. You know to bid a 3-card suit, but which one? Even though partner is a bit more likely to have a four-card major than four diamonds, I suggest a 1♦ response. You want to shut partner up, and responding in a minor is less likely to excite partner than a major suit bid.

On hand 2, you obviously want to respond 1 of a major, but which major? You should bid 1♠, preparing for an auction where the opponents come in with 2♣ or 2♦. Then you can follow up with 2♥ yourself, and partner has a choice of the majors at the two level. This is not an "up-the-line" situation, because you cannot expect partner to bid 1♠ over your 1♥ response holding, say, four spades and three hearts.

VBA SURVEY OF CLUBS IN 2007

The VBA Council has resolved to undertake a survey of all Clubs in Victoria. The Council is interested in the Clubs' opinions on bridge in Victoria. Accordingly, the survey will cover the following areas:

- Feedback on VBA performance in administering state bridge;
- Club views on representation and governance in Victoria;
- Club needs going forward regarding various items such as technology, bridge training, youth bridge development etc.

From the survey results the Council will collate the information to develop strategies for bridge in Victoria.

The FABCV has been invited to participate in the process and they have expressed a strong desire to be part of this.

We are keenly interested in feedback from Clubs and look forward to their participation. Our timetable for the survey is to have it to Club Presidents in the first quarter of 2007.

A BRIDGE MANTRA
Blaine Howe

When you play bridge for long periods you need to concentrate on the hand you are playing and wipe past hands from your mind. Whilst doing this you also need to avoid trying to get good results by wishing them to come true - my experience is this doesn't work.

I have a little mantra I use to help me with both, especially when I am getting tired.

It comes from the Brian De Palma film The Untouchables where Sean Connery plays an Irish policeman and Kevin Costner is Elliot Ness.

They are on the Canadian border waiting to intercept a convoy of illegal whisky they have been informed is about to cross the border into the USA and Costner is impatiently pacing around wanting action.

Connery goes up to him and says (as I remember it):

"Don't wait for it to happen. Don't even want it to happen. Just watch and see what does happen."

It works for me...



RECENT RESULTS

Victorian Interstate Butler – Stage 3

- 1 L. Gold – J. Stark
- 2 B. Tencer – V. Goldberg
- 3 E. Caplan – G. Gaspar

Victorian Open Pairs

Championship

- 1 N. Ewart – B. Howe
- 2 W. Jacobs – L. Gold
- 3 I. McCance – B. Thompson

Plate

- 1 S. Arber – J. Dunstan
- 2 R. Szabo-Bencze – S. Gerdan
- 3 A. Murray – D. Sharman

Consolation

- 1 J. Selwyn – M. Granovsky
- 2 A. Blecher – I. Webb
- 3 S. Klofa – M. Woods

Ros Blutstein Swiss Pairs

- 1 G. Gaspar – J. Gaspar
- 2 S. Tishler – A. Sarten
- 3 S. Gerdan – J. Selwyn



STARTER TAKEOUT DOUBLE AUCTIONS

With the takeout doubler holding:

♠ Q1086 ♥ AK62 ♦ Q5 ♣ AJ9

here are my recommended auctions:

- 1. ♠ 975 ♥ 843 ♦ 10872 ♣ 654

1♦	D'ble	Pass	1♥
Pass	Pass		

- 2. ♠ K94 ♥ J43 ♦ A1093 ♣ Q86

1♦	D'ble	Pass	1NT
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

- 3. ♠ A5 ♥ J873 ♦ 982 ♣ K652

1♦	D'ble	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	Pass

- 4. ♠ KJ43 ♥ J9 ♦ K6 ♣ KQ872

1♦	D'ble	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠