

# Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

March 2007

Editor: Bill Jacobs

## PARTNERSHIP BREAKERS

An interesting poll in the newsgroup rec.games.bridge asked the question: "what is a partnership breaker for you?" Here is a sample of the replies – food for thought?

### Bidding:

- Hogging the contract
- Masterminding the auction
- Frequent psyching
- Insistence on playing particular methods, then frequently forgetting them!
- Having to play a lot of conventions that I am not comfortable with
- Passing cue-bids
- Passing forcing bids
- Not passing penalty doubles

### Play:

- Not trusting partner in defence
- Not being able to follow suit
- Agonizing slowness

### Behaviour:

- Repeated or deliberate poor ethics
- Repeated aggressive calls to the director
- During the bidding/play, putting down the bids/cards in such a way that it is clear he is mad at me
- Yelling at me
- Excessive rudeness to partner or opponents
- Repeatedly turning up late for the session
- Cancelling engagements at short notice
- Failure to pay for his share of the drinks



### PAUL LAVINGS TEACHING TOUR

Paul Lavings will be visiting Victoria again in early June 2007

Affiliated Clubs interested in hosting a Lavings session are invited to contact the VBA to arrange scheduling.

Tel: 03-9530-9006

E-m: clachman@vba.asn.au

This year's topics are:

COMMON ERRORS IN BIDDING

COMMON ERRORS IN DECLARER PLAY

Speaking of partnership breakers, here are three bidding questions for you:

### 1. nil vulnerable

♠ A63 ♥ QJ92 ♦ K982 ♣ 94

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
Pass	1♥	Pass	?

### 2. nil vulnerable

♠ A65 ♥ - ♦ AK1052 ♣ KQ984

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	3♥*	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	?

\* preemptive

### 3. nil vulnerable

♠ KQ32 ♥ - ♦ KQ765 ♣ Q873

West	North	East	South
		2♥*	D'ble
3♥	D'ble	Pass	?

\* weak two

See page 4 for the full story.

*Health Warning:  
This edition contains several tricky squeezes.*



### BEGINNER'S BRIDGE LESSONS

#### FOR STUDENTS

at the VBA

When?	Tuesdays 7.30 pm-9.30 pm commencing 6 <sup>th</sup> March
Where?	Victorian Bridge Association Clubrooms (Melway 60 C6) 131 Poath Road, Murrumbena
Cost?	\$20 with Student Card - 6 weeks of 2 hour lessons - 4 Free Supervised Playing Sessions upon completion of course (value \$28)
Registration?	Phone Cathie: 9530-9006 or E-Mail: clachman@vba.asn.au
Teacher:	Jeff Fust
Transport:	Train: Hughesdale Station (3 min walk, head south along Poath Road) Bus: 767 get off at the Cnr of Poath Rd & Stewart St.

**FOR STARTERS**  
**Bill Jacobs**

**Pre-empts Gone Wrong**

Everyone's been on a receiving end of an opponent's pre-empt – you have a good hand, and no room to manoeuvre. As they say, that's why people pre-empt.

What about being on the receiving end of *partner's* pre-empt? You hold

♠ AK52 ♥ KQ7654 ♦ - ♣ K87

Partner deals, and with no-one vulnerable makes a bid you don't want to hear: 3♦. RHO passes, and you?

It's a starter's error to bid 3♥ here. 3♥ is a forcing bid, and unless you get very lucky and find partner with heart support, it's going to lead to a minus score, quite possibly a large minus score.

Look at it this way: partner has a weak hand with a string of diamonds. Your high cards will take tricks, and partner will take a lot of diamond tricks. It might not add up to 9, but it will go close. Now look at your prospects in hearts: partner's diamonds are useless to you – you will be faced with taking 10 tricks on your own, with little help from dummy. 10 tricks in hearts is not a likely proposition.

You pass 3♦ and it is passed out. Now let's switch to partner's seat and play it.

♠ AK52  
♥ KQ7654  
♦ -  
♣ K87

♠ 943  
♥ 3  
♦ QJ65432  
♣ A3

The lead is the spade queen. You say "thank-you partner" (and mean it - 3♦ is as good a spot as any). What do you play?

First thing's first. Before playing trumps, you need to look after the third-round spade loser. You can discard that spade on a heart honour, and you need to organise that now, otherwise the opponents will win the race to a spade trick.

So you win the spade and play the heart king – West wins with the ace and plays the spade jack. You win that, cash the heart queen pitching your last spade, and play to the club ace. It's time to draw trumps. How?

You might think there's nothing much to the play in diamonds, but there is. If diamonds are 3-3, then you will lose three trumps whatever you do, unless the opponents can get a ruff or overruff, which you cannot do much about.

What if diamonds are 4-2? If the doubleton is two low cards, you have four losers whatever you do, but if the doubleton includes a high honour, you can drop that honour with two low trump leads, and then have the queen-jack playing against honour-small. Let's see that in action, as this is the full deal:

Dealer: S	♠ AK52	
Vul: Nil	♥ KQ7654	
	♦ -	
	♣ K87	
♠ QJ106		♠ 87
♥ AJ82		♥ 109
♦ K8		♦ A1097
♣ J92		♣ Q10654
	♠ 943	
	♥ 3	
	♦ QJ65432	
	♣ A3	

You lead a low diamond. The defence win and play a club, as good as anything. You win with the king, ruff a club, and lead another low diamond. This one catches the doubleton king, and nothing can stop you from dealing with East's remaining A10 – you still have the QJ.

3♦ bid and made. Next board.

Now check out what happens if North had bid 3♥. Nothing good. A final contract of 4♦? No amount of declarer skill will work for that.

4♥? That's good for about 8 tricks – you'll be lucky not to get doubled. 3NT? About 5 tricks – ough!

*Points to remember:*

- A mis-fitting strong hand opposite a weak hand with a long suit usually plays best in the long suit: the strong hand provides the high card tricks, the weak hand provides the trump tricks. In another suit or NT, the weak hand is useless.

Here's another common example of this principle. You open 1♠ on

♠ AKxxx ♥ x ♦ Axx ♣ AJxx

Partner responds 1NT. You bid 2♣, and partner bids 2♥, showing a long heart suit but in a weakish hand. Pass 2♥, hoping that partner can deliver four heart tricks to go with your four high-card tricks. Try giving partner some typical hands for his 2♥ bid and you will see what I mean.

- Before drawing trumps, always check whether you first need to set up a trick for a discard.
- When playing a suit, stop to think of the possible opposing holdings, and make your play accordingly.

**RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS**

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

Graduate Master	Dick Adair Marianne Schwarz
Club Master	Christopher Salter Geoffrey Stanning Laszlo Szigeti
Local Master	Mary Bertuna
Local Master*	Elizabeth Williams Peter Yuill
Regional Master	Dennis Meltzer
State Master	Jeremy Goldberg
State Master*	Jeffrey Lacey
National Master*	Alison Talbot

**SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS**

**Problem 1:**

Dealer: S ♠ A874  
 Vul: all ♥ 106  
 ♦ 10653  
 ♣ KQ8

♠ Q53  
 ♥ J2  
 ♦ AKQ842  
 ♣ 106

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦ <sup>2</sup>	3♦	2♣ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	5♥ <sup>3</sup>	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	6♥

- 1 Strong – 8 playing tricks
- 2 Negative or waiting
- 3 Control probe

Partner leads ♦9 and you win the trick, South playing ♦J. How should you play to defeat this contract?

**Problem 2:**

Dealer: S ♠ A874  
 Vul: all ♥ 106  
 ♦ 10653  
 ♣ KQJ

♠ K53  
 ♥ J2  
 ♦ AKQ842  
 ♣ 106

For the auction, see problem 1.

Partner leads ♦9 and you win the trick, South playing ♦J. How should you play to defeat this contract?

Solutions on page 8.

*(Editor's note: take your time)*

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Vu-Graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan:  
 "I don't think anyone in this tournament can bid diamonds to show diamonds. We lost the club suit in the 1950s. Now diamonds are gone and hearts are sinking fast."

## ETHICAL DILEMMAS - I Bill Jacobs

This series of articles arises out of a request from a member for more guidance on how to deal with ethical issues that arise from time to time.

Competition bridge is full of situations which present tricky ethical decisions to be made. How you navigate through these waters is important, both for your own self-esteem and for your reputation.

Let's make one thing clear at the outset – there will be no mention of the C-word. This series is not about cheating. Cheating is what happens when you and your partner work out a series of winking signals. Or you break into the VBA and steal tomorrow night's hand records. I can write some articles about that if you like, but they will go under a different title.

No, ethical dilemmas are not cheating dilemmas. They are situations that arise which present a real challenge on what to do: if you fail those challenges, then you are not a cheat – you simply haven't assimilated and acted on these articles.

Let's get started.

### On Inscrutability

Many ethical problems arise when a player inserts some extraneous information into the system ... it might be an explanation of a bid, heard by his partner, or a hesitation in a difficult situation.

Such things are unavoidable – how to deal with them will be a major part of this series. This month we focus on extraneous information that *can* be avoided. You should actively work to maintain a calm inscrutable manner at the table – bidding in a natural normal tempo, avoiding facial expressions and not speaking at all.

Actually, that's a lot to ask of a player. And it takes practice.

Here are some examples of extraneous information that could and should be avoided.

1. A player picked up:

♠ 982 ♥ AK876 ♦ J3 ♣ QJ2

It went Pass – Pass – Pass to him. He looked at his hand and said: "Oh well, I suppose I have to say something" and wrote 1♥ on the bidding pad.

Partner, holding

♠ A63 ♥ QJ92 ♦ K982 ♣ 94

bid 2♥, and there they rested, just making.

The comment was totally uncalled for – it helped partner, having a close decision, take the low road.

OK, you are thinking: "well I would never make a comment like that". And I believe you. But maybe you would look at your rubbish 11-count, grimace a bit, pause, give a tiny shrug of the shoulders, and then bid 1♥. It amounts to about the same thing: a perceptive partner will realise that you were thinking about passing the hand out.

It's OK to think, but then bid 1♥ in a calm fashion without any accompanying body language.

2.

West	North	East	South
1♥	1♠	3♥*	4♥
Pass	4♠.	Pass	?

\* preemptive

North's 1♠ overcall was a pile of manure:

♠ J10732 ♥ AQ4 ♦ Q6 ♣ 1053

South had a huge hand:

♠ A65 ♥ - ♦ AK1052 ♣ KQ984

but knew to pass 4♠, because North wrote 4♠ on the bidding pad, and followed it with a full-stop!

I've seen it happen, and on more than one occasion. Is it sub-conscious? I don't know, but that tiny full-stop speaks volumes. Unethical volumes.

3.

West	North	East	South
		2♥*	D'ble
3♥	D'ble	Pass	?
♠ KQ32 ♥ - ♦ KQ765 ♣ Q873			

This is an ugly problem and a major-league decision. What is North's double? Maybe you play responsive doubles in principle – should that apply here? Perhaps he has:

♠ Axx ♥ xxx ♥ AJx ♣ Kxxx

and you'd like to reach the good game in a minor, rather than sweat over defeating 3♥ by a trick.

Or maybe your heart void suggests that partner's "gottem", holding:

♠ Ax ♥ QJ10xx ♦ xxx ♣ Kxx

in which case you are best off defending.

South actually had no trouble passing 3♥ doubled, because North's double was made in an instant and it was such a heavy "X" that it created an indelible impression on the rest of the bidding pad and the tablecloth below.

Go back and consider your answers to the quiz presented on page 1. They were difficult problems – true? But not so difficult "in real life", as it turned out.

In summary, make a pact with yourself. For the next session you play, make a *conscious* effort to be inscrutable in true oriental fashion. Keep a straight face, say nothing during the hand, and make your bids and plays calmly. Be like a computer.

It can be good fun, and habit-forming – which is the whole idea.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

#### Suit combination of the month

QJ87  
A543

How do you play this combination for:

- 4 tricks
- 3 tricks

### THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dealer: N	♠ QJ87
Vul: All	♥ AQ92
	♦ A93
	♣ KQ
	♠ A543
	♥ KJ4
	♦ J52
	♣ A65

You reach 6♠ after an auction best left forgotten. West leads the heart 10. Plan the play.

Solution on page 7.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

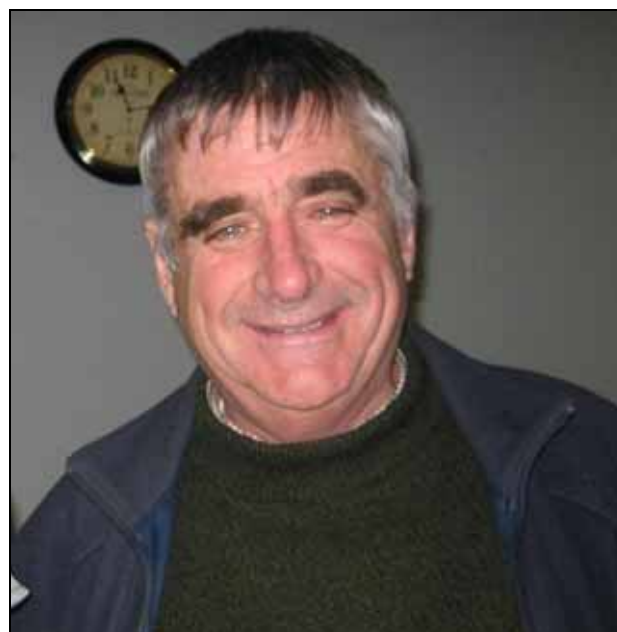
### RECENT RESULTS

#### Ailsa Tandy Eclectic Pairs

- D. Davis – L. Gold
- E. Windmiller – P. Hemmingway
- J. Hare – J. Grigg

#### Ramsden Swiss Pairs

- J. Hoff – K. Hoff
- E. Hechtman – K. Nainanayake
- A. Segal – P. Kriksciunas



Charlie Snashall – semi-finalist in the recent Gold Coast Open Teams Event

**SLAM POST-MORTEMS - I**  
**Bill Jacobs**

As promised, this is the first in a series of articles examining Victorian slam bidding abroad. Just to play fair, I'll start with a poor auction involving yours truly in Tweed Heads.

Dealer: N      ♠ Q82  
 Vul: nil      ♥ K65  
                  ♦ KQ842  
                  ♣ 32

♠ K3  
 ♥ AQJ8  
 ♦ A93  
 ♣ AQJ4

North	South
Jacobs	Gold
Pass	2NT
3♣	3♦
4NT	5♠
5NT	6♦
6NT	Pass

6NT is not the world's worst contract, but it's less than 50%, and considerably inferior to 6♦ (particularly played by South). In 6♦, a spade ruff provides the 12<sup>th</sup> trick.

### Post Mortem

The early auction travelled along well understood lines and was ruled not to contribute to the ultimate failure. 2NT showed 20-22, and 3♣ was Puppet Stayman, asking for a 5-card major. 3♦ denied a 5-card major, but showed a 4-card major somewhere.

4NT was a doubtful bid – better to bid a natural 4♦, but would South understand it? 4NT should be quantitative, since there is no suit agreed, but the partnership was no longer on firm ground.

South correctly took 4NT as quantitative (the initial pass helps here), and accepted the invite, showing three aces along the way.

North, who has never played ace-showing responses to a natural 4NT, felt the wheels had come off, and bid 5NT "to see what would happen next". He had lost control of the auction.

South showed one king with 6♦.

North, in a fog, made the bid that ends all these slam messes: 6NT.

### How the auction should have gone

There were two ways to reach 6♦, serendipitously played by South.

North	South
Pass	2NT
3♣	3♦
4♦	6♦
Pass	

4♦ must logically show slam interest and South has everything: diamond fit, ruffing values, excellent controls. 7♦ is out of the question after North's initial pass – without that initial pass, South should bid cue-bid 4♥.

Alternatively:

North	South
Pass	2NT
3♣	3♦
4NT	5♣
5♦	5♥
5NT	6♦
Pass	

South accepts the 4NT invitation and starts bidding his suits. The 5-3 diamond fit comes to light at the last moment.

### What can we learn

Slam disasters often occur like this: the early auction is ok, but when the high level decisions have to be made, delicate system inferences and judgments need to be made.

In this example, the partnership needed to know:

- what does 4 of a minor mean after Puppet Stayman?
- after a quantitative 4NT, do you accept by showing suits or aces?

The solution to this is lots of discussion and bidding practice. There is no cheaper option.

As to the final outcome of this hand – it was not too painful. Here is the full deal:

Dealer: N	♠ Q82	
Vul: Nil	♥ K65	
	♦ KQ842	
	♣ 32	
♠ A1064		♠ J975
♥ 103		♥ 9742
♦ J107		♦ 65
♣ K986		♣ 1075
	♠ K3	
	♥ AQJ8	
	♦ A93	
	♣ AQJ4	

Against 6NT, West found an imaginative lead – the diamond 10. This created a losing option for declarer, but after much study, he didn't fall for it, winning the ace, and playing back to the king, and then the queen.

What do you think declarer should do now?

Leigh made a smart play ... he crossed to the heart ace and led a low spade away from his king. This put the pressure on West, who succumbed by rising with the ace – declarer claimed.

Leigh tells me that even if West had ducked the spade, he would have worked a strip squeeze – he felt that West's deceptive lead meant he must have all the cards.

Declarer runs his red suit winners, coming down to:

	♠ 8
	♥ -
	♦ -
	♣ 32
♠ A?	
♥ -	
♦ -	
♣ K?	
	♠ K
	♥ -
	♦ -
	♣ AQ

If West has bared the club king, declarer drops it – if West has bared the spade ace, declarer endplays him with it.

Of course declarer must pick the distribution, but that's a mere detail!

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

**THE TWELFTH TRICK**  
**Bill Jacobs**

Dealer: N	♠ QJ87	
Vul: All	♥ AQ92	
	♦ A93	
	♣ KQ	
♠ 1092		♠ K6
♥ 10		♥ 87632
♦ Q864		♦ K107
♣ J10982		♣ 743
	♠ A543	
	♥ KJ4	
	♦ J52	
	♣ A65	

With an inescapable diamond loser, you need to play the spade suit for no losers. There are two single holdings which allow you to do this: East has singleton king (cash the ace and finesse West twice) or West has doubleton 109 (lead the queen from dummy, and then the jack).

So pick one of them.

This hand is from the first night of the Pennant. In my match, declarer inferred from the heart 10 lead that West was more likely to be long in trumps. So he cashed the spade ace. West was long in trumps but not long enough, and 6♠ went two off when East gave West a heart ruff.

In my wife's match, declarer ran the spade queen from dummy and hit paydirt when East, a strong player, ducked it. West could probably have saved the day by falsecarding with the 10 or 9 on this trick (so that declarer continues the plan of playing for a legitimate winning setup), but followed with the 2. So now declarer had no option but to lead a low spade next – bingo!

*Postscript:*

And to play that spade suit when you can afford to lose one trick? Lead a low spade from your hand to the queen. If the 10 or 9 appears on this trick, play for it to be from shortage, and plan the next trick accordingly. If the spade queen holds, and no 10 or 9 has appeared, play back to the ace.

The only "losing" holding (one where a different play would have worked) is if RHO started with a singleton king.

**SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS**  
**Ian McCance**

**Problem 1:**

Dealer: S	♠ A874	
Vul: nil	♥ 106	
	♦ 10653	
	♣ KQ8	
♠ KJ962		♠ Q53
♥ 85		♥ J2
♦ 97		♦ AKQ842
♣ J953		♣ 106
	♠ 10	
	♥ AKQ9743	
	♦ J	
	♣ A742	

If you continue diamonds you know from the auction that declarer will ruff. What are his likely holdings in the black suits? Assume he has seven hearts for his jump to 4♥ and that his black cards include ♣A. Then if declarer has the spade king, he is up to 12 tricks, so assume partner has that card. The case for concern is one spade with four clubs (not ♣J).

If you return anything other than a *club* declarer can draw trumps, trump two spades in hand using ♠A and one of dummy's clubs for entry and play a squeeze – an either-or double squeeze, against partner in spades/clubs or you in diamonds/clubs, whoever holds four clubs

In this end-position South plays his ♥9:

	♠ 10	
	♥ -	
	♦ 10	
	♣ K8	
♠ K		♠ -
♥ -		♥ -
♦ -		♦ A
♣ J9?		♣ 106?
	♠ -	
	♥ 9	
	♦	
	♣ A74	

Whoever has the long club, declarer prevails. But if you switch to a club at trick two, then declarer cannot arrange this ending.

**Problem 2:**

Dealer: S	♠ A874	
Vul: nil	♥ 106	
	♦ 10653	
	♣ KQJ	
♠ J962		♠ K53
♥ 85		♥ J2
♦ 97		♦ AKQ842
♣ 98543		♣ 106
	♠ Q10	
	♥ AKQ9743	
	♦ J	
	♣ A72	

In this position, you must hope that declarer has at most 3 clubs. Then if partner has the spade queen, declarer has a certain spade loser. The case for concern is when declarer has that queen.

If you return anything other than a *spade*, declarer can draw six rounds of trumps, and three rounds of clubs. In this tantalizing end-position South plays his ♣K:

	♠ A	
	♥ -	
	♦ 106	
	♣ K	
		♠ K5
		♥ -
		♦ K8
		♣ -
	♠ Q10	
	♥ 3	
	♦ -	
	♣ 7	

You are caught in a criss-cross squeeze. If you discard a spade, declarer drops your king. If you discard a diamond, declarer ruffs a diamond.

But if you switch to a spade and South mis-guesses the suit, then declarer cannot arrange this ending.

**Printing Error –  
Ovens & Murray Bridge Club Congress**

Please note that the event on Sunday 11th March is a TEAMS event, not SWISS PAIRS as advertised.