

# Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

December 2007

Editor: Bill Jacobs

## VBA HONOUR BOARDS

The VBA Website has been updated with an on-line Honour Board to show the results our players have achieved over the years. You will be able to view all of the Honour Board information that is available on the walls of the VBA and we intend to do a lot more next year, if effective support is forthcoming.

This month, the first version of web data and supporting software has been made available from the home page of the VBA Website. Browse the Honour Boards or pick a player and see what they have achieved at a mouse-click.

Using the hard work of Sue Kelso who has meticulously replicated the Honour Boards in spreadsheet form, we will provide a view of what all of our major players have achieved.

Next year we hope to provide real information of results from national events for all players and also club events if the Affiliated Clubs want to support the efforts to do so and provide information to upload.

Also, photos and biographical info about players will be stored and anything that can be provided about the players who have achieved tournament results or who have contributed to the game in other ways will be incorporated, depending on the input of data.

All submissions will be used to enhance the data. It is always difficult to get material that fleshes out the people who have graced our game. If you can provide anything, please send it to me or to Cathie.

Now I want to ask the jellybean quiz. How many players have been involved in the ANC Representative Teams in the following events:

ANC Open	Since 1956
ANC Womens	Since 1972
ANC Seniors	Since 1993
ANC Youth	Since 1982

If you want to know the answers, check out the VBA Website at the end of the month.

How about an easier question. Which current player played in the ANC as a Victorian Representative 50 years (or is it 51?) after the first time? A seriously impressive achievement however you look at it.

... Blaine Howe

## YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Christine Heesom of Bairnsdale Bridge Club writes:

What a delight to have two members of your "Youth Squad", Justin Howard and Peter Hollands, playing at our Bairnsdale Congress recently. Not only were their bridge skills outstanding (they won the teams event with partners Andrew Mill and Andrew Hegedus), but they also charmed everyone with their personable manner and perfect etiquette at the table.



Andrew Hegedus, Peter Hollands, Shirley Watson, Andrew Mill and Justin Howard

The VBA invites you to the 2007 Summer Congress to be held 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December.

Entry Forms are

available at your Club or phone Cathie on 9530-9006 for further information.



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

With everyone vulnerable, you pick up:

♠ A82 ♥ 7652 ♦ AK1095 ♣ A

You deal and open 1♦, next hand overcalls 1♠, and partner doubles:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♠	D'ble		1♦

What does partner's double show?

---

American Alvin Roth died earlier this year at the age of 92. He was perhaps the greatest bridge inventor of the modern era, and foremost amongst his inventions was the negative double.

The negative double (originally called Sputnik<sup>1</sup>) is like a takeout double, but applies when you have opened the bidding and the next hand overcalls in a suit. Its most important application is you open with 1 of a minor, and next hand bids 1♠. In that setup, the negative double acts as a surrogate for a 1♥ response – it specifically shows at least four hearts.

This hand is a case in point – partner was going to respond 1♥ to your 1♦ opening but the 1♠ overcall has prevented that. He instead doubles, effectively saying: “partner, I was intending to respond 1♥”.

After RHO passes, what should you bid?

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♠	D'ble	Pass	1♦
			?

---

Think of the uncontested auction 1♦ - 1♥. You should bid now what you would have bid in that hypothetical auction. You have 15 points, four-card heart support, good distribution and lots of aces. For me, that spells a jump rebid of 3♥.

<sup>1</sup> Roth gave the device this name in 1957 because he believed it was “out of this world”, heralding the entry of bridge into the Space Age. The man had a healthy ego.

Partner raises to 4♥, concluding the auction:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♠	D'ble	Pass	1♦
Pass	4♥	All pass	3♥

The 1♠ overcaller leads the spade king:

♠ 94  
♥ AQJ3  
♦ 7632  
♣ K86

♠K led

♠ A82  
♥ 7652  
♦ AK1095  
♣ A

RHO, playing standard defensive signals, puts the ♠7 on this. What do you do?

---

It looks as though RHO might be starting a high-low to show a doubleton spade. That presents a risk to the contract, because if LHO is able to at any stage play a third spade through, then a ruff by RHO will endanger the contract.

To neutralize the threat of a third round of spades you should duck the first trick. This cuts the defenders' communications for spade plays. Let's look at the full deal:

Dealer: S	♠ 94	
Vul: All	♥ AQJ3	
	♦ 7632	
	♣ K86	
♠ KQJ1053		♠ 76
♥ 94		♥ K108
♦ QJ8		♦ 4
♣ Q10		♣ J975432
	♠ A82	
	♥ 7652	
	♦ AK1095	
	♣ A	

The defence is stymied once you duck the first spade. They can continue spades, but even though you lose a trick to East's ♥K, there is no quick entry to the West hand to play the killing third round of spades.

Now you might ask: “But what if East's spade is a singleton? Now he ruffs the next spade

and I look like a goose.” To which I would reply: “A six card overcall is much much more likely than a seven card overcall – you have to play the percentages. Looking foolish is part of the game.”

*Points to remember:*

- After 1 of a minor from opener and a 1♠ overcall, a negative double is essentially a replacement for the lost 1♥ bid. On other opening+overcall auctions, the negative double is generally takeout for the other two suits. We will see some of Al Roth’s other inventions in the new year.
- Your 3♥ rebid on a 7-high four-card suit showed good understanding of bidding technique. Even though partner hadn’t bid hearts directly, the jump rebid was a strong raise of his implied suit, and allowed you to get to the only making game.
- Look for opportunities to make communications difficult for the defence by holding up your ace when a suit is led. Holdup plays don’t just apply in notrumps.

**THE TWELFTH TRICK**

IMPs                    ♠ Q85  
 Dealer: N             ♥ AKQ74  
 Vul: N/S              ♦ K64  
                              ♣ A5

♠ KJ4  
 ♥ 102  
 ♦ AQJ  
 ♣ K8762

West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♠*	3NT
Pass	4NT	Pass	6NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

\* weak jump overcall

West leads ♠2. East wins the ace and returns ♠10 (West will discard). Plan the play.

Solution on page 5.

**SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS**

**Problem 1:**

Dealer: S             ♠ K92  
 Vul: Both            ♥ Q862  
                              ♦ 10  
                              ♣ J10542

♠ QJ1086  
 ♥ 1094  
 ♦ J6  
 ♣ A73

West	North	East	South
			1♦*
1♠	D’ble**	1NT	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

\* N/S open 1NT with 12-14 HCP  
 \*\* See “For Starters”

You lead ♠Q won by declarer’s ♠A, partner ♠5. Declarer plays ♥A and ♥3, on which you contribute a mendacious ♥10 – covered by ♥Q and partner’s ♥K. Partner returns ♠3, won in dummy, and declarer now plays ♦10 to ♦Q. He cashes ♦A to discard ♠9. It looks as if partner had 6 diamonds. Next comes ♦3 – how will you defend?

**Problem 2:**

Dealer: N             ♠ KJ102  
 Vul: N/S             ♥ 42  
                              ♦ QJ854  
                              ♣ 73

♠ A5  
 ♥ KJ9753  
 ♦ 62  
 ♣ AK4

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	2♣*
2♥	D’ble	3♥	3♠
4♥	Pass	Pass	D’ble
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
D’ble	Pass	Pass	Pass

\* Precision style

You’ve pushed them into it, now you have to defeat 4♠. You start ♣A: partner’s ♣5 is a likely doubleton. You switch a heart to partner’s ♥Q and declarer’s ♥A. Next comes ♣Q, which you win, to force declarer with a heart, which he ruffs. He plays a spade to ♠10 and another to ♠Q. Now what?

Solutions on page 7.

**ANATOMY OF A CHAMPION**  
**Bill Jacobs**

If you play bridge and have an internet connection there was really no excuse for not watching the live broadcast of the recent World Championships in Shanghai.

So many wonderful hands, but this one from Italian star Fulvio Fantoni in a quarter-final stood out for me as something that marks a real champion. It's not complicated:

IMPs            ♠ 97  
Dealer: S        ♥ A9652  
Vul: N/S        ♦ K982  
                  ♣ 63

                  ♠ A54  
                  ♥ QJ  
                  ♦ 104  
                  ♣ AKJ1072

West	North Nunes	East	South Fantoni
			1♣
Pass	1♦ (=♥)	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♣	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

See if you can do what he did, and for the right reason.

West leads the spade jack (standard honour leads), and East playing reverse attitude plays the two – you duck.

Next trick is spade ten, low, three and you duck again.

Now spade eight, East plays the six, and you win with the ace.

Over to you.

---

You are looking for six club tricks, so will finesse East for the queen. Either the diamond ace or the heart king on-side will be necessary for the ninth trick.

It looks natural to reject the diamond play, because even if the ace is on-side, you might

go down with spades 5-3. But what is the spade position? The two outstanding spades are the king and the queen and one thing is for sure: West won't have them both, because he wouldn't lead the jack from KQJ10x (nor would he pass over 1♣). So if you play a diamond and West has the ace, he cannot defeat you in spades.

So it looks like a 50-50 guess which red finesse to take. Fantoni took the seemingly more dangerous diamond play, which worked a treat, as West held:

♠ KJ108   ♥ 85   ♦ AJ65   ♣ 984

Why did he go right? He would have looked deeply into the club suit and seen that the percentage play was an immediate two finesses, catering to East holding ♣Qxxx. To take two finesses you need two entries, and that is only going to happen if you play a diamond.

And that cool-headed reasoning is what makes a champion. At the other table in the same position, declarer played on hearts and went one off.

A few weeks later, the final of the Spring National Open Teams was broadcast, and here was a somewhat related hand.

IMPs            ♠ AK63  
Dealer: W        ♥ KQ  
Vul: E/W        ♦ AJ86  
                  ♣ K102

                  ♠ J8  
                  ♥ A6532  
                  ♦ K9532  
                  ♣ 4

South (Peter Newell) declared 6♦ after an artificial auction, and Blaine Howe led the spade 2. How would you go about it?

---

The hand seems to revolve around playing the trumps for no losers. If you can do that (slightly better than 50-50), then you lose just a club trick.

But what if you have a trump loser? Then West's spade lead offers you a chance, because if it is from the queen, you can run the trick to your jack, and later discard your club singleton.

Newell thought for some time and went up with the spade ace, and down with the contract, as West held:

♠ Q92 ♥ 974 ♦ 7 ♣ QJ8765

It's understandable that declarer didn't want to stake all at trick 1, and possibly go down in an "unloseable" contract. But I cannot help but think that Fantoni would have coolly run the spade and made the contract. Good defenders tend to attack against slams, and so West's ♠2 lead (particular it being low spot card) makes him a heavy favourite to hold the queen.

Speaking of the Shanghai World Championships, USA won the Venice Cup (Women's Teams), but ran into some problems at the victory dinner when presented with their gold medals:



That was Debbie Rosenberg, and the US Bridge Federation was threatening her (and her supporting teammates) with some dire consequences, only slightly short of public execution. Indeed one wit suggested that the ladies were about to be shanghaied. In the end, saner heads (and maybe lawyers) prevailed, an apology was sent to the event's hosts, and no punishment was meted out.

*From the ABF:*

The ABF Management Committee is pleased to advise that there will be no increase in affiliation fees for 2008.

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

IMPs	♠ Q85	
Dealer: N	♥ AKQ74	
Vul: N/S	♦ K64	
	♣ A5	
♠ 2		♠ A109763
♥ J653		♥ 98
♦ 9873		♦ 1052
♣ Q1094		♣ J3
	♠ KJ4	
	♥ 102	
	♦ AQJ	
	♣ K8762	

There are three legitimate ways to make this contract:

1. hearts are 3-3
2. East has ♥98 doubleton
3. East has the singleton heart jack and at most two clubs (West can be squeezed in hearts and clubs)

To combine all three chances, cash the heart ace at trick 3. If the jack falls, win the heart 10 and cash the diamonds and spades. If East started with 6-1-4-2 shape, then West is a goner.

If the heart jack doesn't drop, cash your minor suit tops. If East discards on one of these tricks, and can therefore still have room for three hearts, then the normal line is to hope that hearts are 3-3, and play them from the top.

However, if East follows throughout, he is counted out for at most a doubleton heart. Your only chance is the layout above: run the heart 10 and pray.

*If you do take this technical line, I hope you were careful to leave the ♠Q as a late entry to dummy by winning the ♠K at trick 2!*

Finally, if you would like a reputation as an artiste rather than a scientist, you could win trick two in your hand, and run the heart 10 at trick 3. You will look foolish if East started with ♥Jxx, but if West holds ♥J9xx or ♥J8xx, you set him a killer psychological problem.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

## THE SEVEN DEADLY PARTNERSHIP SINS Blaine Howe

### Sin 4: Domestic Deafness

Make no mistake, a bridge partnership is a relationship. It has many parallels with marriage and you need to manage it like you manage your relationship with your life partner.

This is what makes playing effective bridge difficult for married couples. It is tough enough trying to maintain one relationship with someone. Maintaining two is impressive. It is possible, I suppose, to have a personal relationship built on the principles required to play high level bridge successfully. If you have mastered this, I would like to meet you. Maybe we can bottle it and sell it for high prices to bridge couples.

You have to talk to each other regularly about a range of things and the problem is doing this efficiently and without one of you developing into a nag. Or both of you nagging but about different things.

Then you stop listening. We all know about how this happens. If it gets bad, then you have to do something, because domestic deafness can quickly become a habit.

I presume that you are not in the situation where your domestic deafness is due to a lack of respect for your partner's views – if this is true don't bother to read any more of this until you form your next partnership.

Domestic Deafness is the Yin to Nagging's Yang. Unfortunately, it is mostly the Yang that has to be dealt with if real improvements are to be made.

The something you should do is generally try to stay constructive at all times, keeping your proposals short and letting some things go. There is only so much energy in the tank to keep going over something.

Letting things go is not in a bridge player's nature and you have to work at it. There are many situations where you know you can do better.

For instance, your partner does something bad in a session and you keep on about it because you believe it is an important hand.

Perhaps partner says at some point "I just made a mistake, OK?". You then retort "But why did you do it?". At this point partner is turning down the volume on his hearing aid.



## DESCRIBER VERSUS DECIDER Bill Jacobs

For an Oscar-winning performance by a Decider one has to go back to 2001 at a Victorian Congress Event. Andrew Mill was playing with Derrick Davis, who was unavoidably delayed. Ros Blutstein had been available to fill in temporarily, but Andrew's opponents objected to Ros as an overly strong substitution.

The only other human in the room not playing was caddy Jenny Laing, daughter of Sue Kelso. "Right!" said Andrew to Jenny, "how would you like to substitute for a while?" "But I've never played the game," said Jenny. "Never mind," replied Andrew, "all you have to do is draw a diagonal line on the bidding pad when it is your turn to bid, and when a card is played, make sure you play a card in that suit if you have one". (The rules of bridge condensed to a single sentence.)

Thus was born a most unlikely partnership,



and it survived for 9 glorious boards, at which point Derrick turned up.

The result? A net IMP *gain* for Andrew and Jenny. Andrew reports that it was surprisingly easy – “I would just listen to the opponents and then guess what to do”. If they passed, he would take a stab at game in his long suit; if they bid, he shut up or psyched at a low level. Of course, the opponents had no idea what he held, so their card-play suffered as well. “But if *they* had psyched,” said Andrew “in particular psyched a Pass, I would be done for, because then they would be able to double me in my guessed contract.”

So this is how a Decider plays against Describers.

Whilst this must go down as one of the more bizarre incidents in Victorian bridge history, maybe there is a little lesson to be learned on how to play against Pro-Client partnerships. In these situations, the Pro deduces as much as possible from his opponents, as he cannot really trust his partner. But if the opponents are untrustworthy, then the Pro is in a lot of trouble. So perhaps you should “mix it up” when playing against a sponsored partnership.

**SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS**  
Ian McCance

**Problem 1:**

Dealer: S	♠ K92	
Vul: Both	♥ Q862	
	♦ 10	
	♣ J10542	
♠ QJ1086		♠ 53
♥ 1094		♥ K5
♦ J6		♦ K98752
♣ A73		♣ Q98
	♠ A74	
	♥ AJ73	
	♦ AQ43	
	♣ K6	

Declarer’s hand-shape will be 3442: he has 3 losers in pointed suits, 1 spade and likely 2 diamonds. He can trump two of these but one belongs to the defence. If you use ♥9 now you are trumping that one. ♥9 is needed for a noble role, martyrdom. When you win ♣A you can remove two trumps for one.

**Problem 2:**

Dealer: N	♠ KJ102	
Vul: N/S	♥ 42	
	♦ QJ854	
	♣ 73	
♠ A5		♠ 943
♥ KJ9753		♥ Q1086
♦ 62		♦ K1093
♣ AK4		♣ 52
	♠ Q876	
	♥ A	
	♦ A7	
	♣ QJ10986	

Declarer has goofed – he needed to retain that ♠Q in his hand. If you play a diamond now, partner will cover dummy’s ♦Q with ♦K, removing declarer’s last entry. He will be unable to draw trumps and re-enter his hand for the established clubs.

[From Spingold final, 2007, Eric Rodwell sat West.]

**RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS**

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

Graduate Master	Peter Zeimer
Club Master	Gregory Law Kay Levy John Makinson
Local Master	Myer Janover
**Local Master	Geoff Schroder
Bronze Life Master	Ben Gesundheit

**Can You Help?**

One of our members assists charity organizations by collecting and forwarding to the charity, shampoos, creams, toothbrushes found in hotel/motel rooms as well as airline giveaways etc. The charities include Dafur refugees, Lighthouse Foundation and Hanover house. If you have any of the mentioned products and would like to donate them there is a box at the VBA clubrooms or phone Juliette on 0425-787-907

The ABF Management Committee welcomes applications for Trainee Directors at all ABF events. Principally the main event whereby Trainee Directors and those Directors wishing to advance their National rating is the Summer Festival of Bridge and applications for positions should go in the first instance to Sean Mullamphy, Convenor of the event. Applications must come through the State Association. In the event that all positions are taken, the Directors Accreditation Committee will take note of reports of experience gained and ability as shown at any ABF event including Licensed events. Applications should be forwarded to John Brockwell, chairman of the Accreditation Committee and to the ABF Secretariat.

Richard Grenside  
ABF Secretary

### RECENT RESULTS

#### Victorian Individual

- 1 Michael Phillips
- 2 Chelliah Arul
- 3 Robert Ellery

#### Ros Blutstein Swiss Pairs

- 1 G. Gaspar – B. Tencer
- 2 B. Wein – S. Ozenir
- 3 D. Davis – L. Gold

#### Open Interstate Butler – Stage II

- 1 B. Thompson – A. Hung
- 2 L. Gold – A. Sarten
- 3 N. Ewart – B. Howe

#### VBA Matchpoint Swiss Pairs

- 1 S. Gerdan – J. Selwyn
- 2 B. Tencer – G. Gaspar
- 3 S. Stock – C. Lanzer

### Half a century

Ian McCance played on the Victorian Open team in 1956 and 2007, and of course many times in-between.

### Spring National Teams (Sydney)

Congratulations to Jenny Thompson (right) who won this event playing with Julia Hoffman, and teammates Liz Havas and Candice Feitelson.



This continues Victorian women's strong run of results in national events.

The following deal was from late in the match, with the result still in doubt:

Dealer: N	♠ AKQ1076432		
Vul: Both	♥ 10		
	♦ 4		
	♣ 92		
♠ -		♠ 95	
♥ A9872		♥ J	
♦ J107532		♦ AKQ986	
♣ 105		♣ AJ86	
	♠ J8		
	♥ KQ6543		
	♦ -		
	♣ KQ743		

West	North Thompson	East	South Hoffman
	3NT	4NT	D'ble
5♦	Pass	Pass	5♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Jenny's 3NT opening showed a solid Suit (with a capital S in this case). Julia Hoffman's clever tactics with the South hand, doubling 4NT before bidding 5♠ masked the nature of the deal from West, who was happy to leave her opponents at the 5-level rather than have to deal with a 6♠ bid.

5♠ made 11 tricks. At the other table, the auction was more straight-forward:

West	North	East	South
	4♠	5♦	5♠
6♦	6♠	D'ble	Pass
Pass	Pass		

That was 10 imps to the eventual winners.