

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

April 2008

Editor: Bill Jacobs

BREATHING EASY – THE PRESIDENT'S JOURNEY

On Friday night she had dinner with her family and said, "I think I'll have a glass of champagne". She was awoken at 4.00 a.m. with the long awaited phone call – a suitable donor had been found.

Quickly, Jeannette Collins and her son Ben made their way to the Alfred Hospital where she would undergo her lung transplant. By 6.00 a.m. all of the "lines" were in and the surgeons commenced weaving their magic. By 12.30 p.m. on Saturday afternoon Jeannette was in intensive care and in possession of her new lungs.

The next five days were difficult; she was hooked into many machines and required a breathing tube because the donor lungs were "wet". She remained in an induced coma until the respirator was removed – a day longer would have involved a tracheotomy.

On the 6th day she was moved into the respiratory unit and, still with many tubes connected into her small frame, was allowed to receive "special" visitors. I was thrilled when she called me and I went to the hospital the following day. She was sitting in a chair and she looked "pink". The first time I have ever seen her that colour!

One week later I went in again to visit Jeannette and the improvement during those seven days was remarkable. She looked fantastic, was sitting eating a normal meal and ready to go to the café for a cup of coffee. So we set off. We needed to travel from the 5th floor to the ground floor. She did this unassisted. I commented that it was the first time in 2 years I wasn't helping her push along her trolley containing her breathing apparatus. We sat at the table, surrounded by other patients and visitors and she indulged herself with orange cake and coffee.

Then her hospitalization was complete – three days later she was home and in the

care of her son Jarred whilst Ben returned to work. From this weekend her sister, Kerry, will be her primary carer for the next 4 weeks.

Every day is an improvement, peppered by visits to the Alfred, for constant monitoring. Jeannette has taken on the challenge of VCC Convener in June, when I'm sure she will be fit and back to living a normal life.

A remarkable outcome for an extremely remarkable woman who, over the last 2 years, religiously attended exercise classes, maintained a strict eating regime and remained positive. Bravo Jeannette! We are all breathing easily with you.

Cathie Lachman, 28th March

ON QUARTER-FINALS

This time last year, the VBA Bulletin criticized both the ABF and the VBA over the one matter: the issue of short 32-board quarter finals in major teams events (the Australian National Open Teams and the Victorian Pennant).

Was someone listening? In 2008, the NOT retained the same basic finals structure, but found a way to increase the length of their quarter-finals to 48 boards, at least half-fixing the problem.

And the VBA Match and Tournament Committee followed our recommendation to the letter: doing away with quarter finals altogether, and simply qualifying 4 teams from the 7-night preliminary event. Well done!

And while I have heard a few gripes about the format, we can reflect on this: no team can genuinely complain about the format being bad luck for them. If you cannot run 1st or 2nd in a 15 team, 7-session Round-Robin, you don't deserve to win the event. And if you do qualify for the semi-finals, then you have 64-board matches in which to prove your superiority.

The Victorian Bridge Association
 invites you to the
2008 ANZAC Congress
 to be held
Saturday 26th April (Swiss Pairs) and
Swiss Teams Sunday 27th April (Swiss Teams)
 at
 131 Poath Rd, Murrumbena
A Red Master Point Event
Convenor: Cathie Lachman - Phone 9530 9006

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

With no-one vulnerable at IMPs, you hold:

♠ 532 ♥ A6 ♦ AJ10 ♣ KJ864

RHO deals and opens 1♠. Do you take a bid?

It's a starter's error to overcall 2♣ here, although I see people (starters and non-starters) doing it all the time. Whilst this is a perfectly good opening hand, there is very little up-side in overcalling at the two level in a moderate 5-card suit and a moderate hand.

What good can it do? Not much: you are likely to be outbid anyway, and you don't particularly want to encourage a club lead by partner. Bidding 2♣ here just paints a picture of your hand to the opponents to help them in the bidding and play. And there are other risks to a 2♣ overcall.

You pass, and the auction proceeds as follows:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♥	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

You find yourself on lead. What's your poison?

Take a close look at the auction. RHO has depicted at least 5-5 in the majors. LHO doesn't seem very enthusiastic – he might have perhaps 2 spades and 1 or 2 hearts. What does this suggest to you about the play?

It seems declarer might want to ruff losing hearts in dummy, and even though you are short in hearts as well, your pathetic spades will be weaker than dummy's. In short, you should be attempting to remove dummy's trumps – lead a spade!

Down comes dummy:

♠ 96
 ♥ 73
 ♦ 7653
 ♣ AQ1097

♠ 532
 ♥ A6
 ♦ AJ10
 ♣ KJ864

Declarer wins partner's spade ten with the ace and plays the heart king. Yes, it looks like your trump attack was worthwhile, so you win this with the ace and continue with another spade, to the jack and king.

Declarer plays the spade queen on which both defenders follow and continues with the queen and ten of hearts. Partner wins that with the heart jack and switches to the diamond eight, to the king and your ace. That's three tricks for the defence. You return the diamond jack to declarer's queen.

Now declarer plays the heart nine in this position:

♠ -	♥ -	♦ 7	♣ AQ109
♠ -	♥ -	♦ 10	♣ KJ86
			♥9 led

Declarer needs the rest of the tricks. How will you defend?

Think back to the auction and count declarer's tricks. He has 5 spade tricks, has won a top heart and top diamond and is about to take two more in hearts (remember, his bidding showed that he started with at least 5 hearts). That's nine tricks you know about, with the club ace in dummy to follow.

So the only hope for your side is that declarer is void in clubs and stranded from dummy. You should discard all your clubs and take trick 13 with the diamond 10, the full deal being:

	♠ 96	
	♥ 73	
	♦ 7653	
	♣ AQ1097	
♠ 532		♠ J107
♥ A6		♥ J842
♦ AJ10		♦ 842
♣ KJ864		♣ 532
	♠ AKQ84	
	♥ KQ1095	
	♦ KQ9	
	♣ -	

Points to remember:

- Resist overcalling at the two level with a moth-eaten suit and a minimum opening hand. There's no upside. And aside from not wanting a club lead and helping the opponents in the bidding and play, check out what might happen if you do overcall 2♣ on this deal¹: pass – pass – double – all pass. Down four for -800.
- Listen to the bidding when on opening lead! I'm not a big fan of trump leads, figuring that they tend to just do declarer's work for him, but when an auction screams for a trump, you've got to be listening.
- Don't forget the bidding during the play. Keep counting the shape and the points and declarer's tricks. Defence is all about hard work.

¹ Actually if you do overcall 2♣, not only might the opponents double you, but if they don't, they could get to the cold 3NT, or even make 4♠, tipped off by your bidding. I'll leave it to you to work out how 4♠ can make.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: W ♠ K7
 Vul: Nil ♥ Q8
 ♦ AQ105
 ♣ AQ973

♠ AQ852
 ♥ AK94
 ♦ J3
 ♣ 65

West	North	East	South
Pass	1NT*	2♣**	2♦
3♥	4♦	All pass	

* 15-17 HCP
 ** majors

Partner leads ♠9, and you cash two spades, and then a top heart, on which partner signals an even number. What is your next card?

Problem 2:

Dealer: E ♠ A53
 Vul: E/W ♥ AJ64
 ♦ J97
 ♣ A109

♠ 8
 ♥ Q73
 ♦ AK108
 ♣ J7632

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

Partner leads a diamond, and you win ♦K and continue ♦A, ruffed. Declarer cashes ♥K and runs ♥10 to your ♥Q. How are you going to defend?

Solutions on page 6.



Suit combination of the month

Dummy: ♣ Q942
 Declarer: ♣ A765

You need to take 3 tricks from this suit. You lead the ace – all follow low. On the second round LHO follows with the jack. Your move.

OPENING LEAD PROBLEM

You are West and hear this auction, with all vulnerable:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	3♠
Pass	4♣ ¹	Pass	4♦ ¹
Pass	4♥ ¹	Pass	5♣ ¹
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

1 Cue-bid, spades as trumps

The cue-bids show first- or second-round controls. What would you lead as West from:

♠ 104 ♥ 765 ♦ AJ10 ♣ A9543

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Q. What is the Postcode for Horsham?

A. Six Down Redoubled Vulnerable.

Many years ago in the NOT (National Open Teams) in Canberra an unfortunate player found himself in 2♦ redoubled and vulnerable when he passed his partner's SOS redouble.

After the smoke had cleared he had made only two tricks and the score was tallied up as 3400. His partner wryly observed that this was the postcode for Horsham.

The following year in the NOT Bulletin "Horsham" posed a challenge to find the placenames corresponding to the given bridge scores with a prize of a bottle of champagne to the first correct entry drawn out of a barrel on the last day of play. This was before the days of Australia Post's online Postcode Searcher so you had to manually search the postcode section at the back of the telephone book to find them.

We had a six-man team that year and the pair sitting out each match had the job of scouring the listing to find the elusive ones. There were the obvious ones of 800 for Darwin, 2000 for Sydney, 2600 for Canberra and 7000 for Hobart, but others were harder to find. We eventually won the bottle of champagne which was cracked open the following year!

Most redoubled vulnerable contracts making eleven tricks or more will land you somewhere in New South Wales. A few

doubled and redoubled contracts will take you to the Northern Territory. One No Trump redoubled vulnerable making all thirteen tricks takes you to Belgrave; the only making contract not in NSW or NT. One Heart/Spade redoubled vulnerable making all the tricks will give you a score of 3120, but is not defined as a postcode at this time. The only non-doubled contracts to land you anywhere are the vulnerable Grand Slams. In a redoubled contract not making many tricks you can also get to Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania; 6400 is a valid bridge score but it is not defined as a postcode.

The reason this story was brought to mind is that in a recent Monday Night Duplicate I was called to a table to verify a score. "What is six down redoubled vulnerable?" they asked. After calculating the score and getting 3400 they asked if this was a club record. I said I didn't know if it was a record at the VBA but it had happened in Canberra and I related the "Horsham" story to them. This caused quite some mirth for the rest of the evening. The unfortunate ladies were in the same predicament as "Horsham" himself; an overcall of three clubs was doubled, redoubled for rescue and left in. *Deep Finesse* said East-West could make ten tricks in clubs and they did! Declarer made only three tricks.

The challenge is not the same as it was back then, but there is a \$25 bridge book voucher for the winning entry (send to the VBA or email info@vba.asn.au). All correct entries will be placed in a barrel and drawn on a Monday night by one of the players who went down Horsham.

What are the placenames for these bridge scores and what are the contracts? Some postcodes have more than one name associated with them - any one will do. The contracts are unique.

2070, 2140, 2230, 2330, 2560, 2840, 2880, 3160

... Terry Crawford

STOP PRESS!

Sally Murray-White – Helen Snashall and Felicity Beale – Diana Smart have both qualified for the Australian Women's Team to play in the World Mind Sport Games in Beijing. Bravo!

THEFT
Bill Jacobs

In this article, we steal a hand from the BAWA (Western Australian) bulletin – an excellent publication, by the way. The regular BAWA Bidding Forum has presented the following problem – you hold as South:

♠ A1086 ♥ J873 ♦ - ♣ A9842

and hear:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♣	Pass	1♥
2♦	2♥	Pass	??

As an invited panellist, this question seemed trivial to me. I wrote:

“4♥ if partner’s 2♥ shows four of them. If I don’t play support doubles (it’s been so long), I suppose I would temporize with 2♠.”

Support Doubles are the best thing since sliced bread, if you play a system based on a strong notrump. They work as follows:

You open one of a suit, partner responds in a suit at the one-level, and your RHO intervenes with a simple overcall of a third suit. Now:

- Direct raise of partner = 4 cards
- Double = 3 card support
- Pass = either <3 cards, or a very minimum flat hand that doesn’t want to encourage partner

Very simple, but the value in distinguishing between a 3-card and 4-card raise is huge.

Take the problem hand: when partner reveals 4-card support, then 4♥ is an obvious contract; but if partner shows only three hearts with a support double of 2♦, then a heart contract is highly unlikely, and you would explore other possibilities, like clubs, spades or even notrumps.

In fact, partner’s hand was:

♠ 5 ♥ AQ6 ♦ K852 ♣ KQJ105

so 5 or 6 clubs was the best spot to finish. Playing support doubles, partner would have doubled with that hand, and you have no problem steering to a club contract.

If you play Acol, or any system with a weak notrump opening, the case for Support Doubles is more tenuous. You may want to reserve a double of the overcall to show a strong notrump pattern. I don’t know if any studies have been done, but my feeling is that it still pays to use Support Doubles in Acol. With the strong notrump hand, you can make a support double with 3-card support, and with a doubleton, you either bid notrumps or even pass if the hand is unattractive (for example if lacking stoppers in the overcalled suit).

What interested me in particular about all this was that when the hand was discussed in the BAWA March bulletin, prior to reporting the panellists’ responses, the inference about the support double wasn’t even mentioned! A 4♥ bid was not considered, and the discussion centred around the choice between 2♠ and 4♣.

I am looking forward to the next edition of the BAWA Bulletin, to read what the panellists think.

Support Doubles are part of “world standard” these days. Whilst not as entrenched as Stayman, if you played with a pick-up partner on-line, Support Doubles would be expected to be part of your armoury, without explicit agreement.

But they haven’t hit Western Australia yet, apparently and I wondered why. Perhaps it is due to the strong and continuing Acol roots in Western Australia, indeed in all parts of Australia except Sydney.¹

Well in Victoria, bridge classes now mainly teach Standard, and so we are seeing a trend towards strong notrumps and 5-card majors in this state.

And Support Doubles, I hope.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

¹ Why has Sydney evolved differently to the rest of the country? I consulted with historian Cathy Chua on this matter. It seems that Sydney’s strong rubber-bridge scene was the primary cause – everyone played “back-room”, essentially 4-card majors and a strong notrump, and hence the tendency towards similar methods in the tournament arena.

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS Ian McCance

Problem 1:

Dealer: W	♠ K7		
Vul: Nil	♥ Q8		
	♦ AQ105		
	♣ AQ973		
♠ 96		♠ AQ852	
♥ J107532		♥ AK94	
♦ K7		♦ J3	
♣ J104		♣ 65	
	♠ J1043		
	♥ 6		
	♦ 98642		
	♣ K82		

Prospects look dim. The auction marks partner with 6 hearts¹ and very little else. It is time to consider favourable possibilities, however remote. Whichever minor king partner might have, it seems finessable.

So it cannot do much harm to return another spade, and if partner does hold ♦K he plays it, and your ♦J will become the setting trick.

Problem 2:

Dealer: E	♠ A53		
Vul: E/W	♥ AJ64		
	♦ J97		
	♣ A109		
♠ K1042		♠ 8	
♥ 85		♥ Q73	
♦ Q6532		♦ AK108	
♣ 85		♣ J7632	
	♠ QJ976		
	♥ K1092		
	♦ 4		
	♣ KQ4		

Return a trump. This won't help if spades are solid, but if partner has a trick there, the contract is doomed, because declarer doesn't control diamonds.

Declarer failed to solve a control problem. He should have run ♥10 without cashing ♥K. That way he retains control and can arrange to trump a second diamond, draw trumps and concede a trick to ♠K.

¹ Indeed, and perhaps partner might have used the Law of Total Tricks to bid 4♥, a contract that might well make.
... BJ

THE SEVEN DEADLY PARTNERSHIP SINS Blaine Howe

Sin 7: Laziness

This is a tricky one but it is real. On a personal level, we can all play better bridge by being physically better prepared. Keep fit, eat well, drink plenty of water and get plenty of sleep.

In a partnership sense there is an expectation of a degree of commitment to the partnership that you need to keep up.

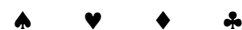
It doesn't matter what your level of commitment is, but you do need understand what it is and try to stick to it. Doing the right thing here is boring but it is very real – especially once you are past your first year as a unit.

You may be in a freewheeling partnership where you turn up with a bottle of wine under your belt even at nationals and just wing it at the table. But that's not you, right?

For those of you who want to do well, you are expected to keep up certain standards. Some of the areas are:

1. Pay attention to your partner's signals.
2. Read and learn the system notes before big events.
3. Put enough effort into defending to get the most out of the cards they give you.
4. Occasionally have a system discussion and/or practice to keep your game ticking over between the big events – whether for your partnership these are national, state or congress.
5. Turn up on time at the table to stop partner getting tense.
6. Help with the administration of entering events and the like.

When you get lazy and stop doing these things to the level partner expects (especially the one about looking at those pesky signals), your partnership is starting to slip. We don't want that do we?



LEADING THE WAY Ron Klinger

This deal arose in the 2002 European Open Teams:

<p>♠ 104 ♥ 765 ♦ AJ10 ♣ A9543</p>	<p>♠ KQ82 ♥ AQ93 ♦ K9865 ♣ -</p>
<p>♠ - ♥ K108 ♦ Q743 ♣ QJ10762</p>	<p>♠ - ♥ K108 ♦ Q743 ♣ QJ10762</p>

Playing against Norway, Italy had the auction given on page 4. West led the ♦A and that was that. He shifted to the ♥5, but it was too late. Norberto Bocchi rose with the ♥A, ruffed a diamond with a flamboyant ♠A, crossed to the ♠K and ruffed another low diamond with the ♠J. A spade to the queen drew West's last trump and dummy's ♦K-9 allowed declarer to discard two hearts. The rest was routine for +1430.

At the other table, with Italy East-West:

West	North	East	South
Lauria	Brogeland	Versace	Saelens- minde
		Pass	1♠
Pass	4♣ ¹	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣ ²	Pass	5♦ ³
Pass	6♠	All pass	

- 1 Splinter raise to 4♠, short in clubs
- 2 Club void
- 3 Second round diamond control

Lead: ♥5

Declarer had to risk the heart finesse. He played low in dummy. East rose with the ♥K and shot back a diamond to West's ♦A, as South had denied first-round diamond control. That was +100 and 17 Imps to Italy.

At the first table West might also have found the deadly heart lead. Holding two aces, West should expect the opponents to have a void in one of the minors and so an ace lead is very risky.

Playing against France, Finland had a brief auction and the outcome was successful when West failed to find the best lead:

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

- 1 Cue bids, spades agreed

Lead: ♣A

Declarer ruffed in dummy, played a spade to his jack and cashed the ♣K, pitching a heart. Next came the ♦2 and West played the ♦J. Dummy's ♦K won: that was +1430 to Finland.

At the other table France also reached 6♠ after South opened 1♠, but declarer muffed the play:

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠ ¹	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♦ ²	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♠	All pass	

- 1 Forcing
- 2 Make of this what you will

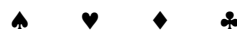
Lead: ♣A

The ace was ruffed and declarer played a spade to hand. After discarding a heart on the ♣K, South played the ♦2. West played the ♦10 and declarer ducked in dummy. East switched to the ♥5, nine, king. One down and 17 Imps to Finland.

Ducking the diamond was a strange move. One would think that declarer would play for two heart discards on the diamonds, one on the DK if the DA is onside and the other on the fifth diamond if diamonds are 4-3. When that works you do not need the heart finesse.

If the DK loses to the ace, you can still set up the fifth diamond for one heart discard and rely on the HK with West.

Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.



RECENT RESULTS

Victorian Restricted Pairs Championship

- 1 Ivan Hu – Nathan Howard
- 2 John Yang – Alan Hu
- 3 Chula Arul – Helen Stewart



Winners: Nathan Howard and Ivan Hu



Best pair under 100 masterpoints:
Kim Frazer and Ian Williams

Suit combination of the month

Dummy
♣ Q942

Declarer
♣ A765

This one has no answer. Against a computer, you should play the club queen: this is a restricted choice situation. There are three equally likely relevant holdings – West with KJx, K10x or J10x. So it is 2:1 odds to play West for the king, rather than East for king-doubleton.

Against a mortal being, you need to judge whether West is capable of playing the jack smoothly from KJx.

HOW KEEN ARE YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR GAME?

You owe it to yourself, your partners and your team-mates to visit and sign up with <http://www.ronklingerbridge.com/>

- This is what you will find on our website:-
- a new bidding/play problem and solution each day
 - constructive bidding quizzes
 - opening lead problems and solutions
 - play hands trick by trick with Ron
 - conventions and guide section
 - your bridge questions answered
 - 'Old Master' hands – can you match his play?
 - how to use 5-card major Stayman
 - the lighter side of bridge

New material added constantly

MORE BRIDGE POETRY

Behold, four Kings in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair Queens whose hands sustain a flower,
The expressive emblem of their softer power;
Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;
And particoloured troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:
"Let spades be trumps!" she said, and trumps they were.

From Elegy to the memory of an unfortunate lady (1717), by Alexander Pope