

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

August 2008

Editor: Bill Jacobs

VICTORIAN TEAMS FOR ANC

Open:

Leigh Gold – Adam Sarten, Cathy Chua – Simon Hinge, Bill Jacobs – Ben Thompson

Women:

Rena Kaplan – Paula Schroor, Tammy Bloom – Janina Fleiszig, Cathie Lachman – Helen Snashall (npc: Laurie Kelso)

Seniors:

Sam Arber – Henri de Jong, George Gaspar – Boris Tencer, Michael Dilks – Blaine Howe (npc: Laurie Kelso)

Youth:

Justin Howard – Peter Hollands, Ben Kingham – Angus Munro, Nathan Howard – Ivan Hu (npc: Laurie Kelso)

Good luck to all our teams!

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN? Blaine Howe

Episode 4 – Putting Dummy Down

Play the cards as they are called by declarer and not before. Also, release each card as it is played and remove your hand so both defenders can see – some players have a peculiar difficulty with this.

Quit your cards when declarer does and stack them so the tricks point the correct way. Stack them neatly in the same Left to Right or Right to Left direction declarer does so they mirror his stack.

Doing this properly make it easier for declarer to check the trick count and notice if he has placed a card the wrong way. I hope you never verbally point a mistake out to declarer – doing this is wrong.

Keep your ears tuned during play (your only ongoing duty). It can be quite irritating to declarer if he has to regularly repeat a request for a card to be played.

Finally, there is one last task when the hand is over. Wait for declarer and the defenders to agree the number of tricks made before scooping up your cards. Your cards must be kept in played order in case a dispute about the trick count arises.

Like most aspects of being dummy, doing the above properly can be a little tedious. But admit it, you should do it properly, shouldn't you?

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Blaine doesn't mention that you are allowed to ask "No hearts partner?" when declarer doesn't follow suit to (say) a heart lead. But beware the following:

♠ Q6
♥ Q76
♦ Q52
♣ AKQ42

You open 1NT, next hand bids 2♥ and partner finishes the auction with a 6♠ bid!

The lead is the heart jack, you put down dummy, declarer thinks for a bit, and it goes heart jack, low, low, small **club** from declarer!

Do NOT say: "no **spades** partner?"

	♠ Q6	
	♥ Q76	
	♦ Q52	
	♣ AKQ42	
♠ 732		♠ 54
♥ J104		♥ AK98532
♦ 9643		♦ KJ10
♣ J83		♣ 10
	♠ AKJ1098	
	♥ -	
	♦ A87	
	♣ 9765	

Partner has cleverly noticed that he needs to discard a club to avoid blocking the suit.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

Bid 'em up?

Your opponents are vulnerable you are not, and in 4th seat in a team's (IMPs) match, you hold this thrilling hand:

♠ 86432 ♥ 97 ♦ KJ4 ♣ 654

LHO opens 1NT (12-14), partner bids a natural 2♠, and RHO joins the party with 3♥:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1NT	2♠	3♥	?

What's your call?

You may have heard of the Law of Total Tricks. It's not in fact a Law of any kind, more a guideline, based on a great deal of experience of a great many people. In its very simplest form it says this:

"In a competitive auction, bid to the same level as the total combined number of trumps that you estimate your partnership holds."

In other words, with an 8-card fit, compete to the two level (8 tricks required); with a 9-card fit, go to the three-level (9 tricks required). Etc, etc. The theory is that irrespective of the *strength* of your combined hands, the degree of fit determines how high you should go in the bidding.

If your side is outgunned in high-cards, or the opposing cards sit badly for you, bidding to the level of your fit will represent an appropriate sacrifice. Conversely, if strong, or your finesses are winning, then bidding to this level will force the opponents to sacrifice against you.

This hand is a case in point: with 10 or 11 combined spades, you might bid 4♠ here – you don't expect to make it, but you would expect a 4♠ contract to result in a smaller minus score than letting the opponents play 4♥ or 3NT.

Following the Law of Total Tricks, you bid 4♠ over 3♥. LHO, not to be outdone, bids 5♥, passed back to you:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1NT	2♠	3♥	4♠
5♥	Pass	Pass	?

Anything more to say?

Nope. You're done, happy to have pushed them to the 5-level. Pass out 5♥.

Now lead ... what?

Anything could work. A trump could cut down on dummy's ruffing power, but getting in two rounds of trumps is unlikely to be sufficient to hurt. I'd scratch the trump lead.

A diamond seems courageous with that holding, but it could be the winning choice, building diamond tricks. A bit too high-life for me.

The club lead could develop tricks if partner is strong there, without the risk of giving away "free" finesses to declarer.

Leading a spade is very safe – it surely won't blow a trick; and it could be necessary to grab your spade trick if declarer's likely spade singleton can get discarded away.

Perhaps it says something about my character, but I would recommend the spade lead. If you chose something else, then fine, but you can consider to have answered the question correctly if you thought of the pros and cons of the various suits.

If you do lead a spade, make it a high one, the 8 for preference. Low cards should suggest honours in the suit; high cards deny them (and on this auction, won't be mistaken for top of a doubleton).

You lead the spade eight, and see:

♠ K5
♥ K632
♦ AQ109
♣ 982

♠ 86432
♥ 97
♦ KJ4
♣ 654

Partner wins the spade ace, declarer dropping the queen. Now partner switches to the ace then queen of clubs, declarer taking this trick with the king.

Declarer cashes the ace and queen of hearts, partner follows once, then discards a spade. Next declarer plays a diamond, you play low, and he wins with the queen.

What are you thinking right now?

You better not be thinking: "did I leave the lights on in the car?" Your role is not finished in this hand.

At some point, declarer is going to cash the ace of diamonds. Even though the king and jack of diamonds are now equivalent cards, you must follow suit with the *king*. Here's the full deal to see why:

	♠ K5	
	♥ K632	
	♦ AQ109	
	♣ 982	
♠ 86432		♠ AJ1097
♥ 97		♥ 5
♦ KJ4		♦ 762
♣ 654		♣ AQJ10
	♠ Q	
	♥ AQJ1084	
	♦ 853	
	♣ K73	

Declarer is planning to cash the spade king, discarding a diamond, then ruff the diamonds good, and re-enter dummy to play the long diamond discarding his losing club. It's going to work.

At least it's going to work if you follow to the second diamond with the jack – his only chance will be for you to have started with ♦KJx.

But if you follow with the king, and do so without apparent thought, declarer has a choice: if you started with ♦Kx, he must run the ten next, picking up your partner's ♦Jxxx. And if he does that, you gleefully win your ♦J for down 1.

Points to remember:

- With 5-card support, bid 'em up. Don't be afraid of having few high cards – particularly if your side is not vulnerable. Take a look at the combined E/W hands here: on a very good day, you might even make 4♠. And today, with three finesses failing, you still go down only 500, which shows a profit against 4♥.
- When you have supported partner in the bidding, and find yourself on opening lead – if you choose to lead partner's suit, lead a high one from an honourless holding.
- Look for opportunities to play the card you are known to hold, when choosing between two cards of effectively equal value. This theme does appear on occasions, as we will see.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

THE TWELFTH TRICK

IMPs ♠ AQ7653
 Dealer: N ♥ 84
 Vul: N/S ♦ 1092
 ♣ AJ
 ♠ -
 ♥ AKJ975
 ♦ -
 ♣ KQ76532

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	5♥
Pass	5♠	Pass	6♣/7♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads the diamond ace.

This deal came up in the US trials to determine the American team to play in the world championships in Beijing. Brad Moss bid 6♣ in this auction.

Plan the play in 6♣.
 Plan the play in 7♣.

Solution on page 6.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Think Time

Dealer: S ♠ 106
 Vul: N/S ♥ AQ5432
 ♦ QJ
 ♣ K72

♠ J75
 ♥ J1076
 ♦ K5
 ♣ A653

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

* fourth-suit, invitational hand

Partner leads the club queen – king, ace, four. You return a club, which declarer ruffs. Now declarer goes into a brown study.

You have some think time. What will you do with it?

Solution on page 6.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Bad Bidding – Dreadful Contract

Dealer: W ♠ KJ104
 Vul: N/S ♥ 9853
 ♦ AKQJ
 ♣ K

♠ 52
 ♥ KQ642
 ♦ 763
 ♣ A54

West	North	East	South
3♣	D'ble	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠*
Pass	6♥	All pass	

* two-key cards plus heart queen

Not the world's best auction. Nor the world's best contract.

The lead is ♣Q – is there a line that gives you any chance at all?

Solution on page 7.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: S ♠ AJ4
 Vul: N/S ♥ QJ84
 ♦ 854
 ♣ Q105

♠ 9753
 ♥ A932
 ♦ QJ97
 ♣ 8

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦
Pass	2NT*	Pass	3♣
Pass	5♣	All pass	

* forcing to game

Partner leads ♠K, won in dummy. The next card is ♥4 and you get this right when you fly ♥A, dropping declarer's ♥K, which partner's count card tells you was indeed singleton.

What next?

Problem 2:

Dealer: E ♠ A103
 Vul: Nil ♥ A
 ♦ KQJ83
 ♣ K983

♠ Q9
 ♥ KQJ10964
 ♦ 52
 ♣ Q

West	North	East	South
		4♥	Pass
Pass	D'ble	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Partner leads ♥5 to dummy's ♥A. Declarer plays ♠3 to his ♠K then finesses ♠10 to your ♠Q. Your play. What can partner hold to enable you to come to three more tricks?

Solutions on Page 7.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

From Terry Crawford:

A definition of Point Count from a book about Symmetric Relay: "A system of hand evaluation designed to keep accountants out of game contracts".

THE TWELFTH TRICK
Bill Jacobs

IMPs	♠ AQ7653	
Dealer: N	♥ 84	
Vul: N/S	♦ 1092	
	♣ AJ	
♠ K1084		♠ J92
♥ 2		♥ Q1063
♦ AK653		♦ QJ874
♣ 1094		♣ 8
	♠ -	
	♥ AKJ975	
	♦ -	
	♣ KQ76532	

In 6♣, what's the safest play for 12 tricks? In the US trials, Brad Moss played as follows (around a 90% chance to work): he cashed the heart ace, crossed to dummy with a trump and finessed the heart jack. West ruffed this and returned his last trump: down one, as declarer now had a heart to lose.

That was unlucky, but a better (98%) shot was available. Declarer should cash the heart ace at trick two, and then play a *low* heart. Unless clubs are 4-0, declarer will be able to ruff a further heart in dummy, should hearts prove to be 4-1.

This play could lead to disaster if West, holding Q10x in hearts wins the second heart and plays a third one – dummy must ruff, and now if trumps are 4-0, declarer has gone down in a cold contract. Nevertheless the play of ace of hearts followed by a low one is an elegant and correct strategy.

THE THIRTEENTH TRICK

IMPs	♠ AQ7653	
Dealer: N	♥ 84	
Vul: N/S	♦ 1092	
	♣ AJ	
♠ K1084		♠ J92
♥ Q102		♥ 63
♦ AK65		♦ QJ8743
♣ 109		♣ 84
	♠ -	
	♥ AKJ975	
	♦ -	
	♣ KQ76532	

In 7♣, you plan to ruff a heart loser in dummy. That won't work too well if clubs are 4-0, so play a club to the ace at trick 2. If all follow, play ace-king and another heart, hoping that hearts are 3-2.

If West drops the heart queen on the first round, then you can play a second club to dummy and take a "proven" finesse against East's ♥10xxx, hoping that West doesn't have a third club to ruff the heart with.

In the given layout, if West is inspired to drop the heart queen from ♥Q102 – playing the card he will shortly be known to hold – then down you go in 7♣.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣
Think Time

Dealer: S	♠ 106	
Vul: N/S	♥ AQ5432	
	♦ QJ	
	♣ K72	
♠ 432		♠ J75
♥ K98		♥ J1076
♦ 74		♦ K5
♣ QJ1098		♣ A653
	♠ AKQ98	
	♥ -	
	♦ A1098632	
	♣ 4	

This deal is from the recent Victor Champion Cup. Declarer's hand is an open book. He must have long diamonds to the ace, five strong spades (he jumped to 3♠) and a heart void (no Blackwood, and with a heart, he would have crossed to the heart ace long ago to start the diamond finesses). So he has 5-0-7-1 shape, and is wondering whether to (A) try to get to dummy with a spade ruff for the diamond finesse, or (B) drop a singleton diamond king.

If declarer goes for plan A, cashing the top spades, were you ready to smoothly follow to the second spade with the jack? Then declarer will have good reason to switch plans, with gratifying results – for you. Another variation on "playing the card you are known to hold or will shortly be known to hold".



Dreadful Contract – Good Play

	♠ KJ104		
	♥ 9853		
	♦ AKQJ		
	♣ K		
♠ A86		♠ Q973	
♥ J		♥ A107	
♦ 109		♦ 8742	
♣ QJ109872		♣ 63	
	♠ 52		
	♥ KQ642		
	♦ 763		
	♣ A54		

West	North	East	South
3♣	D'ble	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠*
Pass	6♥	All pass	

* two-key cards plus heart queen

If the opponents can count, they know you are off two key cards, so it's not going to be easy. This layout is about your only chance.

So lead a heart up at trick 2, hoping to win the trick (East plays low on the heart – after all, his partner could easily have a singleton king of hearts).

Next a spade to the king, winning you hope. Now four rounds of diamonds to discard your spade loser, a second trump, and Bob's your uncle! If you are going to bid like this, you have to play like this.

By the way, when you led a heart at trick 2, I hope you played the *queen* from hand, *playing the card you are known (from the bidding) to hold*. West might think you are successfully finessing East's trump king, and duck your spade play hoping for a misguess.

But if you won the heart trick with the king, an astute West will realise that his side holds the trump ace, and he will go in with the spade ace.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Vu-Graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan:

“They make a game. It wasn't a good game but they won't give it back on that account.”

“Someone said down one is good bridge. Making is perhaps better.”

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS Ian McCance

Problem 1:

Dealer: S	♠ AJ4		
Vul: N/S	♥ QJ84		
	♦ 854		
	♣ Q105		
♠ KQ82		♠ 9753	
♥ 10765		♥ A932	
♦ K6		♦ QJ97	
♣ 632		♣ 8	
	♠ 106		
	♥ K		
	♦ A1032		
	♣ AKJ974		

The hearts will provide two discards and you start to count tricks: 6 clubs, 1 spade, 2 hearts. Partner will need to hold one of ♦A or ♦K and if it's ♦K, you need to play one now, before ♠J is set up for a third discard.

If you miss this switch it will be scant consolation to discover that your other table has made 3NT in comfort.

Problem 2:

Dealer: E	♠ A103		
Vul: Nil	♥ A		
	♦ KQJ83		
	♣ K983		
♠ 865		♠ Q9	
♥ 853		♥ KQJ10964	
♦ A4		♦ 52	
♣ AJ762		♣ Q	
	♠ KJ742		
	♥ 7		
	♦ 10976		
	♣ 1054		

It looks as if partner will need to hold both minor suit aces to defeat this contract. That's two more tricks – you still need a fourth. The other missing cards are the black jacks. IF partner's ♥5 was a singleton AND he holds ♠J, you can promote it by returning a heart and forcing dummy to ruff. Is this likely? Would declarer, holding three small hearts, have risked playing trumps this way? Well maybe, but you can't read ♥5 so that's another maybe. The more likely case, and the winning one, is that partner has ♣J and you can set up the setting trick by returning ♣Q.



DEFENCE CLINIC

Sat. August 16th
Sun. August 17th

Jeff Fust "Learn How Experts Think"

Saturday 16th 10:30 am - 4:00 pm
The Five Lines of Defence

Gain a deep understanding of the themes common to every hand.

Sunday 17th 10:30 am - 4:00 pm
Becoming a Bridge Detective

Deductions from the Bidding and Cardplay.
Counting Tricks and Distribution.
Locating the Missing High Cards.
Signalling - Attitude, Count, Suit Preference.

Cost : \$30 per person per day.
Where : VBA Clubrooms, 131 Poath Rd, Hughesdale.
Registration : Payment in advance reserves your place.
(places are limited)
Phone : 9530 9006
Email : clachman@vba.asn.au
Lunch : Available at the Bridge Players Cafe.

Defence presents the greatest opportunity for you to gain a significant edge over your opponents and be a consistent winner. More time at the bridge table is spent on defence than on any of the other aspects of the game. Typically defence does not get the attention it deserves in spite of the edge that could be gained if partnerships devoted more effort to it. They discuss their system for bidding at great length but spend little or no time on a system for defence.

Defence is by far the most difficult part of bridge and defenders are simply guessing much of the time.

At Jeff's clinic, there will be lots of game play and discussions will be dynamic and utilize computer technology to bring the cards to life on the big screen. It promises to be both challenging and rewarding and is suitable for players of every standard.

RECENT RESULTS

Ros Blutstein Swiss Pairs

- 1 S. Tishler – A. Sarten
- 2 G. Gaspar – B. Tencer
- 3 W. Scott – R. Drew

Rothfield Swiss Teams

- 1 B. Thompson, W. Jacobs, J. Howard, A. Hung
- 2 J. Rothfield, A. Sarten, J. Magee, T. Strong
- 3 E. Caplan, J. Thompson, H. Sawicki, N. Howard, A. Macready-Bryan

BRIDGE LIFERS John Moir

The **Yarra Valley Bridge Club** recently celebrated its 40th Anniversary with a dinner attended by over 90 members and guests. The dinner was at the Dorset Gardens Hotel, the venue for the Club's first congress thirty years ago. Guest of honour was 95 year old Marjorie Saunders, founding member, life member, past president and convenor of the first several congresses, who came from her home in Rosebud for the occasion.

The highlight of the evening was the announcement that the four other living founding members would be made life members. They are Aileen Bullen, Monica Murphy and Marjorie Stewart, who are still active members to this day, and Claire Lewis, who sadly was not well enough to attend. Other special guests included Pat Hayward, whose husband Peter gave lessons in their home to the fourteen ladies who formed the club all those years ago. Pat herself was the club's first paid bridge director.

The Club, with about 175 members and amongst the biggest clubs in Victoria, meets four times a week, on Monday and Thursday evenings at the East Ringwood Senior Citizens' Centre and on Wednesday and Friday afternoons at the Federation Estate in Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood and guests are always welcome.

Anybody wanting to make enquiries about the club can contact John Moir, the President, on 9870 4490.



Life members Monica, Aileen and the two Marjories share a laugh while cutting the cake.