

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

September 2008

Editor: Bill Jacobs

ANC WINNERS

The Gold Coast ANC saw some splendid Victorian results.

Week 1 was the Butler Trials, and Rena Kaplan and Paula Schroor continued their excellent recent form to run second in the Women's event.

The middle weekend saw the running of various National Pairs events. Justin Howard and Peter Hollands walked away with the Youth Pairs; Paula Schroor and Laurie Kelso won Silver in the Mixed Pairs; Andrew Hegedus and Andrew Mill took out Bronze in the Open Pairs.

The second week was the Interstate Teams. The Open and Seniors teams were always in contention, but both teams finished in third place, narrowly missing out on their respective finals by around just 30 imps.

The Women's and Youth teams went two steps better.

The Women's team of Rena Kaplan – Paula Schroor, Cathie Lachman – Helen Snashall, Tammy Bloom – Janina Fleiszig qualified second behind NSW. But the final reversed these results, with Victoria running out 26-imp winners.

The Youth team (Justin Howard, Peter Hollands, Ben Kingham, Angus Munro, Nathan Howard, Ivan Hu) were the class of the field. They finished 180 imps ahead of second-placed NSW in the triple round robin qualifying, then added around 100 more in the 40-board final. That's what one calls a comprehensive victory.

Congratulations to all our contestants!

Whilst we're about it, Victoria has a number of Australian and State representatives in the up-coming PABF (Far East) Congress, and in the World Mind Sports Games in Beijing. Our best wishes go to all our players.



Victorian Women's team: Tammy Bloom, Cathie Lachman, Helen Snashall, Janina Fleiszig, Paula Schroor, Rena Kaplan (with NPC Laurie Kelso)



Victorian Youth team: Justin Howard, Ben Kingham, Peter Hollands, Ivan Hu, Nathan Howard, Angus Munro



ANC Quiz

♠ A10 ♥ AK109762 ♦ K2 ♣ A6

What do you open, vulnerable against not in second seat, after RHO passes?

And again, vulnerable against not, you hold:

♠ AK5 ♥ AKJ8743 ♦ 974 ♣ -

It goes 2♠ (spades and a minor) – Pass – Pass to you. What is your plan?

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

Up and Down the line

Here are two hands for your consideration:

1) ♠ K9532 ♥ J10864 ♦ 7 ♣ A8

2) ♠ K532 ♥ J1064 ♦ 987 ♣ A8

Playing natural methods, your partner opens 1♣, RHO passes. What is your bid?

The two hands are similar but different.

On hand 1) you want to show both your suits in many auctions: there is an excellent chance that partner has at least three cards in one of the majors, and therefore you would belong in that suit.

With hand 2) however, it will be up to partner to make the running if you are going to reach a major.

So the hands require different strategies.

If you want to name two suits, then you should start with 1♠, planning to bid hearts next: that way, if partner prefers spades, he can return to that suit without raising the level.

If you don't want to name two suits, then you should start with 1♥, giving partner the maximum room to show spades.

The rule of thumb is:

With two 4-card suits, bid them "up the line" (bid the lower suit first).

With two 5-card suits, bid them "down the line" (bid the higher one first).

Let's continue with hand 1). You respond 1♠, partner rebids 1NT, showing 12-14 points. You continue with your master plan and rebid 2♥, expecting to hear either a pass, or a return to 2♠.

But partner surprises you with a 3♥ bid. This has been the auction so far:

	Partner		You
	1♣	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	??

Your hand:

♠ K9532 ♥ J10864 ♦ 7 ♣ A8

What now?

Your 2♥ was not a strength-showing bid. Partner, with a limited hand, is stepping right out by raising the level and inviting game.

He will certainly have four hearts, and should also have maximum values within his defined range. With at most 22 combined points, you might think that game is out of reach, but is it?

Let's think about it.

- You have a 9-card fit
- You have all the side suits under control in one way or another (conversely, having three small cards in a side suit would be a worry)
- Partner is likely has at most two spades, so you might be able to ruff your spades good.

This is a setup where points don't tell the whole story. With practice, you can visualize that the hand will play very well in hearts.

You bid 4♥, all pass, and the club queen is led:

♠ A7
♥ K972
♦ KJ5
♣ K743

♠ K9532
♥ J10864
♦ 7
♣ A8

Well, a truly great partner would have given you the diamond ace rather than king-jack; but even so, this is an excellent game.

What is your plan in 4♥?

You should plan to set up the spades. Don't touch trumps, lest you give the opponents the chance of maybe playing three rounds of trumps and limiting your ruffs.

Best is to win the first trick in dummy, keeping entries back into your hand.

Then spade ace, spade king, and ruff a spade with the heart seven. Unless you've done something dreadful to offend the card gods, you will lose at most the diamond ace and two trumps.

The full deal:

	♠ A7	
	♥ K972	
	♦ KJ5	
	♣ K743	
♠ Q1084		♠ J6
♥ 3		♥ AQ5
♦ A10932		♦ Q864
♣ QJ10		♣ 9652
	♠ K9532	
	♥ J10864	
	♦ 7	
	♣ A8	

On this layout, playing an early trump is fatal. East plays two more rounds, muttering "one of us must be wrong to be playing hearts", and down you go.

Points to remember:

- With two five-card suits, bid them "down the line" (higher suit first). With two four-card suits, bid them "up the line" (lower suit first). It's a good rule of thumb – however beware of the inevitable exception ... see elsewhere in this bulletin.
- Points – shpoints. Counting to 22 points and thinking "no game" will limit your bridge results in the long-term. It's a real buzz to be able to work out the play *during the bidding*.
- Another good rule of thumb for the play is to set up your side suit before drawing trumps.

**WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?
Blaine Howe**

Episode 5 – Calling The Director

Don't. How simple is that?

I cannot remember calling the director as dummy and being right.

Ask a senior director to find out about the rare situations where dummy calling for a director is legitimate.

In fact, there are only a very few infractions you are even allowed to point out to the table during play. But you are permitted to warn declarer that he is about to lead from the wrong hand.

If you get an urge to call the director, it is best to wait until the play has finished.

Finally, whenever you call the director, do so in the voice you would use to ask the advice of a good friend. Few things cause more tension at the bridge table than calling for the director as if you were calling over a policeman to make an arrest.



THE TWELFTH TRICK

IMPs	♠ 43
Dealer: N	♥ A8762
Vul: nil	♦ 86
	♣ A654
	♠ AKQJ87
	♥ K5
	♦ A54
	♣ K7

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

West leads the diamond two, which looks suspiciously like a singleton.

Plan the play.

Solution on page 5.

TRAINING YOUR HIPPO
Lindsay Coker – Yarra Valley BC

Memory is a funny thing. It's a great example of 'use it or lose it', and research at the University of NSW has now shown that part of the brain's memory storage facility, called the hippocampus (because it looks a bit like a seahorse), is larger in people who have been mentally and physically active from an early age. The hippocampus controls short-term memory and navigational skills, and those who have exercised it by study and other challenges over many years have a much-reduced likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease and similar dementias in later life than those who let their hippo be lazy.

Even more surprising, and of greater relevance to most bridge players, is that other research has shown that you do not have to start when you're an adolescent to train your hippo – it can be prodded into activity at any age, given the right stimuli. The more complex the stimulus, the greater the challenge, the quicker the rewards are achieved. Many examples are given, from taking up crosswords to learning a new language - and that one is a beaut. Bridge, above all things, is the learning of a new, multi-faceted language, and proof of its efficacy is the observation that eventually all bridge players die of many ailments, but rarely of dementia-related illness.

And here's another fact: you don't have to be clever to see the benefits. Bridge is not just for intellectuals, but for pretty well anyone who is prepared to make the effort, take the time, and train their hippo to be a good defender against the Alzheimer enemy.

So, if you have never thought of bridge as anything more than an old fuddy-duddy game, think again. There's clubs all over, most have courses at which you can learn a socially-oriented, inexpensive yet challenging mental exercise, where you continually improve your performance, and where your hippo will trumpet victory. Well, your memory will improve, anyway.

And for long-term players: your memory has to be good – so remember the time you started learning, and treat newcomers with

kindness and encouragement. They too want a happy hippo.



Editor's note: Whilst this article is perhaps primarily directed at non-players rather than the readership of the VBA Bulletin, it serves to remind us to promote the game to family and friends as exercise for the brain.

There is an ever increasing volume of research to support that playing bridge will tend to ward off Alzheimer's disease. So will several other activities such as ballroom dancing and playing a musical instrument, but for sheer accessibility, bridge is it.

MORE "UP AND DOWN THE LINE"

LHO opens a natural 1♣, partner doubles and RHO passes. Your move with:

♠ Q982 ♥ K763 ♦ 2 ♣ J542

I've used this hand before – in the December 2006 Bulletin - recommending a response of 1♠ to the takeout double.

So much for bidding up-the-line with two four-card suits. But the theory behind the 1♠ response is that it gives you the chance to bid 2♥ later on some auctions. For example, LHO rebids 2♣, and it goes pass-pass to you.

That's why the *strategy* is more important than the *rule*. The strategy is that if you wish to show both suits, then bid the higher one first. This is what applies here: with partner suggesting the majors, your two four-card suits are more like five-card suits, because there is almost certainly a good fit in one of them.

There are other applications of this strategy:

♠ Q10965 ♥ K62 ♦ 72 ♣ A3

Partner opens 1♥ - RHO overcalls 2♦. If you decide you are strong enough to want to bid both suits, then start with 2♠, planning to follow up with a heart bid. But if you consider it a "one shot" hand, then simply bid 2♥ - if you belong in spades, partner will need to make the running with a spade bid himself.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: N ♠ A852
 Vul: nil ♥ Q106
 ♦ 7
 ♣ 109642

 ♠ K97
 ♥ K942
 ♦ QJ952
 ♣ 7

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Partner leads ♦4 to your ♦J and declarer's ♦A. Declarer trumps ♦6 (partner's ♦3), then plays ♥Q, ♥10 (partner ♦8), both winning. He returns to ♣A, on which partner signals *even*. Now comes ♥A, on which partner throws ♦K, and declarer's next card is ♣K. How are you going to defend?

What next?

Problem 2:

Dealer: E ♠ KJ
 Vul: Both ♥ 964
 ♦ J853
 ♣ AJ52

♠ A
 ♥ J95
 ♦ 109762
 ♣ K1043

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

You start ♦10, which runs to partner's ♦4 and declarer's ♦Q. Next comes a spade, your ♠A, dummy's ♠K and partner's ♠8. How will you continue?

Solutions on Page 7.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

THE TWELFTH TRICK
Bill Jacobs

♠ 43
 ♥ A8762
 ♦ 106
 ♣ A654

♠ 10952
 ♥ Q1093
 ♦ 2
 ♣ J932

♠ 6
 ♥ J4
 ♦ KQJ9873
 ♣ Q108

♠ AKQJ87
 ♥ K5
 ♦ A54
 ♣ K7

There should be no problems if hearts are 3-3, but what if they aren't? Then you are going to need a squeeze of some sort, and if you read all the text books, this will work best if you can lose a trick to "rectify the count". But what trick can you safely lose?

Win the diamond ace and draw trumps discarding a club and a diamond from dummy. Now, heart king, heart to the ace, and a third round. If East follows to the third heart, you can ruff this and hope for hearts to be 3-3. But if East discards, then discard a diamond yourself – count rectified!

West wins and with no further diamonds, switches to a club. You win in hand and play the remaining trumps, leading to the following position with one trump left:

♠ -
 ♥ 8
 ♦ -
 ♣ A6

♠ -
 ♥ Q
 ♦ -
 ♣ J9

♠ -
 ♥ -
 ♦ K
 ♣ 108

♠ 7
 ♥ -
 ♦ 5
 ♣ 7

On the last spade, West must pitch a club – dummy's heart eight has done its job and is discarded. And likewise East must pitch a club to protect against your diamond five. Dummy's clubs are high. (There are other ways to make, but this is the only line that needs no guesswork.)

GOLD ON THE GOLD COAST
Bill Jacobs

Sunny Surfers Paradise, great playing area, excellent Victorian results – what more can one ask for from an ANC? Well ... let me start with a few nasty words about the format of the Interstate Teams.

The absence of all Northern Territory teams from the ANC didn't help matters, but what on earth were the organizers thinking when they shortened the matches from 24 to 20 boards and unbalanced the playing schedule, with 5 days containing 2, 3, 4, 3 and 2 rounds in sequence? There seemed to be utterly no logic to this: if the days were set up with 3, 3, 3, 3 and 2 rounds, we could have returned to 24 board matches and a more satisfying volume of bridge.

The actual outcome was a highly abbreviated event. For the Vic Open Team, the vagaries of the byes and sitouts meant that Cathy Chua and Simon Hinge didn't turn a card on the first or last days of the event – their bridge was confined to the 3 middle days.

Please ABF, PUT IT BACK.

Now for a couple of hands ...

Dealer: E	♠ K84		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q		
	♦ AQ1054		
	♣ 10874		
♠ 96532		♠ QJ7	
♥ 3		♥ J854	
♦ 763		♦ J98	
♣ 9532		♣ KQJ	
	♠ A10		
	♥ AK109762		
	♦ K2		
	♣ A6		

This was from the qualifying rounds. Helen Snashall and Cathie Lachman bid it:

Helen	Cathie
2♣	3♦*
3♥	3NT
6♥	Pass**

* Natural positive, at least an ace and a king
 ** Regretfully

This was an effective and controlled auction. Helen knew that Cathie had the diamond ace and a black king, so 6♥ was likely the correct contract. Cathie was worried about her extra values, and rightly so, as 7♥ is in theory a desirable contract. In practice, 6♥ was perfect.

Would you believe, in the Open and Women's events, they was the only pair to reach 6♥? Most languished in game, and a few reached 6NT, unluckily down on 4-1 hearts. (Double dummy, 6NT can make, but not by any likely play.) One pair bid an unfortunate 7♥.

The Seniors group was more impressive, 6♥ being bid at five out of six tables, including by Sam Arber and Henri de Jong. Their auction was:

Henri	Sam
2♣	2♥*
3♥	4♦**
4♠**	4NT
5♦	6♥
Pass	

* 2-3 controls
 ** Cue-bids for hearts

It seems that the key to getting to slam is to recognize that the South hand is worth a 2♣ opening. Only 18 points, but also only 3-4 losers.

In the six tables of the Youth, three reached 6♥, and two stayed in game. Then there was Angus Munro (South) and Peter Hollands: they had a somewhat confused auction to 5♥. The West Australian East sussed out that this was not the correct contract (right she was!) and doubled. Angus was quick to send this back, and the outcome was a par-beating +1600.

The Open 7♥ contract was bid against Ben Thompson and me, and it was an emotional roller-coaster ride for Trevor Fuller from WA, sitting South.

Playing a Forcing Pass system, he "opened" with a Pass and then relayed several times. Suddenly he jumped to 7♥, closing the auction. He then explained: "my partner holds 1-3-5-4 shape with three controls (A=2, K=1)". Well yes, you would bid 7♥ with that data.

“No, no,” said North, “I was showing you 3-1-5-4 shape”. South must have felt somewhat sick having this revealed to him. Anyway, the relays made him dummy, and the club king was led. Declarer won, and crossed to his heart queen. “Wow, that’s great” exclaimed poor South, praising the Lord that partner’s singleton heart was the queen. The second round of trumps brought him back to earth with a thud. What a strange tragedy to reach the correct contract on a misunderstanding, and then have it go down. Compounded by Victoria playing 4♥ at the other table!

This board from the Final saw a Victorian swing in both Women and Youth:

Dealer: W	♠ 1062		
Vul: N/S	♥ Q5		
	♦ AK6532		
	♣ 94		
♠ J9743		♠ Q8	
♥ 109		♥ 62	
♦ J		♦ Q108	
♣ KQ832		♣ AJ10765	
	♠ AK5		
	♥ AKJ8743		
	♦ 974		
	♣ -		

Women:

West	North	East	South
	Lachman		Snashall
2♠	Pass	Pass	D'ble
Pass	3♦*	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* Shows values (Lebensohl)

Youth:

West	North	East	South
	Justin H		Hollands
Pass	Pass	2♣*	4♥
5♣	5♦	Pass	6♦
6♠	D'ble	7♣	D'ble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* Precision

That was a heap of good bidding by the Victorians. Helen had no problem in ducking the second diamond to bring home 6♥, whilst 7♣ cost 1100, the par result. At the other tables, only game was reached.

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS Ian McCance

Problem 1:

Dealer: N	♠ A852		
Vul: nil	♥ Q106		
	♦ 7		
	♣ 109642		
♠ QJ10		♠ K97	
♥ 7		♥ K942	
♦ K10843		♦ QJ952	
♣ Q853		♣ 7	
	♠ 643		
	♥ AJ953		
	♦ A6		
	♣ AKJ		

You have declarer’s hand-shape – 3523 and have to hope partner has a trick in clubs. If he has ♣QJxx all is well, but if only ♣Qxxx you have to get busy. If you let ♣K hold, declarer, if he holds ♠J, can concede the next trick and later take discard(s) on dummy’s established clubs. Mindful of partner’s astonishingly prescient ♦K you must trump ♣K and play a spade.

[*It was Brazilian superstar Gabriel Chagas]

Problem 2:

Dealer: E	♠ KJ		
Vul: Both	♥ 964		
	♦ J853		
	♣ AJ52		
♠ A		♠ 8652	
♥ J95		♥ AQ32	
♦ 109762		♦ 4	
♣ K1043		♣ Q976	
	♠ Q109743		
	♥ K107		
	♦ AKQ		
	♣ 8		

What about that ♠8? It can’t be a singleton, can it? Does it call for hearts or does it just say “wake up!”

Partner could have started with ♦K4. Could declarer have 3 small hearts? ♠Q, ♦AQ and ♣Q might make an opening bid, but hardly enough to accept a push. It seems more likely that partner’s ♦4 was singleton. Leading the ♦2 would be a good move so that partner’s club return kills the dummy.

TO BID OR NOT TO BID

If Shakespeare had played bridge...
(www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/385300.html)



To bid or not to bid: that is the question!
Whether 'tis better in the end to suffer
The sets and bottoms of outrageous distribution,
Or to pass against a mess of doubles,
And by passing end them. To win; to place;
No more; and by a pass to end
Redoubles and the thousand natural shocks
A player is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To place, to win;
To win; perchance I dream: aye, there's the rub;

For in that dream what tops may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the bid
That makes calamity of one night's play.
For who could bear the halves and zeros, at times
The opponent's scorn, our partner's contumely,
The pangs of sacrifices gone wrong, the kibitzer's
pity.

The point count, honour trick,
The chill of bottoms the unworthy takes,
When he himself might quiet us make
With a mere pass? Who would conventions use
To squirm and sweat a dazed life,

But that dread of being east-west
That humble seeding from whose bourn
No reputation returns, puzzles the mind
And makes us rather hide the cards we have
Than make bids our partner knows not of?

Our systems do make fools of us all,
And thus the simple pass of irresolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of doubt.

All enterprise of cue bids, take-outs
We now regard as breathless strategy
And skip the chance for action. Soft you now!
Fair partner! Simply, in thy prayers
Be all my bridge sins remember'd.

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to the following members:

Graduate Master	Adina Morris
Club Master	Toni Alfredson
Local Master	John Spender
*Local Master	Tim Blizard Mary Hanrahan
**Local Master	Judith Joss
State Master	Peter Yuill
Bronze Life Master	Peter Hollands
Grand Master	Margaret Tildesley

RECENT RESULTS

Elizabeth Sawicki Eclectic Pairs

- 1 S. Gerdan – M. Balint
- 2 M. Margitta – I. Margitta
- 3 M. Chrapot – L. Meyer

Team of Four Combo

- 1 W. Scott, R. Drew, G. Gaspar, B. Tencer
- 2 S. Collins, S. Rubinstein, S. Klofa, R. Livingston
- 3 H. Stewart, C. Hagan, C. Naranong, C. Arul

VBA GNOT Heat

- 1 M. Woods, D. Hohor, M. Kaneko, T. Chira
- 2 W. Scott, I. McCance, G. Kilvington,
G. Chettle, A. Halmos
- 3 B. Tencer, G. Gaspar, H. de Jong, S. Arber,
M. Tencer, M. Chrapot