

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

March 2011

Editor: Bill Jacobs

2010 ABF YOUTH AWARDS

The Helman-Klinger Achievement Award is presented each year to the Australian youth player whose ability, achievements, sportsmanship, attitude, contribution and commitment during the calendar year are most deserving.

The 2010 award was won by **Peter Hollands**, who has been instrumental in organising various aspects of youth bridge in Melbourne, as



well as having had an impressive list of achievements in various national and local bridge events. This includes being part of the runner-up "Melbourne 4" team at the GNOT and winning the Victorian Open Pairs and the Victorian Open Teams.

Congratulations Peter!

(The Helman-Klinger Awards exist due to the generosity of Rabbi Helman, an American lawyer, prominent bridge enthusiast and philanthropist, who made a substantial donation to establish the prizes to honour Ron and Suzie Klinger's outstanding contribution to bridge in Australia.)

SURVEY TIME ...

The VBA Council has been considering the service it provides to its members and will be asking all members to complete an anonymous short survey.

It is envisaged that this will be distributed in the last two weeks in March, with the results being collated in April and then published in the Bulletin - this will include a response from the Council. If you want more details please contact a council member.

We ask all members to help us to help you enjoy your bridge at the VBA by completing the survey when it comes out.



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2011

Powerhouse Function Centre, Albert Park

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday 23 rd July	10 am	Welcome Swiss Pairs
	7 pm	Captains' Meeting
Sunday 24 th July - Thursday 28 th July	10 am	ANC Interstate Teams
Friday 29 th July	10 am	Interstate Teams Final
	7 pm	Victory Dinner
Saturday 30 th July - Sunday 31 st July	10 am	ANC Open & Womens Butler Stage 1
Monday 1 st August - Thursday 4 th August	10 am	ANC Open & Womens Butler Stage 2 ANC Seniors Butler ANC Restricted Butler

Congress Events will be held during both weeks.

Full details will be published at
www.vba.asn.au/anc2011 in April

Contact Jeannette Collins – 0411 189 198
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Upcoming State Event at the Victorian Bridge Association

The VBA invites all Victorian players to enter the following
State event commencing in March



*2011 Victorian Masters Pairs
Monday evenings
March 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th*

**Enter this event and play against pairs of the
same masterpoint ranking**

It is not necessary to be a member of the VBA to play in State events

Enter via the website: www.vba.asn.au or phone 9530-9006

**CHERRY, COW CORNER, DAISY CUTTER,
FLOATER AND PADDLE SWEEP -
AN INDIAN REPORT
Cathie Lachman**

These are just a few of the new words I learned during my trip to India to play in the 3rd Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship, held in Ghaziabad, October 2010, as part of the Australian Women's Team.

You probably recognise them as cricket terms and the reason I learned them was because I drank so much bottled water during my stay. Bisleri was the drink of the day and it set about educating imbibers about cricket terms. I have a vast vocabulary of cricket terms these days.

I arrived in New Delhi at the new (almost finished) international airport built especially for the Commonwealth Games. It was 3.30 a.m. and I was surrounded by military personnel. I spent the first couple of nights at a guest house in Gurgaon with my team mates who had arrived two days earlier and then it was off to Ghaziabad - a mere 50 kms away that took 1.5 hours reach. 3 lane highways became 5 lane highways so the drivers in India are quite skilled at lane hopping, cow avoidance, tooting their horns and travelling anywhere between 5 km/hr to 100 km/hr. They also have very good brakes!

The Opening Ceremony was something else. We were greeted by ladies in traditional garb and presented with a marigold lei and a Bindi (a drop, dot) of red paint and rice on our foreheads. We all felt so special and honoured to be in India.

The next day the games commenced.

Playing against the Australian Open Team, Helen Snashall and I were pitted against Tony Nunn and Sartaj Hans. They are aggressive bidders, and never give you an easy ride. This was an unlucky match for us where on one hand Ian Robinson was able to open 2♠ on a 5 card suit and they played in 4♠. Yet in our room we defended 4♥ for a double game swing.

This hand was worth IMPs and my palms were sweaty.

Dealer: N	♠ -		
Vul: Nil	♥ J10875432		
	♦ K7		
	♣ J102		
♠ AQJ63		♠ 982	
♥ K		♥ Q6	
♦ 54		♦ A9632	
♣ K8754		♣ AQ6	
	♠ K10754		
	♥ A9		
	♦ QJ108		
	♣ 93		

West	North	East	South
1♠	2♥	4♠	D'ble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

What do you think of Tony's 2♥ overall?

I guess I was lucky not to get a diamond lead. Nunn led ♥J overtaken by the ace and now ♦Q. I pitched a diamond on ♥Q and ran the ♠9 and closed my eyes. Yew bewdy... +590.

Playing against England....

Dealer: N	♠ A85		
Vul: Nil	♥ 1083		
	♦ 10743		
	♣ AQ7		
♠ KJ63		♠ Q942	
♥ K97654		♥ Q	
♦ J52		♦ AKQ86	
♣ -		♣ 1086	
	♠ 107		
	♥ AJ2		
	♦ 9		
	♣ KJ95432		

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

I loved this hand and it comes from knowing one's partner. Helen Snashall sitting East opened and after the pre-empt I bid 3♥. 4♣ by North and Helen passed. Gee I thought: Helen, an aggressive bidder, didn't raise my hearts nor double clubs. 4♠ seemed right as that suit had been lost. ♣A lead, I ruffed. Next a heart to queen and ace and a club came back, ruffed. ♠K, ducked. ♠J felling the ten. Howzat? Bridge is an easy game and that was worth 8 IMPs.

The Australian ladies failed to make the cut to the semi-finals so on the rest day there was an organised bus trip to Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. We were up at 5.30 a.m. to catch the bus to travel a mere 238 km which took 5 hours. The long bus trip was certainly worth it as the Taj is very beautiful. It was built in 1635 by Shah Jahan in memory of his wife who died during the birth of their 14th child. He had planned to build the black Taj on the opposite side of the Ganges for himself but his 3rd son killed his two older brothers and blinded the 4th son and placed his father under house arrest at nearby Fort Agra. Upon his father's death he buried him in the mausoleum next to his wife and moved the capital to Delhi (now known as Old Delhi).

On the last day in Ghaziabad a Friendship Pairs event was held for all non finalists. My captain arranged for me to play with Marianne Karmarkar, a member of the Indian Ladies Team.

A two session matchpoint pairs event. Arghhh! Matchpoints is not my best game. At the end of session 1 we were running 3rd. Not bad for an untried partnership playing in a field against established partnerships.

In the 2nd session we played against two Precision-playing gentlemen whom I recognised to be more than competent and who had already forced Helen and me into a bad contract in the teams. I was South on the following hand:

Dealer: N	♠ K
Vul: All	♥ xx
	♦ K10xxxx
	♣ AQJx
♠ xx	♠ QJxx
♥ AKJxx	♥ Qxxxxx
♦ xx	♦ x
♣ Kxxx	♣ xx
	♠ A10xxxx
	♥ -
	♦ AQJx
	♣ 10xx

West	North	East	South
1♥	2♦	4♥	4♠
Pass	Pass	5♥	6♦
Pass	Pass	D'ble	All Pass

Marianne overcalled 2♦ vulnerable and I now had to bid over 4♥. I knew (from previous experience) that East would bid 5♥ and I didn't want to bid 6♦ because they would sacrifice in 6♥, so I tried 4♠ and I was right. Caught him! He bid 5♥ and I bid 6♦ promptly doubled for all the matchpoints. Marianne and I finished 6th in a handsome field, won 5,000 rupees and we ended up the best women's pair and best mixed pair (Indian/Australian).

And so it was back to New Delhi for a day's shopping and then the long flight home. On the Singapore/Melbourne leg we flew on the new Qantas airbus which was extremely comfortable. I found out two days later that all the airbuses have been recalled. I truly am a lucky traveller.

The airbus couldn't bowl this maiden over☺

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dealer: S ♠ K84
 Vul: Both ♥ K932
 IMPs ♦ J54
 ♣ 954

♠ A
 ♥ A5
 ♦ AQ8
 ♣ AQJ10732

West	North	East	South
			2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♥	Pass	6♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads ♠Q.

Plan the play. Solution on page 8.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

RECENT RESULTS

Ramsden Handicap Swiss Pairs

- 1 P. Nankin – A. Rauchberger
- 2 V. Rugless – D. Wilson
- 3 J. Collins – A. Czapnik

CASES FOR ACES – VIII
KICKING BACK
Bill Jacobs

You hold

♠ Kx ♥ AJ109xx ♦ xxx ♣ KJ

and hear partner open 1♠. You respond 2♥ and partner bids 4♦, a splinter bid, showing heart support, a good hand and shortage in diamonds.

With a fine hand of your own, and no wasted values in diamonds, you wheel out 4NT, key-card Blackwood, and partner responds 5♠: two key cards and the trump queen.

Uh oh – two key cards are not enough. You are now locked into a 6♥ contract, and this is not a success, partner having

♠ AQJxxx ♥ KQxx ♦ K ♣ Qx.

The villain in this little horror tale is Roman Key Card Blackwood, and its two key-card + queen reply that took you beyond 5 of your agreed trump suit. Whenever you bid 4NT as Blackwood, there is a risk that the response will take you too high: the risk is greatest when clubs is the trump suit, but of course it can be a problem with any trump suit other than spades.

Is there anything that can be done about it?

Back in the September 2010 Bulletin, Jill Magee described Minorwood: where bidding 4 of the agreed minor is Blackwood, which means that there is a full level of bidding between the Blackwood bid and a signoff in 5 of a minor, so no response can take you beyond your safety level.

An alternative, which works for all suits, is Kickback Blackwood. Playing Kickback, the next step after 4 of the agreed suit is Blackwood. So if clubs is the agreed suit, 4♦ is Blackwood; for diamonds, 4♥ is Blackwood; and for hearts, 4♠ is Blackwood. If spades is the agreed suit, then 4NT is, surprise, surprise, Blackwood.

The two red-suit bids for when a minor is trumps has also been named "Redwood".

With this scheme, there are always enough steps below 5 of the agreed suit to prevent you getting too high. For our example hand, the auction would be:

1♠	2♥
4♦	4♠
5♥	Pass

4♠ is Kickback Blackwood, 5♥ would show two key-cards and the heart queen, and you live happily ever after.

This auction gives you an instant understanding of the extreme danger of this convention. That 4♠ bid is game in opener's opened suit: it is possible that opener won't recognize it as Blackwood and pass. You have to have sturdy agreements and partnership experience to play Kickback. An appropriate starting point would be to agree that Kickback should only apply when a suit has been *explicitly* agreed, not *inferentially* agreed. To explain, consider this auction:

1♥	1♠
3♥	4NT

Most experienced partnerships would play 4NT there as key-card Blackwood with hearts as trumps. Hearts are inferentially set as trumps, because opener has just shown a strong hand with long hearts. But in *this* auction:

1♥	1♠
3♥	4♠

4♠ should certainly *not* be key-card Blackwood with hearts as trumps, even if playing Kickback. No, in that auction, responder just wants to play 4♠. The requirement for Kickback should be that hearts has already been explicitly set as trumps, such as in our first auction, where a splinter bid was used to set the agreed trump suit.

When Kickback Blackwood *does* apply, you need to decide a meaning for the now-idle 4NT bid. Two possibilities spring to mind: you could retain it as Blackwood as a protection against forgetting all about Kickback – a pragmatic if inefficient approach; or alternatively it could carry the same meaning as the Kickback bid would have had, eg a cue-bid.

In summary, Kickback Blackwood is a terrific convention in theory, but is not for children. And it wouldn't have saved me from a premature exit from the recent Australian National Open Teams event. More on that another day.

PANACHE - X
Ben Thompson

Bridge is a bidder's game. This hand, from the third week of the Open Interstate Butler, is all about the auction (with a little bit of card-play thrown in for fun).

Dealer: N	♠ Q432		
Vul: Both	♥ K8		
	♦ 10765		
	♣ Q72		
♠ KJ95		♠ 108	
♥ 1076		♥ 9542	
♦ KQJ32		♦ A984	
♣ A		♣ 1085	
	♠ A76		
	♥ AQJ3		
	♦ -		
	♣ KJ9643		

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♣
D'ble	1NT	2♦	3♣
3♦	Pass	Pass	3♥
Pass	5♣	All pass	

Many people would find this auction surprising. For a start, three players deliberately avoided bidding superficially attractive suits. And the fourth bid a superficially pointless suit.

West chose double, not 1♦. His plan was to get his three "suits" across rather than just one of them. With KQJxx in a major, he would bid that instead of doubling. It's important to name a good major, and you can double back later with a decent hand. As it was, it's more important to let partner know that both majors had some playing potential than to show just the diamond suit.

North chose 1NT, not 1♠. After West's double, North's spade suit looked pretty anaemic. Better to name the likely strain (NT) and also try to protect those major suit stoppers.

East chose 2♦, not 2♥ (and not Pass). You're weak and will defend more often than not, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't bid. If you pass now, partner may sell out cheaply, and will lead blind. Bidding hearts sucks partner into leading them. It's pushy, but 2♦ helps partner out. Look at it this way – if partner had overcalled 1♦, would you compete to 2♦? I sure would. This situation is pretty much the same.

South chose 3♣, not the economical 2♥. After double, 1NT and 2♦, his side almost certainly had a club fit. In a competitive auction, your first priority is to make sure your side knows what your fit is.

Later, South bid 3♥ even though hearts were still an unlikely destination. This gives partner room to bid 3NT if that's right (even though both opponents bid diamonds). And 4♥ could still be right (imagine partner has ♥109xx and sensibly didn't bid them). What do you think double of 3♦ should be? I reckon total penalty by North, and "action" by South (good hand, prepared to defend for money if you are).

North judged his collection well in bidding 5♣. Nothing wasted in diamonds, well-placed major cards, and a very useful ♣Qxx paired with shortage opposite partner's heart suit.

At the end, West had a nice-looking 14-bagger with a partner who bid, and passed out 5♣. Don't punish partner for competing.

5♣ was virtually cold on the auction, and 11 tricks were wrapped up. Well bid by David Morgan (South) and Brad Wein (North).

Expert aside: If trumps are 2-2, try playing a low spade towards the queen. If West ducks, which they do sometimes, you can ditch two spades from dummy on the hearts, and make 12 tricks. There's no risk because you still have the ♠A. If you cash the hearts first, nobody is ducking. It's worth trying even at teams because it's risk-free and those imps add up, even one at a time.

The takeaway

Consider your *whole* hand and the *whole* auction when you bid. Sometimes you need to show a major, or conceal a major, or stretch, or go quietly.

AN INTERESTING 2 IMP SWING Bill Jacobs

This white-knuckle hand came up in the last set of a tense 2011 National Women's Teams Final in Canberra:

♠ 6 ♥ AKQJ9853 ♦ - ♣ 10973

How much heart bidding would you expect from this hand? Here's the full deal:

Dealer: N	♠ AJ875
Vul: E/W	♥ 72
	♦ K109
	♣ AJ5
♠ 6	♠ 3
♥ AKQJ9853	♥ 106
♦ -	♦ AQJ87643
♣ 10973	♣ Q6
	♠ KQ10942
	♥ 4
	♦ 52
	♣ K842

As it turned out, neither West bid hearts at all!

At one table, North opened 1♠, East, Diana Smart, tried 4♦, and South bid 4♠. This put Felicity Beale, sitting West, in the hot seat. What do you think she should do?

Felicity made a great bid, under a lot of pressure. She doubled 4♠! Partner's diamond bidding, combined with the unfavourable vulnerability, convinced her that nothing much good could come of 5♥, and indeed that contract would probably have been doubled and set two tricks.

So at her table, North declared 4♠ doubled.

At the other table, East overcalled 1♠ with just 3♦, and South bid 4♥: a splinter bid. West passed, biding her time to good effect, because North didn't see the 4♥ bid that way, and also passed!

So at the second table, South declared 4♥.

Who do you think picked up the 2-imp swing?

Against 4♠, East led ♦A and gave West a diamond ruff. West played hearts: declarer ruffed the second heart and needed to pick up the clubs. She unwisely played off all her

trumps and ♦K before taking the club finesse into East, so when East won her ♣Q, she had a good diamond to play. So N/S were two down in 4♠ doubled, -300.

Against 4♥, West liked her chances and cashed a top heart at trick 1. She then continued with 7 more of them, but declarer had the rest after that: down 5, -250, and 2imps to the team that played in the splinter bid. There's no justice!

Did you spot West's mistake? After the first round of trumps, she knew partner had ♥10 – South had revealed her singleton heart in the bidding. West should have played a *low* heart at trick 2, to allow East to win and score her ♦A. That would have been down 6, and a flat board.

The bridge on this deal was fun, but not too good. That's what it's like at the end of a long and arduous event. It just confirms a theory of mine: the winner of the final of a week-long event will be the one that *gets the most sleep*.

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

Graduate Master	Michael Small
**Local Master	Richard Carter Martha Van Der Hoek
Regional Master	Ellen Allery
*Regional Master	June Pulford Margot Slonim
State Master	Mary Lipp
*State Master	Christine Louie Herman Louie Nafty Van Der Hoek
*National Master	Max Henbest (ABF Youth) John Yang
**National Master	Larry Attwood Carmy Karliner

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Vu-Graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan:

“As you can see, neither pair had any difficulty in reaching their 19 point game. The difficulty will come in the play.”

COMING UP AT THE VBA ... THWAITES MIXED PAIRS

Dates: Wednesdays, March 9, 17, 23, 30

Format: Two nights qualifying, two nights final, scored as matchpoints. Held simultaneously with the Restricted Mixed Pairs (to qualify in the Restricted, each player must have less than 300 masterpoints).

Defending Champs:

Open: Felicity Beale and Rob van Riel
Restricted: Jenny and Kim Hoff

REMEMBERING THE THWAITES Ian McCance

The Thwaites were friends of my bridge-playing parents, and Jack Thwaites was my partner for my first game of duplicate bridge in 1943 (he wouldn't have been used to coming last).

In those days the Thwaites were a power in the land, strong players and very involved in promoting bridge in Victoria.

Marjorie Thwaites played in 22 Victorian Women's teams from 1934 to 1968, 14 times as captain, winning the Australian title 12 times.

Jack Thwaites played for Victoria in 1935 and 1953, the Vics successful both times. He was an enthusiast for par-points; in 1938 he and Marjorie won the Australian Par-point Pairs, and Jack repeated this victory in 1949 and 1951 playing with Eric Field. In 1951 (this may have been the same event) he and Field won the World Championship in this form of the game.

Both were unfailingly pleasant and courteous and I should mention Mrs Thwaites' role in another context - encouragement of Youth bridge. In 1943 I entered a team from school in the Victorian Pennant. To mark the occasion a Handicap Pennant was set up to run in parallel. When they realised how bad we were the handicaps were hastily revised. The Handicap was abandoned when we moved on. Marjorie Thwaites was also responsible for my teenage presence on the Council of the VBU for some time.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: N ♠ KJ5432
Vul: N/S ♥ A3
 ♦ 9864
 ♣ K

♠ 106
♥ J1062
♦ J752
♣ 975

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

You select a low heart from that unpromising collection. Dummy plays low and partner wins ♥K (declarer ♥7) and returns ♥5 to ♥A (declarer ♥9).

Declarer starts diamonds, low to his ♦10, which it seems a good idea to win. What comes next?

Problem 2:

Dealer: E ♠ 873
Vul: nil ♥ K1084
 ♦ 6
 ♣ AK863

♠ Q5
♥ 652
♦ Q943
♣ QJ107

West	North	East	South
		Pass	Pass
1♣ ¹	1NT ²	Pass	3♣ ³
D'ble	Pass	Pass	Pass

- strong
- 4 major + 5 minor
- Pass or correct

Partner starts ♦A, switches to ♥A then ♥Q, which declarer wins in dummy and discards a spade. Next comes a spade to ♠A, partner signalling (probably) *odd*.

Now a diamond ruff, a heart ruff, another diamond ruff and dummy's last heart - your play.

Solutions overleaf.

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS Ian McCance

Problem 1

	♠ KJ5432	
	♥ A3	
	♦ 9864	
	♣ K	
♠ 106		♠ AQ97
♥ J1062		♥ K54
♦ J752		♦ K3
♣ 975		♣ J832
	♠ 8	
	♥ Q987	
	♦ AQ10	
	♣ AQ1064	

This is the other side of a familiar coin - declarer has a 6-card suit in dummy and shows no signs of developing it. Surely he hasn't six spade tricks (major suit fits tend to be played there).

South looks to have started with four hearts (from the spots), has bid clubs and is establishing diamonds. Not much in spades there! Shift to ♠10 and get partner off an end-play.

Problem 2

Dealer: E	♠ 873	
Vul: nil	♥ K1084	
	♦ 6	
	♣ AK863	
♠ J96		♠ Q5
♥ AQJ73		♥ 652
♦ AKJ52		♦ Q943
♣ -		♣ QJ107
	♠ AK1042	
	♥ 9	
	♦ 1087	
	♣ 9542	

You still need 3 tricks and can see only the 2 sure tricks in your hand. Partner will need to contribute one more, and if you discard on this heart you will end up trumping partner's spade trick.

So climb up ♣Q and exit a high trump or the spade (declarer should have taken ♠K earlier).

THE TWELFTH TRICK Bill Jacobs

	♠ K84	
	♥ K932	
	♦ J54	
	♣ 954	
♠ QJ105		♠ 97632
♥ J74		♥ Q1086
♦ 1073		♦ K962
♣ K86		♣ -
	♠ A	
	♥ A5	
	♦ AQ8	
	♣ AQJ10732	

I've made it easy for you this month - there are *two* correct plays.

Cross to dummy's ♥K at trick 2 and take a minor suit finesse - any minor¹ - leading low from dummy.

If the finesse wins, play the other minor to force an entry back to dummy: so if a club finesse wins, but West shows out, play ♦Q - if *that* wins, then play ♣Q; alternatively, if a diamond finesse wins, play ♣Q to force a club entry to dummy with ♣9, to cash ♠K.

If the finesse loses, then that gives you an entry to dummy in that suit, so you can try the other finesse.

There are two traps to avoid on this deal: cashing ♠K prematurely, and leading ♣9 from dummy.

2010 McCUTCHEON SHIELD

Congratulations to the following Victorians who were winners of their respective sections in the 2010 McCutcheon Shield Bridge Competition.

*Regional Master	Flossie Aizen (VBA)
State Master	Max Henbest (ABF Youth Bridge)
Bronze Life Master	Ben Kingham (VBA)

¹ Actually, playing the club finesse is probably slightly superior, as it reduces the chance of an adverse ruff