

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

November 2012

Editor: Bill Jacobs

COUNCIL NEWS

VBA Foundation

The VBA foundation was established in 2003 and over the years the foundation has provided support for bridge and in particular the enhancement of facilities at the VBA which benefits all those who play in events at the venue. The VBA has recently approved the appointment of two new trustees to the VBA Foundation. These are Mr Geoff Chettle and Mr Grant Kilvington who join the existing trustees Dr Ian McCance and Mrs Diana Jacobs to oversee the management of the fund.

The VBA appreciates the time and efforts of the trustees in ensuring the Foundation is appropriately administered.

November Congresses:

November kicks off with a 3 day festival at Waverley:

Waverley - November 3 – 5

Enter at www.waverleybridgeclub.com.au

Kooyong - November 18

Email leeron.branicki@gmail.com

Kattery - November 25

Enter at www.kattery.com.au

Visit the VBA website for more details on these events under "Affiliated Home".

VBA Annual General Meeting

The 2012 AGM for the Victorian Bridge Association Limited will be held on Tuesday 4th December 2012 at the VBA Clubrooms, 131 Poath Road Murrumbena, commencing at 6.30 pm.

All members are welcome to attend and enjoy a free, friendly game of duplicate bridge and supper after the AGM has concluded.

PLAY 3NT

Dealer: S ♠ 73
Vul: All ♥ AJ102
♦ A94
♣ AJ85

N
S

♠ K52
♥ K93
♦ QJ1052
♣ KQ

West	North	East	South
			1♦
Pass	1♥	1♠	D'ble
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

West leads ♠10. East overtakes with ♠J, and you let this win. East continues with ♠A and ♠6, as West follows with ♠9 and then discards ♣3.

There is a 100% play for the contract here. See if you can find it before E/W scream for the director that you are taking too long.

Solution on page 5.

VBA Summer Congress

A Red Master Point event

Saturday 8th December – Swiss Pairs
Sunday 9th December – Swiss Teams

Starting time: 10 am

Tournament convenor: Cathie Lachman
Tournament director: Laurie Kelso

Enter via the VBA web-site at
www.vba.asn.au.

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

Playing in a team game with no-one vulnerable you hold:

♠ 103 ♥ AQ4 ♦ K10986 ♣ K72

The bidding begins:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♠	2♥	?

You have several options. You could show your diamonds with 3♦, or invite game in notrumps with 2NT. Another possibility is to bid game in notrumps: 3NT. What's your poison?

No one would criticise you for bidding 3♦. You have sufficient high-card strength and a decent diamond suit. Of course, this might give partner a difficult rebid problem with some dull hand with for example 5224 shape.

What about 2NT, inviting game rather than forcing to game. This seems reasonable with your 12 points, but is it? Your hand is better than its 12 high-card point for two reasons: the ♥AQ is like ♥AK, because it's going to be sitting over RHO's king, and you also have a nice 5-card suit.

That leaves a 3NT bid, which is my choice. 3NT is very likely the correct contract on this deal, and you should just bid it. There's nothing wrong with keeping the bidding simple.

3NT ends the auction, ♥9 is led, and you see:

♠ AK962
♥ 83
♦ J73
♣ AJ4

N
S

♠ 103
♥ AQ4
♦ K10986
♣ K72

RHO puts up ♥K. Plan the play.

First step in notrump contracts is to count your tricks. You have two spades, two hearts and two clubs on top, so are looking for three more. They can come from the diamond suit: even if you have to lose to ♦Q and ♦A, you will have three tricks there.

Second step in notrumps contracts is to count your opponents' tricks. They can't immediately threaten you in spades, diamonds or clubs, but RHO has hearts, and there is a real danger of his establishing the suit, and running it when you lose tricks in diamonds.

Based on the bidding and the opening lead, it seems that RHO has six hearts and LHO two. If you win the first trick, cross to dummy, and lose a diamond to LHO, then he will play his second heart. Then if RHO wins the next diamond trick, then he will have four good hearts to run. Two down!

You can neutralize this threat by letting the opponents win the first heart trick. When you win the second heart, and subsequently lose a diamond trick to LHO, he will have no more hearts to play.

You duck the ♥K and RHO returns another, as LHO plays a small one. Your play.

You need to cross to dummy so you can finesse East for ♦Q. The safest entry is in spades, so you should play a spade to the ace. All follow small, and you now play a low diamond and put in ♦10. LHO wins ♦Q and switches to ♣3. The position is:

♠ K962
♥ -
♦ J7
♣ AJ4

N
S

♣3

♠ 10
♥ Q
♦ K986
♣ K72

What do you play?

Take care here. This is not the time to try a finesse, because if your ♠K gets forced out, you might end up without an entry to your hand to run the diamonds.

Win ♣A and play a second diamond. Nothing will stop you from winning those three diamond tricks you need.

The full deal:

♠ AK962	♠ 8
♥ 83	♥ KJ10762
♦ J73	♦ A54
♣ AJ4	♣ Q108

♠ QJ754	N	♠ 103
♥ 95	W E	♥ AQ4
♦ Q2	S	♦ K10986
♣ 9653		♣ K72

Points to remember:

- Simple is often best. Your 3NT bid was a simple bid. Suppose instead that you had bid 3♦. What would partner do? Looking at his hand, he has a difficult problem. He might have "solved" it by raising diamonds, and that will lead to 5♦, a contract that you would not have made.
- The duck at trick 1 was an example of a holdup play, this time when you had two stoppers in the suit. East could have put you to a sterner test by playing the heart ten at the first trick. Now you have to apply the same holdup by letting ♥10 win! The finesse for the ♥K will work just as well on the second round of the suit, and it's a finesse that you know will work, based on the bidding.
- Crossing to dummy with a spade at trick 3 was not 100% safe. There was a small risk that the defenders could develop two spade tricks, two diamonds and a heart to defeat 3NT. However, the alternative was to play diamonds out of your hand (did you think of that possibility?), and that runs the substantial risk of your RHO holding ♦AQ, and setting up his hearts after all.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dir: East	♠ Q986
Vul: N/S	♥ Q654
	♦ 4
	♣ K1085

♠ AJ10432	N
♥ J7	W E
♦ 96	S
♣ QJ4	

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

You lead ♠J, and declarer's ♠K wins. Now come ♦AKQ and another diamond, on which you let go two spades, and dummy one card in each suit. Partner follows ♦7, ♦5, ♦J then wins ♦10.

Partner returns ♠5 (declarer discarding a club) and you win ♠A.

How will you defend?

Problem 2:

Dir: South	♠ KQ32
Vul: All	♥ 32
	♦ A8632
	♣ 96

♠ 74	N	♠ 74
♥ J987	W E	♥ J987
♦ 74	S	♦ 74
♣ J10543		♣ J10543

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT*
Pass	4♠	All Pass	2♠

* 15-17

Partner's ♦Q lead runs to declarer's ♦K. A low spade follows, won in dummy. Next comes ♣6.

Which card do you play?

Solutions on page 5.

PANACHE - XXII
Ben Thompson

Alister Murray made an unusual play and presented me with an unusual problem in the Pennant last month. Suffer along with me. Sympathy welcome ☺

Dir: South ♠ Q65
 Vul: E/W ♥ A763
 ♦ AKJ9
 ♣ AK

♠ K1098	N	♠ AJ7
♥ 94	W E	♥ J105
♦ 10852	S	♦ Q4
♣ Q104		♣ J9853

♠ 432
 ♥ KQ82
 ♦ 762
 ♣ 762

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

The vagaries of the multi 2♦ mean Alister winds up declarer with the weak hand (another reason not to play the multi 2♦).

Leading a black suit could easily blow a trick, and leading a trump could easily pick up partner's trump queen. All very unattractive, so I sling a low diamond against 4♥.

Normally in this situation, you would win ♦A and go about your business. There's no technical need to take the diamond finesse immediately, and you certainly don't want to lose to stiff queen and suffer an inglorious ruff a few tricks later.

Alister finds the unusual ♦J play. Bill wins his queen, correctly decides our best chance to beat the contract is 3 spade tricks right now, and puts the ♠7 back. If declarer's hand is Kxx-Qxxx-xxx-xxx instead, returning the ♠7 is unlikely to blow the contract, because declarer will probably misguess trumps.

So there I am back on lead with the ♠K, and I have two options: give Bill a diamond ruff or try to cash 2 more spade tricks in his hand.

First step: what were declarer's diamonds? The finesse doesn't make any sense with fewer than 3 diamonds (even if he wanted to pitch spades, a cross-ruff probably works just as well), so it looks like he had 3 or 4. I can't think why the immediate finesse would be more or less attractive either way. Great.

Second step: what does Bill's ♠7 tell me? It could be low (encouraging) from AJ7, and he wants us to cash 3 spade tricks. Or it could be his high pip (discouraging) from AJ7x or A7x and he wants me to give him a diamond ruff. Awesome.

Third step: I figure there's only one AJ7 but a whole bunch of AJ7x and A7x holdings, so the diamond ruff is more likely. So I return a diamond, and Alister can finesse the diamond 9 at his leisure, eventually pitching a spade loser. Fabulous.

Beating 4♥ was easy when North played it. East leads something safe, North draws trumps and takes the diamond finesse, and now the only set is cashing 3 spade tricks.

Expert aside: Restricted choice applies in a complex way here. If East has ♠AJ7, he plays the 7 every time. If he has AJ7x, he plays the 7 every time he can get a diamond ruff, and the x every time he doesn't. He also returns the 7 from A7x when he wants a diamond ruff. He's 3 times more likely to have a diamond left than not, so he plays the spade 7 back 25% of the time from AJ7x/A7x, which means it's even money whether he wants a diamond ruff or a spade back. Great. Awesome. Fabulous.

The takeaway

If you have to give your opponents a trick, give it to them early. The earlier the opposition get in, the less information they have and the less likely they are to figure out the right thing to do. Alister extended that successfully to "if you **may** have to lose a trick, lose it early".



Vu-Graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan

"The Laws should really allow a player who has made a penalty double to look at his cards again, then undouble."

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS
Ian McCance

Problem 1

Dlr: East	♠ Q986										
Vul: N/S	♥ Q654										
	♦ 4										
	♣ K1085										
♠ AJ10432	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 75
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ J7		♥ AK983									
♦ 96		♦ J1075									
♣ QJ4		♣ 76									
	♠ K										
	♥ 102										
	♦ AKQ832										
	♣ A932										

You have to hope declarer gambled on taking 6 tricks in diamonds, and has only one more high card. An ace seems most likely, ♥K alone seems a bit thin. If it is ♣A, you will have to find the setting tricks now, else declarer has 9 tricks (2 spades, 5 diamonds, 2 clubs). If declarer has ♥A instead, the consequences of a heart switch are harder to determine (perhaps declarer has ♥A10?). ♣Q would bring the defence's fourth trick, but then the 5th would be elusive.

However, partner's high-suit preference (♦J then ♦10) is a strong guide. The card to play now is clearly ♥J. Down 3!

Problem 2

Dlr: South	♠ KQ32										
Vul: All	♥ 32										
	♦ A8632										
	♣ 96										
♠ AJ8	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 74
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ Q1064		♥ J987									
♦ QJ109		♦ 74									
♣ K8		♣ J10543									
	♠ 10965										
	♥ AK5										
	♦ K5										
	♣ AQ72										

It may be your custom, particularly if you normally play reverse count, to insert a high club in the this position, ♣J, to show possession of ♣10. This can't gain. Holding ♣AQ8, declarer is unlikely to double-finesse with only two clubs in dummy, and if he has this holding, ♣J will tell him to finesse again. Can it cost? Well, maybe. You would be

committed to covering ♣9 next, and you don't have good intermediates in clubs. Play low.



RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

Graduate Master	Liesl Harmse
Club Master	Renee Aron Dael Lewis
Local Master	Joseph Getreu Rodney Carr
Regional Master	Maurice Bolling
*State Master	Sue Small Malka Rubin
National Master	Genie Harband
*National Master	Harry Brown
Life Master	Carmy Karliner
Silver Life Master	Leon Rogers
Grand Master	Ben Kingham



PLAY 3NT SOLUTION

	♠ 73										
	♥ AJ102										
	♦ A94										
	♣ AJ85										
♠ 109	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ AQJ864
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ Q876		♥ 54									
♦ 863		♦ K7									
♣ 10743		♣ 962									
	♠ K52										
	♥ K93										
	♦ QJ1052										
	♣ KQ										

This deal was from the recent GNOT Metro Final. Grant Kilvington found the sure-trick solution at the table, and suffered no associated fine for slow play.

He discarded a diamond from dummy on the third spade, cashed ♣KQ, then played a low heart to dummy's ace, and a low heart back to his 9. If that had won the trick, he had 1 spade, 3 hearts, 1 diamond and 4 clubs.

West won ♥Q and played a diamond, but Grant won ♦A and played the top clubs, discarding his blocking ♥K.

GADGET CITY
Bill Jacobs

This gadget is for those who play the weak 1NT opening. There are plenty of us left, in this world of Standard American and 2-over-1. We play Acol, or Precision, or some other method that recognises the power of this opening bid that has such a tremendous pre-emptive effect on the opposition.

There is just one teensy-weensy drawback to the weak notrump: it can occasionally be doubled and clobbered. Weak notrumpers are not scared of the occasional penalty – “real men play a weak notrump” - but when 1NT is doubled, it would be nice to have a robust strategy to minimise the damage and/or potentially turn the heat back on the doubler.

Specifically, we need to:

- escape to a 5-card suit of responder's or opener's, or
- find a decent escape in a 4-4 or 4-3 fit, or
- play 1NT doubled when our hands are particularly flat, or
- re-clobber the opponents by threatening to play 1NT redoubled

Here's a surprisingly simple scheme of responses that achieves all these aims.

If 1NT is doubled by the next hand, responder's choices are:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Pass | “happy” to play 1NT doubled: basically any weak hand lacking a 5-card suit |
| R'dble | Bwahaha! You've chosen the wrong time to double, mister: I've got points. (You follow up with penalty doubles if they try to run from 1NT redoubled.) |
| 2-suit | 5-card suit, natural |

That's a totally natural scheme of bids for responder: run to a suit, redouble for penalties, or pass neutrally.

The gadgetry belongs to the 1NT opener should 1NT doubled be passed back to him. He can:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Pass | Usually indicates 4333 shape: given that responder is balanced, this is going to be best played in 1NT doubled. Running to a suit will probably make things worse. |
| 2-suit | 5-card suit, natural (this will usually be a minor, depending on your style for opening 1NT). |
| R'dble | Finally, the gadget. This indicates some 4432 shape, and suggests to responder that we might be better off finding a suit fit at the 2-level. |

If opener redoubles, responder now starts scrambling, bidding his lowest playable suit. This will usually be a 4-card suit, but might not be. For example, with 4=3=3=3 shape (4 spades), responder would run to 2♣. If that gets doubled, he can redouble for rescue, and opener will bid a 4-card suit of his own.

In my partnership with Ben Thompson, we have been playing the weak notrump and this escape mechanism for over 3 years, and it never lets us down. In all that time, we've suffered only one significant penalty after opening 1NT. Many's the time opener has redoubled, responder has scrambled, and the opposition is unable to nail us. It happened only just last week. Believe me, this is the way to do it.

If 1NT is passed around to fourth seat, who doubles, then the methods are similar, but the personnel are flipped. The 1NT opener, who is next to bid, can run directly to a 5-card suit, but usually he will pass, to see what responder wants to do. Now *responder* has the option of making a scrambling redouble; alternatively he can bid a 5-card minor, or he can pass out 1NT doubled.

What about if you play a strong 1NT opening? Whilst the likelihood of a strong notrump being punished is less than for a weak notrump, it can still happen. I would recommend this gadget no matter what the strength of your 1NT.

SPRING NATIONALS - SYDNEY

Congratulations to Victorians Felicity Beale, Rob van Riel and David Smith, who were runners-up in the just concluded Spring Nationals Open Teams event in Sydney.

And commiserations to VBA VP Simon Hinge, who was in a team that lost its semi-final by a heartbreaking 2 imps. (It's better to lose by 200 than 2!)



Margaret Bourke, Rob van Riel, Felicity Beale, David Smith, David Hoffman

This exciting deal from the semi-final clinched the match for the Victorians:

Dealer: E ♠ K
 Vul: E/W ♥ A109842
 ♦ AKJ76
 ♣ 7

♠ Q98	N W E S	♠ 76
♥ K		♥ QJ65
♦ Q10		♦ 5432
♣ AK65432		♣ Q109

♠ AJ105432
 ♥ 73
 ♦ 98
 ♣ J8

Both tables played 4♠ after South had opened 3♠. West led a top club, but after that the play diverged. Keep your eye on the diamond suit.

When David Smith was declarer, West switched to ♥K. David won ♥A and returned a low heart. East, who thought that declarer was ruffing that heart, played low and South's ♥7 was an unexpectedly good card! West ruffed this, and played a second top club, forcing declarer to ruff with ♠K.

Now declarer played the rare Dentist Coup: extracting the opponent's exit by cashing ♦AK before ruffing a red card. West could overruff, but that was the end of the defence – he had to play a black card for declarer to win and draw the remaining trumps.

If David had played a heart from dummy without cashing ♦AK, West would have overruffed and played a diamond. Declarer would be stuck in dummy and unable to prevent the defence from promoting another spade trick.

At the other table, the play was no less interesting. West, David Hoffman, continued with a low club at trick 2. South, Michael Whibley, ruffed and played ♦A, planning to establish the diamonds for a heart discard. This line was slated to work, but Hoffman played the ♦Q on the first round! A second coup, under the title "play the card you are known to hold or will soon be known to hold". Declarer, fatally misled, played ♥A and another heart – East knew to play a heart honour on the second round. West discarded his second diamond on the heart, got a diamond ruff and still had a trump trick remaining.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dealer: S ♠ 732
 Vul: All ♥ Q53
 ♦ J75
 ♣ 6432

N S

♠ AK
 ♥ AK764
 ♦ AK43
 ♣ AK

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

West leads ♦10. You decide to play ♦J from dummy and East graciously follows with the ♦6. Plan the play.

Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Bill Jacobs

	♠ 732				
	♥ Q53				
	♦ J75				
	♣ 6432				
♠ Q104	<table style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ J9865
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 8		♥ J1092			
♦ Q10982		♦ 6			
♣ Q1085		♣ 976			
	♠ AK				
	♥ AK764				
	♦ AK43				
	♣ AK				

How best to hold your red suit losers to at most one? You should attempt to ruff the fourth diamond in dummy, in case the suit does not divide 3-3. Achieving that is a little trickier than it might look.

The key play is right here at trick 2: you must lead a diamond off the table. If East started with a singleton diamond (West can't have a singleton diamond), you don't want him ruffing a diamond honour.

If East ruffs, you follow with your low diamond and subsequently draw trumps and claim. If East discards, or follows suit, then win ♦A, play ♥A, heart to dummy's ♥Q, and a third diamond from dummy, leaving East with the same dilemma. If he discards again, then ruff your diamond loser with dummy's last trump.

DIRECTORS COURSE ON THE MARK

Kim Frazer

The director's advanced seminar in October was very well received by the 50 plus participants who travelled from as far as Cairns to attend the 2 day event held at the VBA by the Australian Bridge Directors Association.

The presenters Laurie Kelso, Arie Guersen, Matthew McManus and Sean Mullamphy all did a great job in ensuring the participants got the most out of the weekend.

The focus of the weekend's sessions on discussing the more difficult decisions that

directors often face was well targeted. A highlight for me was Laurie Kelso and Michael Wilkinson portraying difficult bridge players for the trainees - more amusing than the comedy festival, and guaranteed to keep you awake!

During one of the sessions we discussed a particular hand which required a director's ruling on appeal. It was most interesting to find how many different opinions there were amongst both the participants and the leading directors on what ruling should be given to the particular scenario posed. It was interesting to see that often shades of grey abound, so no director should feel uncomfortable if another director disagrees with them, as on many occasions this is the case.

On behalf of all the participants, I'd like to say thanks to the four course leaders for efforts in "directing" the course.

RECENT RESULTS

Master Teams

Section A

- 1 L. Meyer, R. Greenfield, B. Kingham, M. Darling, J. Rosen
- 2 R. Gallus, S. Weisz, A. Branicki, M. Gurfinkel
- 3 S. Klofa, P. Fent, R. Stewart, A. Krolikowski

Section B

- 1 A. Murray, H. Stewart, K. Anderson, L. Anderson
- 2 M. Chrapot, L. Woolf, F. Aizen, S. Small
- 3 B. Dembo, S. Hall, A. Paul, J. Hare

Victorian Individual

- 1 Chandrdeep Chakravorty
- 2 Tad Irlich
- 3 George Gaspar

Regional Victoria GNOT Teams

Barwon: Gary Ridgway, Arthur Robbins, Roger Gillard, Piyush Jain

Northern: Michael McQueen-Thomson, Wayne Leppard, Jamie Thompson, David Thompson