

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

February 2013

Editor: Bill Jacobs

SAPONEM CAPSA
Ben Thompson



On becoming President of the Victorian Bridge Association in December last year, my wife Jenny said "congratulations" – and I thought that would be the last congratulations I would hear. Over the next few months hundreds of people, some of whom I barely know, have warmly congratulated me, and wished me the best of luck. Everyone has been very nice, which brings me to the theme of my first President's column – "Be Nice"!

I found out recently that 31% of players who give up bridge have some masterpoints, but fewer than 2. In other words, they took the trouble to spend 2-3 months learning bridge, went through months of supervised sessions, and enjoyed it enough to play some duplicates. And then stopped. How could that happen?

Research tells us that most people choose a club because it's convenient, but stay because it's friendly. I'm going to repeat that last word because it's so important. Friendly. The sad reality is that many people leave our wonderful game because they have an unpleasant experience, especially early in their bridge careers.

The solution is so simple – "be nice". When your next opponents sit down, say hello!

When they leave, say thank you! If you're playing against someone new or less experienced, try to remember that the tournament game has a lot of technical rules, and newer players don't know them. Any breach is almost certainly unintentional. Make sure they know that you know that!

But wait, there's more! If your partner makes a mistake, don't yell at them. It's unpleasant for everybody, even you. Ask yourself if you contributed – if you're really honest I bet the answer is often yes. Don't explain the opponents' mistakes to them. In my experience, the explainer usually has less idea than the explainee!

The Australian Open has just finished, so let me frame that in tennis terms. Please try to be a little more Roger Federer and Kim Clijsters, and a little less John McEnroe and Serena Williams.

Over the next few months, I'm going to be talking a lot about my vision for bridge in Victoria and how we're going to achieve it. I want to see us double our numbers from 5,000 players in 60 clubs to 10,000 players in 100 clubs. Everyone can help, and an important part is retention.

The secret sauce is ... "Be Nice".

VIC HIGHLIGHTS AT SUMMER FESTIVAL

It's hard to go past Peter Hollands and Justin Howard who won absolutely everything at the Youth Championships: pairs, teams and top qualifiers to the Australian Junior team. On the Junior national team, they will be joined by Max Henbest, Nathan Howard and Ellena Moscovsky. (I hope I have that right: the web-site poses quite an IQ test.)

From young to old, Simon Hinge won the Seniors championship, with Chris Hughes a narrow runner-up.

And Neil Ewart and Ben Kingham were winners of the Mixed Teams Championship.

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

In this month's deal, you are playing in a matchpoint duplicate, and you are the dealer, with your side vulnerable:

♠ A82 ♥ J75 ♦ AKQ95 ♣ A3

You are too strong for a 15-17 point 1NT, so you open 1♦ and the bidding continues:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♦
2♣	Pass	Pass	?

With 18 high-card points, it would be overly cautious to pass out 2♣. You could rebid your diamonds, or perhaps bid 2NT – however the bid that allows for most contingencies is a takeout double.

Just like a double of a 1-level opening, this bid shows shortage in the opponent's suit and at least 3-card support for the unbid suits. By doubling, you are catering for a possible major suit fit, whilst not leaving out the option of reaching 2♦, a notrump contract, or even a final contract of 2♣ doubled.

You double 2♣ and the auction concludes:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♦
2♣	Pass	Pass	D'ble
Pass	2♠	3♣	All pass

Partner leads ♦4, and you see:

♦4	<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ A82 ♥ J75 ♦ AKQ95 ♣ A3
N					
W E					
S					

You win the first diamond trick, as declarer follows with ♦2.

What is your plan for the defence?

You seem to have 4 cast-iron tricks in defence: 2 diamonds, ♠A and ♣A. Where might the 5th come from?

It could be a heart or club. Or perhaps declarer has 3 or more small diamonds and needs to trump those losers in dummy. What about playing ace and another club to try to stop those ruffs?

The problem with that plan is how are you going to organise to play a third round of clubs? You have to win the second round of diamonds, and don't have a third club to play. And in the unlikely event that there is an entry to partner's hand, it would be with the setting trick anyway.

A trump play at trick 2 cannot accomplish anything, except for declarer. This is not a hand where you want or need to do anything exciting; instead try to avoid playing anything that might cost a trick.

For example, you could switch to a heart at trick 2, and let nature take its course. The full deal:

♠ 97654	<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>W E</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ A82
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 103		♥ J75			
♦ 764		♦ AKQ95			
♣ J92		♣ A3			
		♠ Q3			
		♥ AKQ			
		♦ 1032			
		♣ K10854			

In the fullness of time, declarer will lose a trick to partner's ♣J, for down 1.

Points to remember:

- The humble takeout double can appear in all sorts of guises: the trick is to recognise the opportunity when it comes up.

Your RHO missed an opportunity to make life more difficult for you on this deal. He would have done better to raise 2♣ to 3♣ directly. That would have left you in a

pickle. If you make a takeout double of 3♣ (which is what I would have tried), that will lead to a 3♠ contract, and it would have been your side that takes the minus score on this deal.

- Your heart switch at trick 2 was an example of passive defence: a play that doesn't achieve anything in particular, but simply avoids giving away a trick. Sometimes the right defence is to do nothing.



RECENT RESULTS

Mixed-Unmixed Pairs

- J. Masters – T. Cowie
- S. Gerdan – M. Balint
- B. Lindsay – G. Lovrecz

VBA Summer Congress

Swiss Pairs

- J. Fust – M. Tildseley
- B. Geyer – M. Willcox
- L. Meyer – P. Moritz

Swiss Teams

- J. Fust, M. Tildseley, E. Hardy, L. Gold
- D. Thompson, J. Thomspson, R. Drew, E. Moskovsky
- R. Livingston, P. Hill, S. Collins, Q. van Abbe

Christmas Teams

- P. Hollands, L. Ginnan, E. Caplan, J. Thompson, B. Thompson, W. Jacobs
- G. Kilvington, G. Chettle, D. Smart, F. Beale, S. Henbest, R. van Riel
- = A. Krolikowski, R. Stewart, K. Chan, P. Fent, S. Klofa
- = A. Hegedus, A. Mill, P. Moritz, L. Meyer

Ailsa Tandy Eclectic Pairs

Butler

- H. Snashall – R. Berlinski
- K. Muntz – J. Magee
- M. Adams – V. Daly

Matchpoints

- H. Snashall – R. Berlinski
- A. Gedge – D. Wilson
- F. Halmos – J. Hall

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dlr: West ♠ 10974
 Vul: N/S ♥ A6
 ♦ 742
 ♣ Q1082

N	♠ Q
W	♥ Q108752
E	♦ 9865
S	♣ 95

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

* a top heart

Partner leads ♥K, won in dummy. Next comes two rounds of trumps, partner following once with ♦10, then discarding ♣3. Declarer's ♣K is won by partner, who returns ♥9 to your ♥Q.

What next?

Problem 2:

Dlr: East ♠ AK10942
 Vul: nil ♥ -
 ♦ 63
 ♣ A9632

N	♠ Q8
W	♥ K75
E	♦ KQ1087
S	♣ KQ8

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

Partner leads ♦2 and your ♦Q is won by ♦A. Declarer plays ♥A then ♥Q which you win. Things look a bit desperate.

What to do?

Solutions over page.

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS

Ian McCance

Problem 1

Dir: West		♠ 10974			
Vul: N/S		♥ A6			
		♦ 742			
		♣ Q1082			
♠ J8532	N	♠ Q	E	♥ Q108752	
♥ K9	W	♦ 9865	S	♠ 95	
♦ 10	S	♠ AK6			
♣ AJ643		♥ J43			
		♦ AKQJ3			
		♣ K7			

With 2 tricks already won, pause to consider South's hand-shape. Five diamonds, and probably only 3 spades (he looked for no-trump first, and partner doubled 4♠). Unless partner has a top spade you have an urgent problem. This contract will succeed if declarer can make 2 tricks in clubs. (2+2+5+2). If declarer's remaining 5 cards are 2 hearts and 3 clubs there is no hope since a finesse in clubs will succeed, but 2 clubs and ♥Jxx is more likely (from the probe for no-trump, and partner's high lead). The club finesse will still be on, also finishing the reds would squeeze partner. You must return a club NOW, removing the entry while you can still trump a club.

Problem 2

Dir: East		♠ AK10942			
Vul: nil		♥ -			
		♦ 63			
		♣ A9632			
♠ J7653	N	♠ Q8	E	♥ K75	
♥ 1083	W	♦ KQ1087	S	♠ KQ8	
♦ J92	S	♠ -			
♣ 75		♥ AQJ9642			
		♦ A54			
		♣ J104			

South must have started with 7 hearts, so will come to 10 tricks unless you can find 3 more in the red suits. Your only hope is that the hidden diamonds are now 2-2. (Your style is to lead low from any 3 in this situation), and also that partner has ♦J and a promotable ♥10. For a promotion you would

need to be on lead after the third diamond trick. So the key play is a low diamond next. Partner will win and return one, leaving you on lead. An alternative is to play ♦10 after ♥K.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

AFFILIATED CLUB NEWS

Waverley Bridge Club is conducting a 6-week series of intermediate lessons from Saturday February 16 to March 23, classes running from 9:30 am to noon. The cost is \$80 (or \$15 per lesson, \$17 for non-members), and each class will contain thorough notes, quizzes and hand play.

Topics covered will include:

- Bidding after NT openings (2 weeks)
- Overcalls and competitive bidding
- Bidding strong hands
- Pre-empt
- Play of the hand

For more information and application forms contact Mary on 9807 6502 or email office@waverleybridgeclub.com.au.

Paynesville Bridge Club installed its first Life Member in a surprise ceremony held at the club's Christmas Lunch on December 12. Helen Cantwell, pictured receiving her award from Duncan Grant, Manager of the Paynesville branch of Bendigo Bank, has given 23 years of continuous service to the club in various roles ranging from Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Committee Member and player. Dot Lawrence (left) is Helen's regular playing partner and the pair also won "Best 2012 Partnership".



PANACHE - XXIV
Ben Thompson

This month's hand definitely comes with a safety warning. Don't try at home, or don't show to small children, or keep the bottle locked away in a high cupboard. Have a look at Ishmael Del'Monte, sitting South, in action late in the last set of the recent National Open Teams final, which his team won in a very impressive 4-handed effort.

Dir: West ♠ 42
 Vul: All ♥ J96
 ♦ KJ984
 ♣ K93

♠ AJ53	N	♠ Q109876
♥ 108	W E	♥ 7542
♦ Q653	S	♦ 2
♣ AJ6		♣ 54

♠ K
 ♥ AKQ3
 ♦ A107
 ♣ Q10872

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

Are you scrabbling around looking for the little spade that must be with the king in Ish's hand? Lots of BBO spectators were.

West led ♠3. Ish won his ♠K, picked up the diamond suit and ended with 10 tricks. Thanks for coming, as they say.

How did Ish find that 2NT bid? Well, he knows that his partner has a good diamond suit, probably 5 of them, to pass out 1♦X. 5 diamond tricks, plus 3 heart tricks is 8. And there's obvious potential for a 9th trick (eg a spade stopper, or the ♥J, or a 6th diamond). So it looks like 3NT should have 9 tricks, but there's just one little eensy teensy problem.

The spade stopper. And West is very likely to lead one because we just dumped on his own diamond suit.

Now, East passed originally, so almost all of the opposition points are going to be with West. In particular, would East really pass a 1♦ opening with long spades headed by the ace? Almost certainly not.

If West has ♠A, will he lead it? Almost certainly not. He's much more likely to lead a low one to partner's (imagined) king and hope to pick up our Qxx. And couldn't our partner have ♠A, or ♠Q, or even ♠Jxx?

Ish saw how the play was likely to go, and backed his judgment with 2NT. Only 2NT, rather than 3NT just in case partner had something like ♦QJxxxx and out, and needed to bail in 3♦. Very considerate.

The other room played in 4♣ making 11 tricks, giving 10 imps to Ish's team.

Expert aside: East should really respond 1♠. The books say you need 6 points to respond, but when you have the boss suit, you should try to get it on the table if you can. East in the other room did respond 1♠, making it way too hard for N/S to bid 3NT, or even 5♣.

The takeaway

Sometimes most of a stopper (usually Qx, but sometimes stiff king or even Jxx) is enough. But don't forget the first part of the equation – you need good chances for 9 fast tricks in 3NT **before** you start playing fast and loose with the stoppers. If you have to give the defence a second chance to beat you, they'll probably take it!

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dealer: W ♠ AK832
 Vul: All ♥ 65
 ♦ AK764
 ♣ 6

N
S

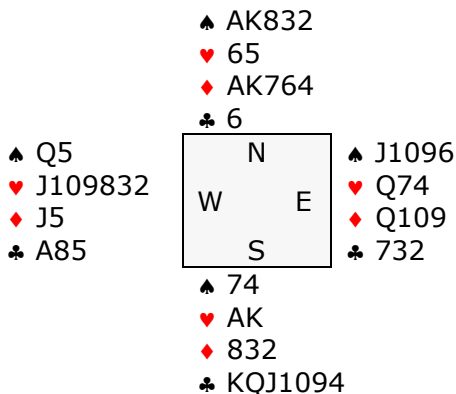
♠ 74
 ♥ AK
 ♦ 832
 ♣ KQJ1094

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

* weak-two opening
 ** surfeit of Christmas eggnog

West leads ♥J. Your play. Solution over page.

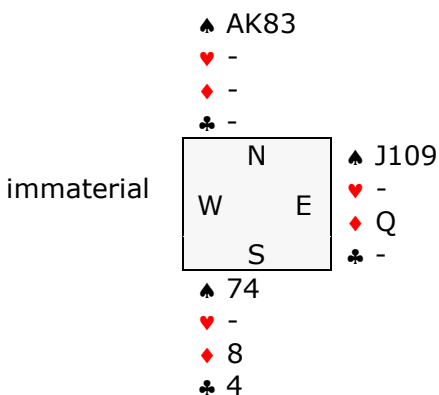
THE TWELFTH TRICK
Bill Jacobs



You have 11 tricks (5 clubs and three sets of ace-king) and one certain loser in the ♣A. The twelfth trick can only come from a squeeze in spades and diamonds – the two suits in which you hold threat cards.

Who is the squeezee? It will have to be East, as West cannot have enough cards in spades and diamonds, given the weak two opening. This presents a problem, as East will be discarding after dummy when you run the club suit.

You must organise your ♦8 as a threat card. The only hope for the contract is to cash the ♦AK at tricks 2 and 3 (technically a Vienna Coup) and then play on clubs. You hope that West wins ♣A and is out of diamonds. Win the heart return and run the clubs. When the last club is cashed, as in the diagram below, East is squeezed:



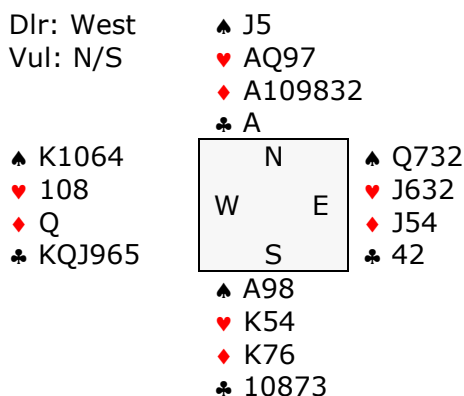
It looks weird to establish your opponents' diamond trick before knocking out the ♣A, but if the defence takes the setting trick in diamonds when in with ♣A, you could never have made the contract anyway.

BRIDGE FROM HERE AND THERE
Ian McCance

Bereft of my usual occupation I am embarking on a new project, picking hands for presentation and comment from all over the place - hence my title. If the editor (and readers) can tolerate it, an occasional effort.

Choice of Contracts

This deal is from session 5 of the recent Victorian Pennant (IMP scoring). It is rotated for convenience.



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

* good raise

The deal was played 24 times: seven times in a diamond partial, ten times in 5♦, once in 4♥ from South and six times in 3NT (once North, five times South).

A 5♦ contract should pose no problem. On the face of it there are 3 possible losers: one spade, the last heart and a trump. The trump loser could be avoided by cashing ♦A on the first round, then taking a "restricted choice" finesse. However there is no need for this, declarer can simply play off the top two trumps, then use dummy's last diamond to trump that fourth heart. One declarer went down.

4♥ is an interesting contract. Declarer can afford to guess wrong in both hearts and diamonds and still succeed (because East runs out of clubs) provided that only two trumps (♥A, ♥K) are taken before starting on

diamonds. This is because a return path to hand is required if, later, diamonds are blocked or East has to return a spade.

A major point of interest is in the play in 3NT. If North declares, a club lead leaves the contract dependent on a correct view in diamonds. 3NT from South should fail only if East holds both missing diamond pictures (guarded), hence a sure entry. After the ♣K is led, South has a second stopper unless East can play a club. Declarer, who can afford to invest an overtrick for safety's sake, should keep East off lead by finessing a diamond into West. This is determined not primarily by "restricted choice" but is a classical "avoidance" play.

Perhaps the best line is to play a low diamond from dummy at trick 2, intending to play ♦6 from hand, since this would pick up against all 4 diamonds in West.

In the event, 3NT played from North failed and two of five failed from South.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

GADGET CITY Bill Jacobs

Suppose you hold:

♠ AQ1043 ♥ 4 ♦ KQ32 ♣ AQ2

You open 1♠ and partner responds 1NT. What now?

Nothing fits. A jump to 3♦ is forcing, and whilst it could work out, it could equally get you into a mess at a high level. Conversely, a non-forcing 2♦ rebid is too little. Compromising with a non-forcing but invitational 2NT has problems of its own.

Enter ...

The Gazzilli Convention

Playing Gazzilli, you rebid 2♣. This shows one of two types of hand:

11-16, with spades and clubs, or
17+, any distribution

After 2♣, responder bids 2♦ with any hand in the maximum range (about 8-9 points); with minimum values, responder makes a different natural bid – often a return to opener's first suit.

Finally, after 1♠ - 1NT - 2♣ - 2♦, opener returns to 2♠ to show the spades+clubs minimum opener, or makes a different natural bid to show 17+ points (the partnership is now in a game-force).

A pleasant by-product of Gazzilli is that opener's jump rebids show constructive values – about 15-16 points – and good distribution. For example, the auction 1♠ - 1NT - 3♦ depicts at least 5-5 shape, 15-16 points, and is non-forcing.

Gazzilli is an extremely popular convention in Europe – it is an Italian invention, as are so many gadgets in town - but it does come with some downsides. To start with, a final contract of 2♣ is no longer possible, nor can you end up in 2♦ after the 2♣ rebid. Nevertheless, most experts consider that the gains accrued with the improved definition of opener's strong hands far outweigh the losses.

There are many different ways to play Gazzilli, and it can also be adapted to a system (such as 2/1) where 1NT is a forcing response. Some of these adaptations come under different names, for example Bart and Cole.

Gazzilli and its cousins should come in plain packaging with a Government health warning attached. It is not something that a casual partnership should use. There are many subtle aspects to the gadget and these require plenty of discussion and practice. I play the convention myself: it's definitely not suitable for children.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

Graduate Master	Peter Boone Aviva Stillman
Club Master	Albert Aron Liesl Harmsel Nina Zurek
Local Master	Jill Stone
**Local Master	Stephen Rogers
**National Master	Lorraine Parker
Bronze Life Master	Ralph Berlinski
Gold Life Master	Robert Drew

COUNCIL NEWS

2013 VBA Council

Ben Thompson was elected as President of the VBA at the AGM held at the clubrooms on 4 December 2012. The meeting thanked the out-going President, Mrs Jeannette Collins, for her outstanding work in the past several years as President. Neil Ewart was re-elected as Treasurer whilst Kim Frazer was also re-elected as secretary.

Other 2012 councillors Rob Stewart, Phill Fent and Jenny Thompson were also re-elected, along with new councillors David Morgan, Ralph Berlinski and Terri Kay. As per the Articles of Association, the Presidents of the three regional associations, Eastern, Northern & Western, have also been invited to join the council, and we trust with the advent of meeting participation via Skype, participation will now be easier on the regional representatives.

The AGM also considered some motions to change the Articles of Association, however after much discussion the proposer agreed to withdraw these motions due to a technical question on the process. We expect these motions to be proposed to members at a later date, and will keep members informed on this matter. The council has had its first planning day in January, and members will see and hear more about the initiatives coming out of this over the coming months.

Club Notices available on Website

The VBA has recently introduced a section on its website for posting notices and other information sent to club secretaries. The new area can be found under VBA Documents/Club Notices. From 2013, all relevant documents sent to club secretaries will be posted to this area as an archival reference. The VBA Bulletin, Council Meeting Minutes, Match & Tournament Regulations as well as other useful information can also be found under various headings on the VBA Documents page. Our thanks go to Chris Heesom from Paynesville Bridge Club for suggesting this addition to the website.



VBA COUNCILLOR PROFILE ROB STEWART

Rob Stewart has been working diligently to improve the facilities of the Murrumbreena clubrooms since he joined the VBA Council at the end of 2011.



Rob describes himself as having started playing bridge a "long time ago" having learnt the game by working through Hoyle's book of Card Games. He began playing with his brother, and has since played with other well-known faces around Victorian Bridge. One of his current partners describes him as a great partner to have, especially in a long tournament, because even though he is an engineer, he is extraordinarily affable, and difficult to anger.

Hardly a day goes by that Rob isn't working on something to make our premises more attractive, and the facilities more amenable. Our air-conditioning is markedly improved, thanks to Rob and Stan Klofa's input.

In the playing area, no doubt everyone has noticed the installation of the Computer Display Screens, enabling better and more easily recognisable information during events. Behind the scenes in the director's area, there have also been changes to enable better management of data during play. These changes are due to Rob's work.

Even the cleaner, more efficient kitchen started with Rob's influence when he co-opted his wife and other helpers to come and help him with a big spring cleaning effort!

Since we have lost Blaine Howe as webmaster, it has been up to Rob to keep the VBA website running. Rob is a retired electronic engineer, so is not trained as a webmaster, but he has put in many hours to get an understanding of our website's operations, and has also been assisting the other clubs that used to have Blaine's help with their website administration.

Thanks for your efforts Rob, from all of us at the VBA.