

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

April 2016

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



Autumn has definitely arrived. Footy, warm clothes and lots of bridge selection events!

The Victorian Open Team for the Interstate championships was selected a few weeks ago, and by a pairs selection event (rather than teams) for the first time in about 25 years. Congratulations to Jamie Ebery – Kim Frazer, Peter Hollands – Christopher Leach, and Chen Ding – John Yang. Jamie and Peter are past Interstate champions while the other four players are all making their Interstate debut. I played my first Interstate match sitting in the wrong direction; I'm sure this year's debutants will manage much better!

We're using the same pairs format for selecting our Seniors and Womens teams. Entries for the Seniors playoff close the day this bulletin comes out; as I write I can already see the potential for a strong team in there. The Women playoff is held a week later (we hold our playoffs separately to give you as much chance as possible to make a team). If you're eligible (check the VBA website), think about having a go – the Interstate really is good fun. Best of luck to everyone contesting those playoffs.

All of the Australian teams for the world championships in Poland in September have now been selected. I'm absolutely delighted to say that my wife Jenny has been selected as non-playing captain of the Australian Women's team.



NEWS FROM THE VBA COUNCIL

State-wide Congress Disciplinary and Ethics Regulations

The VBA Council at its March meeting ratified the Congress Disciplinary and Ethics Regulations, which will apply to all Victorian Congresses events in Victoria. The VBA Council has received broad support from clubs over the implementation of a state-wide Disciplinary and Ethics Committee. These regulations are designed to deal with the small number of complaints received from players about behavioural and/or ethical issues at congress events to make play at congresses more enjoyable for everyone. The regulations are not intended to replace the powers of the Congress Director.

The Committee will comprise up to 12 representatives from Victorian clubs and be re-elected annually. Nomination forms for the committee and further information will be forwarded to club secretaries this week, and placed on the VBA website. We anticipate the regulations will take effect from July 1st from which date all clubs running congress events will be expected to comply with any rulings from the committee.

The VBA council thanks the sub-committee of Helen McAdam (Traralgon), Rob Quirk (Waverley), Richard Giles (Ballarat), Bill Jacobs (VBA) and Graham Morris (Moonee Valley) for their efforts in developing the regulations.

FOR STARTERS

You hold in fourth seat, no one vulnerable:

♠ K1084 ♥ 62 ♦ A1087 ♣ AQ9

The auction starts as follows:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
Pass	Pass	1♥	?

What do you bid?

You have a very respectable hand but no 5-card suit to bid. You can however make a takeout double. The requirements for this bid are:

- Opening strength
- At most 2 cards in the opponent's suit
- At least 3 cards in every other suit

and this hand meets them. Doubling here allows you to compete for the contract.

You try the double, but partner remains steadfastly silent as the auction concludes:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
Pass	Pass	1♥	D'ble
2♥	Pass	4♥	All pass

It's your opening lead. What's your poison?

It's a poisonous choice indeed. Every suit is wrong. So barring the option of making a lead in some new green suit, you are going to have to lead the suit that is least wrong.

The 'wrongest' suit is clearly clubs. You want to retain the ace and the queen to trap declarer's hypothetical king. If you chose a club, go directly to Jail, do not pass Go, do not collect \$200.

Almost as bad is a diamond lead. Indeed against a suit contract, it is rarely right to lead from a suit containing the ace, unless it is backed up by the king, or unless partner has bid the suit. If you lead a low one, there is a risk that either declarer or dummy has a singleton, in which case you lose your ace. And if you lead the ace itself, there is a risk that you are giving a free trick to an opponent's king.

Many would lead a low spade, but the modern view is that it is a poor choice. Whenever I lead from a king these days, it seems that declarer always wins an undeserved trick with the queen, whether it is in dummy or declarer's hand.

That leaves a trump. It's an uninspiring lead, and has the downside of doing the work of declarer, who usually wants to draw trumps at the start. But it is a relatively safe choice: it will not give declarer a trick that he couldn't have taken himself.

You decide to lead a trump, and see this:

♠ A62	
♥ 543	
♦ K6542	
♣ 84	
♠ K1084	N
♥ 62	W E
♦ A1087	S
♣ AQ9	

Partner puts in the ♥10, and declarer immediately draws three rounds with the ace, king and queen. What do you discard?

More unpleasantness. You'd like to keep all your cards, but that is not an option. The one suit you must keep is diamonds, because dummy's 5-card diamond suit is a threat.

You choose to discard a low spade. Partner follows to the third round of hearts, and now declarer promptly leads ♦3.

You knew that was going to happen. This hand is one nightmare after another. Should you grab your ace (in case declarer started with a singleton) or play it cool and duck?

Again there is no 100% answer, but consider this. If declarer has an honour remaining, in particular the queen, you will want to play low here, so that you can later trap declarer's queen with your ace. And if declarer started with a singleton? Then you will have lost the ace if you play low. But, suppose you had taken the ace. That means that declarer can take a discard on the established king. Most of the time, it will work out to the same thing. On that basis, it is usually correct to play low in this situation.

You do indeed play low, and declarer wins dummy's king as partner follows with the 9. He plays another diamond from dummy, partner follows with the jack, declarer plays the queen and you win with the ace.

Now what?

You have a very safe play here: a winning diamond. Dummy's diamonds are impotent: declarer has only one entry remaining, and cannot establish the suit.

Declarer trumps your diamond, flails around for a time, but eventually has to concede down one, losing a diamond, a spade and two clubs. The full deal:

	♠ A62										
	♥ 543										
	♦ K6542										
	♣ 84										
♠ K1084	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 100px;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 75
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 62		♥ 1087									
♦ A1087		♦ J9									
♣ AQ9		♣ 1076532									
	♠ QJ93										
	♥ AKQJ9										
	♦ Q3										
	♣ KJ										

Your classical 'do nothing' defence has been too much for him. If at any point in the play, you had got busy and attacked in a suit, declarer would have made the contract.

Points to remember:

- The takeout double: an overcaller's often forgotten friend.
- Whilst an opening lead of a trump is not something you usually do, it can nevertheless be the indicated choice. The most common scenario is when any other suit is worse.
- It is a well-known adage that aces are meant to beat kings, kings are meant to beat queens and so on. On this deal, avoiding playing the diamond ace "on thin air" prevented declarer from making more than one trick in clubs.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

When to make a takeout double

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1♦	?

The takeout double is one of the most important but underutilized tools in a player's kitbag. It can be used in a variety of auctions and asks partner to bid a new suit, because the doubler has some length in those suits.

In this exercise, we will practise it in its most elemental form: when an opponent has opened one of a suit. In this scenario, the takeout double can be bid on hands of two different types.

The Type A takeout double is a hand of opening strength, shortage in the opponent's suit and with at least 3 cards in every other suit. This is the form we saw in "For Starters".

Type B takeout doubles are hands of at least 17 HCP, not suitable for a 1NT overcall. You double with such hands because you are too strong to make a simple overcall in a suit: there is too greater risk that partner would pass such an overcall when a game contract is available. Type B doublers follow up their initial double with a bid in their long suit, assuming partner has not responded in that suit. This is how such doubles are distinguished from Type A doubles.

Decide whether you have a Type A double, a Type B double or Something Else with the following hands:

- (a) ♠ K754 ♥ 865 ♦ A3 ♣ AQJ8
- (b) ♠ K75 ♥ 65 ♦ AQJ1053 ♣ K6
- (c) ♠ K75 ♥ Q865 ♦ 4 ♣ AQJ106
- (d) ♠ AQ975 ♥ K106 ♦ 4 ♣ K865
- (e) ♠ AK975 ♥ K6 ♦ A943 ♣ A6
- (f) ♠ K75 ♥ Q86 ♦ AQ ♣ AQ1086

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1♦	?

(a) ♠ K754 ♥ 865 ♦ A3 ♣ AQJ8

D'ble. The classic Type A double. Opening strength – check. Short in diamonds – check. At least 3 cards in every other suit – check.

(b) ♠ K75 ♥ 65 ♦ AQJ1053 ♣ K6

Pass. This happens every now and then. RHO opens with the bid (often 1♣ or 1♦) that you were going to make yourself. You would like to make a penalty double, but that is now how bridge is played. Instead, play it cool and pass: perhaps you will be able to bid diamonds (naturally!) later in the auction.

(c) ♠ K75 ♥ Q865 ♦ 4 ♣ AQJ106

D'ble. You could overcall 2♣ legitimately, but the majors is where the money is. It's far more important to look for a major suit fit (particularly as a major can be more easily used to outbid their diamonds), and that is what a takeout double achieves.

(d) ♠ AQ975 ♥ K106 ♦ 4 ♣ K865

1♠. It meets the requirements for a double, but when you have a decent 5-card *major*, you should prefer to bid it directly. Otherwise you won't be able to ever show it.

(e) ♠ AK975 ♥ K6 ♦ A943 ♣ A6

D'ble. The type 2 double. You are too strong to merely overcall 1♠, which has an upper strength limit of about 16 HCP. Instead double, and then when partner inevitably bids hearts or clubs, bid your spade suit. That tells partner that you have a 5+ card spade suit, and were too strong to overcall 1♠ in the first place.

(f) ♠ K75 ♥ Q86 ♦ AQ ♣ AQ1086

1NT. A double is 'legal', but this hand has two diamond stoppers, and not a huge interest in the majors. It's a perfect 1NT overcall, showing about 16-18 HCP with balanced distribution.

CONGRESS RESULTS**Rye Beach Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 R. Stewart – A. Czapnik
- 2 R. Kingham – G. Johnson
- 3 A. Hegedus – A. Mill

Swiss Teams

- 1 G. Ghali, V. Zhang, J. Yang, M. Zhang
- 2 R. Stewart, P. Fent, J. Magee, T. Strong
- 3 C. Arul, K. French, G. Johnson, D. Middleton

Gardenvale Easter Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 S. Gluck – B. Kingham
- 2 R. O'Dell – M. Allison
- 3 A. Edwards – W. Scripps

Swiss Teams

- 1 A. Maluish, A. Mill, A. Hegedus, J. Howard
- 2 S. Klofa, M. Gurfinkiel, D. Harley, A. St Clair
- 3 S. Ozenir, M. Yuill, B. A'Beckett, M. Allison

Matchpoint Swiss Pairs

- 1 S. Gerdan – J. Eddie
- 2 P. Fent – R. Stewart
- 3 M. Darling – A. Mill

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 5 (March 5)*

- 3 H. Saunders – D. Nicol (Berwick)

Event 6 (March 20)

- 1 D. Ware – K. Haebich (Yarrawonga)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS**Frankston Congress**

Sunday 10th April, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: St Francis Xavier Centre
Cnr Baxter and Davey Streets
Frankston (Melway 102 D3)

Contact: Yvonne Minton, 0418 348 264

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Whittlesea Congress

Sunday 17th April, 10 am: Matchpoint Pairs

Venue: Whittlesea Community Centre
57-61 Laurel St
Whittlesea (Melway 246 H9)

Contact: Lyndall Shaw, 0428 601 111

Enter: <http://www.whittlesea.bridgeaustralia.org>

VBA ANZAC Day Swiss Pairs

Monday 25th April, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue: VBA
131 Poath Rd
Murrumbena

Contact: Cathie Lachman, 9530 9006

Enter: <http://vba.asn.au>

Bayside Congress

Saturday 30th April, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
Sunday 1st May, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: Beaumaris Bowls Club
Martin St
Beaumaris

Contact: Jan Clyne, 0418 556 382

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

NATIONAL RESULTS

Some excellent results were obtained by Victorians at the recent Gold Coast Congress:

Open teams:

2 Leigh Gold

Seniors teams:

1 Chris Hughes

Restricted teams:

2 Bob Coker, Ian Wright, Faye Symons, Denis Upsall

STATE RESULTS

Victorian Mixed Teams

- 1 B. Thompson, W. Jacobs, J. Thompson, E. Caplan
- 2 N. Ewart, J. Magee, T. Strong, D. Beckett
- 3 S. Ozenir, E. Samuel, C. Ding, M. Zhang

TIP OF THE MONTH

You hold your usual hand:

♠ J53 ♥ 632 ♦ J864 ♣ Q105

No one is vulnerable, LHO is the dealer, and passes, then your partner opens 2NT, showing a balanced hand and 20-22 HCP.

Next hand passes. Simple arithmetic tells you that your combined assets are 24-26 HCP, so you may or may not have enough strength to make 3NT. Should you bid it?

Here's this month's tip:

Hands do not play well when one-sided in strength

In other words, a very strong hand opposite a very weak hand has problems in the declarer play.

The reason is that the very weak hand lacks entries: there will be problems of communications. This has two effects: first, you might be able to establish winners in the weak hand, but will you have an entry to take them? And second, there might be a finesse you want to take through RHO, but will you have the necessary entry to try it?

The bottom line is: 12 opposite 12 is a lot better than 20 opposite 4!

So in the example problem, I would pass 2NT and hope partner makes it. The hand will probably be difficult to play.

Conversely let's boost the hand a little:

♠ J53 ♥ 632 ♦ AJ86 ♣ Q105

We've added an ace, to bring it up to 8 HCP; the rest of the hand is identical. This time, your LHO opens 2♥, a weak two, and partner overcalls 2NT, showing 16-18 HCP.

The maths is identical: your side has a combined total of 24-26 HCP. But this time, it's worth bidding 3NT. There's a far better chance of being able to establish and cash winners in your diamond suit. And there is a cast-iron entry to dummy, which may be helpful if partner wants to take a finesse, for example through the hearts of the weak-two opener.

**2016 VICTOR CHAMPION CUP
FESTIVAL of BRIDGE**

THURSDAY 9TH JUNE – MONDAY 13TH JUNE 2016
 Bayview Eden Hotel: 6 Queens Road, Melbourne Victoria

SWISS PAIRS EVENTS - 10.30AM START
 WOMENS, SENIORS, OPEN, RESTRICTED, AND <200 MP 9TH JUNE - 10TH JUNE

SWISS TEAMS - 10AM START
 OPEN & RESTRICTED 11TH JUNE – 13TH JUNE

NEW FOR 2016 - PRIZES IN ALL EVENTS

An ABF Gold Point and Playoff Qualifying Points Event
 For more details and to enter visit the website:
www.abfevents.com.au/events/vcc/2016/

SPONSORED BY

VICTORIAN OPEN TEAM PLAYOFFS
Kim Frazer

Held on the weekend of 19th and 20th March, the playoffs this year were decided by a cross-imped Pairs format of 11 x 10 board rounds - a departure from recent years of team's based trials.

Playing with partner Jamie Ebery, we headed into round 4 after lunch on day 1 with two wins and a loss. Our opponents here were David Beckett and Neil Ewart who are a well established pair and who qualified first for the trials. Board 7 of the round was one of our favourite hands of the playoffs.

♠ 96 ♥ AKQJ6 ♦ KQ5 ♣ A62	<table border="1" style="width: 80px; height: 80px; border-collapse: collapse; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W	E			S		♠ A103 ♥ 754 ♦ A10 ♣ KQJ98
N											
W	E										
	S										

West	East
<i>Frazer</i>	<i>Ebery</i>
2♦	2NT
3NT	4♣
4♠	5♣
5♠	7NT
Pass	

I opened a multi-2♦, upgrading my 19-count to 20 with the 5-card heart suit, which our methods allow.

When I showed the 20-22 HCP with 3NT, Jamie asked for aces and kings with 4♣ and 5♣. After much thought, and despite missing a king, he bid 7NT, which gained us 14imps for the board. At worst it was on a finesse, but sometimes making teams involves a little

risk! When my hand hit the table, it was simply a claim at trick 1, identifying the need to finesse the club if they broke 5-0 (which they did.)

For me to beat the Ewart - Beckett combination was a real confidence booster. We finished Day 1 in 4th position having won 5 out of 6 matches - losing only to John Yang and Chen Ding who played solidly throughout the event and eventually placed 3rd.

I felt our draw for Day 2 was always going to be tough as we played the two sponsor/pro pairs - sponsor/pros are always dangerous as the pro can often make things happen - and also Robbie Van Riel - Felicity Beale; Andrzej Krolikowski - Michael Gurfunkiel and Arthur Robbins - Doug Newlands (the leaders after Day 1).

After a win in our first match we came up against van Riel - Beale. Sometimes you just get clobbered by your system as happened here on Board 16.

Dir: West		♠ 3			
Vul: E/W		♥ Q10			
		♦ J94			
		♣ QJ105432			
♠ A75					♠ J1086
♥ K987					♥ J32
♦ AK5					♦ 7632
♣ 986					♣ A7

N		
W	E	
	S	

♠ KQ942			
♥ A654			
♦ Q108			
♣ K			

West	North	East	South
<i>Beale</i>	<i>Ebery</i>	<i>van Riel</i>	<i>Frazer</i>
1NT	Pass	Pass	D'ble
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Beale opened an Acol 1NT and after two passes to me in the pass-out seat, I doubled which for us shows the top of the opponents' 1NT range - i.e. 14+. This was passed out.

Partner kicked off with the ♣Q won in East. A low heart to the king and a heart back towards the jack won by partner's queen. Declarer now found out the bad news about the clubs eventually going four off for plus 1,100 and 14imps for us.

In the penultimate round we faced the pairing of Peter Hollands and Christopher Leach. Holland - Leach were the only other pairing to beat us and finished the playoffs in 2nd place. When I said earlier Pros could be dangerous, this board illustrates why.

Dir: South ♠ 1043
 Vul: E/W ♥ AJ1085
 ♦ 63
 ♣ QJ7

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K ♠ AQ987
 ♥ 72 ♥ 643
 ♦ AQ1042 ♦ KJ8
 ♣ K10543 ♣ A6

♠ J652
 ♥ KQ9
 ♦ 975
 ♣ 982

West	North	East	South
Frazer	Hollands	Ebery	Leach
			Pass
1♦	2♥	D'ble	3♥
Pass	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♦	All pass

My 1♦ opening showed a 5-card suit, and Hollands threw in a weak 2♥ bid. Jamie doubled, as 2♠ by him would be non-forcing. His subsequent 3♠ was game-forcing, and we landed in 5♦.

The defence took the first two heart tricks and I ruffed the 3rd heart. Perhaps I should have not drawn any trumps and just cross ruffed the hand out since my trumps were so good. But I didn't come up with this line at the time, so I drew two rounds of trumps, and now to make 5♦ I have to either ruff one club if clubs are 3-3 or ruff the spades good while managing entries and all the time I think North has a shortage somewhere for the heart bid. As it turned out any line I took would have succeeded, but in the heat of battle sometimes the obvious doesn't always seem so.

At the end of this round, we were locked for first place, however the battle for second and third was still open. Robbins - Newlands and Krolkowski - Gurfunkiel both of whom had been competitive throughout the event had strong chances for a spot however both had losses in the last round.

At the conclusion of the playoffs, Victoria has four new state team representatives with only Hollands and Ebery previously playing for Victoria in the Open team. All of us are very excited by the opportunity.

Final placings were:

Kim Frazer - Jamie Ebery	162.53
Peter Hollands - Christopher Leach	131.47
Chen Ding - John Yang	129.22

Substitutes

Please help! The number of un-notified substitutes or over- (or under-) weight substitutes is increasing.

The VBA's policy concerning substitutes is designed to ensure the integrity of events is maintained.

All substitutions are required to be notified in advance to Laurie Kelso or the Match and Tournament Committee. Notice on the day of an event is acceptable when there is an emergency. Please note that continued failure to notify may result in a disciplinary penalty being imposed.

All substitutes should be of comparable strength. The VBA's Tournament Regulations require a penalty to be imposed when a substitute is noticeably better than the player they are replacing.

Withdrawals

Please help! The number of players or teams withdrawing from events or not continuing to the next stage of an event is increasing.

Withdrawals without cause are disruptive. They require the director to reorganise an event or find replacement players at very short notice. They take away the pleasure of other players.

Please note that the VBA's Tournament Regulations provide that a player or team that withdraws from an event or fails to proceed to the next stage of an event without cause will be required to justify their actions. If the explanation is unsatisfactory then the player or team can be barred from competing in the same event the following year.

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Jillian Griffith Kooyong
Mary Stoney RACV

*State

Elizabeth Wilby Northern

Correction

In the February bulletin, the leading congress player for the Melbourne Bridge Centre was incorrectly reported. It was in fact Peter Cork and Jane Reynolds, each with 12.3 VQPs.

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

There are many ways to learn about bridge. Here are some activities available in the coming months for Victorian bridge players or potential bridge players.

Beginners Lessons



Beginner Lessons 2016

Love a challenge? Like to have fun?

BEGINNER'S BRIDGE LESSONS

(the world's most popular mind sport)

A 1 day course will be held on

Sunday 10th April 2016 and

Saturday 4th June 2016

131 Poath Road, Murrumbidgee

Cost \$40 per person - Lunch included - 10.30am to 4.00 pm

Registrations essential - clachman@vba.asn.au or 9530-9006

Whittlesea Bridge Club is offering a series of *free* beginner's lessons over 6 weeks, commencing Monday 4th April, from 10 am to 12 pm.

The venue is Whittlesea Bowls Club, 101A Church St, Whittlesea (plenty of free parking).

For more details, ring Lyndall Shaw on 0428 601 111, or email lyndallshaw@bigpond.com.

Improve Your Bridge

Waverley Bridge Club runs regular "Improvers Workshops" on Saturday mornings from 9:30 am to 12 pm. Cost is \$17 per lesson, or \$90 for all six.

All lessons are taught by Mary Elson, the 2014 Victorian Bridge Teacher of the Year.

April 23: Takeout doubles in depth
April 30: Competitive bidding
May 7: Signals, discards, count
May 14: Splinter Bids
May 21: Cue bidding to slam
May 28: Cue bidding to the right contract

Waverley Bridge Club is at 21A Electra Ave, Ashwood, 3147. Contact them on 9807 6502 or email office@waverleybridgeclub.com.au.

STATE AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

A reminder that nominations for the 2016 awards close on April 30th. Further information and nomination forms can be found on the VBA Website/Document Library/Club Notices.

The awards provide an opportunity to recognise people in your club who make a valuable contribution to our game in four categories - Teacher, Official, Volunteer and Sportsmanship. These could be the people who simply ensure the boards are dealt every week, the teacher who puts their heart and soul into running lessons and supervising the new players or the director who runs the sessions flawlessly and deals with director calls pleasantly and effectively.

Winners will be recognised at an awards ceremony held at the Victor Champion Cup Presentations on Friday June 10th at approximately 6.30 pm.

Finally, for the mature and/or female:

Victorian Seniors Team Playoff: April 9-10
Victorian Women's Team Playoff: April 16-17

Details, qualifying points lists and entry forms are available at the VBA website: <http://vba.asn.au>.