

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

May 2016

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



All of Victoria's teams for the Interstate Teams Championship, to be held in Brisbane in June, have now been selected. Congratulations and the best of luck to all our representatives. See inside for the lineups.

Over the last few months I've had the serendipitous delight of running into two people with connections to Victorian stars from the earliest days of bridge – Viv Braham's nephew and namesake, and Hal Oddie's daughter.

Viv Braham was a lawyer who won 3 Interstates on the trot on the mighty Victorian teams of the mid-30s. I met the modern Viv (also a lawyer) at ERBA's 21st birthday dinner, and had a great time hearing his stories, old and new.

Hal Oddie was also an Interstate champion in the 30s. He was on Australia's very first international team – for the 1960 Olympiad. A physicist turned medical researcher, he took up an academic position in the US in 1955, returning to Australia for a few years through 1960, before finishing his working life in US academia. On retirement he returned to Australia. Our bridge paths crossed briefly in the late 80s when I was

very green, and he still carried the aura of a great player.

Do you have a connection to the bridge greats of yore? Write in and tell us about it!



NEWS FROM THE VBA COUNCIL

VBA Delegate to ABF

The Council announces the appointment of Kim Frazer as Victorian delegate to the ABF for a two year term. The Council thanks the out-going delegate, Simon Hinge, for his many years of service as Victorian delegate. Victoria's other delegate is Brian Morgan who has one year remaining on his current term. The ABF Annual General Meeting is on May 21/22 in Canberra.

Disciplinary & Ethics Regulations

The VBA advises the implementation of Disciplinary & Ethics Regulations which will apply from July 1st, 2016 to all Congress events held in Victoria. The regulations will be used to manage the small number of complaints received by the VBA from players subsequent to the conclusion of congress events.

The VBA has called for nominations for the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee which will comprise up to 12 members. Nominations will close on June 20th, 2016.

Both the Nomination Form and the Regulations are available on the VBA website in the Club Notices section of the Document Library.

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

**Less than 2 months to the Victor Champion Cup
It's time to get your entry in!**



**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

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FOR STARTERS

Playing in a Swiss Pairs congress event (IMP scoring), you are the dealer and pick up:

♠ KJ5 ♥ KJ2 ♦ AQJ9 ♣ A84

19 HCP, so it's too strong for a 1NT opening bid. The plan with a balanced 19 HCP hand is to open in a suit and then jump in notrumps, if partner makes a response. And this is what you do, the auction proceeding:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♠	Pass	?

Partner has thrown you a curve-ball with that 3♠ bid. The textbook told you to jump to 2NT, but perhaps remains silent on this continuation. What do you bid and why?

This matter comes down to whether you denied holding spades when you bid 2NT. It would seem that partner has 4 spades himself, and is checking whether there is a 4-4 spade fit.

There isn't, but what about the hearts? Could partner have a 5-card suit of hearts? If so, perhaps you should be supporting the hearts now.

In fact, partner should not have 5 hearts. If he does have 5 hearts (and 4 spades), then

he could have rebid 3♥, showing a 5-card suit, trusting that if you cannot support the hearts, and do have 4 spades, then you will come back with a 3♠ bid, finding the spade fit that way. This auction indicates that partner is exactly 4-4 in the majors.

You therefore rebid 3NT, which ends the auction. LHO leads the ♣5.

♣5 led

♠ A763

♥ 8764

♦ K6

♣ K73

N
S

♠ KJ5

♥ KJ2

♦ AQJ9

♣ A84

You start by counting your certain tricks: 2 spades, 4 diamonds, 2 clubs = 8 tricks: one more required, and plenty of possibilities. As a keen student of the game, you let RHO win the ♣J. He returns the ♣9, LHO follows with the ♣2, and dummy's ♣K wins.

It seems you need to take a finesse, and there are three possibilities. You could play a spade to the jack (finessing RHO for the ♠Q), or a heart to the jack (finessing RHO for the ♥Q) or a heart to the king (finessing RHO for the ♥A). They are all 50-50 propositions: the question is: if your chosen finesse loses, which one gives you the best chance of still making the contract?

From the defensive cards in clubs played, it rather looks like LHO started with 5 of them. It's unfortunate therefore that all the finesses are into his hand. If you lose a finesse now, and then lose another finesse to LHO later, then your 29 HCP 3NT will fail. Embarrassing!

It's best to take a *spade* finesse here. If that loses, then perhaps the outstanding six spades divide 3-3. If that is the case, then there will be no need for further finessing, because you will have a winning spade in dummy for the 9th trick.

You lead a spade to the jack, but Murphy's Law kicks in as LHO wins the ♠Q. He plays

the ♠Q, RHO discards a diamond and you win the ♠A.

Next you play the ♠K and then a spade to dummy's ♠A, but alas, LHO discards a diamond on this trick. So RHO has a good heart.

Any other bright ideas?

You do have one arrow left in your quiver. You must hope that RHO has the ♥A, in which case you can still get a 9th trick with your ♥K. It is no use hoping that RHO has the ♥Q (and LHO the ♥A), because then LHO will have the setting tricks to take in clubs.

You lead a heart, RHO plays low and you put up the king. Murphy has taken a break, and this wins the trick, giving you your well-earned 3NT. The full deal:

	♠ A763		
	♥ 8764		
	♦ K6		
	♣ K73		
♠ Q9	N	♠ 10842	
♥ Q103	W E	♥ A95	
♦ 853	S	♦ 10742	
♣ Q10652		♣ J9	
	♠ KJ5		
	♥ KJ2		
	♦ AQJ9		
	♣ A84		

Points to remember:

- It's best to play that a 2NT rebid can include a 4-card major that could have been bid at the 1-level. You can show your points first, and then use logical and natural bidding to find out whether there is an 8-card major suit fit.
- When faced with a choice of finesses, take the one that gives you the best residual chance, should it lose.
- When faced with a choice of finesses, don't take one that cannot help, even should it work!

TEST YOUR BIDDING

Responding to a takeout double

Nil vulnerable

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♦	D'ble	Pass	?

As we saw last month, partner's takeout double shows opening strength (about 12+ HCP), shortage in diamonds and at least 3-card support for every other suit, *or* some strong hand of 17+ HCP.

You are on the rack: unless you want to defend 1♦ doubled, you must bid here, even with no points at all. So a simple response in a suit shows 4+ cards in that suit, and about 0-8 HCP. That's right, you have zero points, and yet you have to make a bid (and partner needs to realise that!).

If you have a stronger hand, about 9 HCP up to 12 HCP, then show your strength by making a jump bid in your best suit.

And in the rare cases that you have an even stronger hand (13+ HCP), then you might need to make a *cue bid*, bidding 2♦, their suit, forcing partner to describe his hand further in the search for the final contract.

Finally, if you have a balanced hand and a stopper in their suit (diamonds in this case), you can respond 1NT, showing about 6-10 HCP. Similarly, jump to 2NT with 11-12 HCP and a stopper.

Choose your response to partner's takeout double with each of the following hands:

- (a) ♠ 72 ♥ Q654 ♦ J962 ♣ 872
- (b) ♠ 752 ♥ 654 ♦ J962 ♣ 872
- (c) ♠ K72 ♥ AQ65 ♦ J962 ♣ 72
- (d) ♠ Q72 ♥ AQ6 ♦ J962 ♣ 872
- (e) ♠ 752 ♥ A6 ♦ KJ10962 ♣ 72
- (f) ♠ A752 ♥ K654 ♦ J96 ♣ AQ

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♦	D'ble	Pass	?

(a) ♠ 72 ♥ Q654 ♦ J962 ♣ 872

1♥. Only 3 HCP, but be glad you have a suit you can bid.

(b) ♠ 752 ♥ 654 ♦ J962 ♣ 872

1♥. The "I should never have got out of bed" hand. You have to bid something: the last thing you should do is pass, and let them wrap up 1♦ doubled for a bottom. Searching vainly for a non-diamond 4-card suit, you come up empty. So bid your cheapest 3-card suit instead and hope for the best.

The big error on this hand is to bid 1NT, showing 6-10 HCP, which you ain't got. 1NT will go down plenty, and if it's in theory making, then partner will have put you in 3NT.

(c) ♠ K72 ♥ AQ65 ♦ J962 ♣ 72

2♥. If you're bidding 1♥ on hand (b), you can hardly do the same with this one. Jump the bidding to show your values.

(d) ♠ Q72 ♥ AQ6 ♦ J962 ♣ 872

1NT. About 6-10 HCP, balanced. Your diamond stopper is a little shaky, but it will have to do.

(e) ♠ 752 ♥ A6 ♦ KJ10962 ♣ 72

Pass. This is a rare situation, but it can happen. Here is a hand where you do actually want to defend 1♦ doubled, and expect to beat it several tricks for a good score. So you pass partner's double, converting his takeout bid to a penalty situation. It's essential to have strong diamonds for the penalty pass.

(f) ♠ A752 ♥ K654 ♦ J96 ♣ AQ

2♦. There is enough combined strength for game. Cue-bid 2♦ to force partner to bid: partner will almost surely bid a major, which you can then raise to game.

CONGRESS RESULTS**Frankston Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 G. McRobert – T. Ranasinghe
- 2 C. Shugg – W. Sieredzinski
- 3 G. Johnson – R. Kingham

Swiss Teams

- 1 V. Zhang, J. Yang, C. Ding, G. Ghali
- 2 A. Mill, J. Howard, M. Darling, A. Maluish
- 3 C. Fernando, B. Romeijn, W. Sieredinski, C. Shugg

Whittlesea Congress*Matchpoint Pairs*

- 1 P. Nolan – M. Porter
- 2 M. Elson – D. Jacobs
- 3 C. Ding – D. Nie

VBA ANZAC Day Swiss Pairs

- 1 R. Van Riel – F. Beale
- 2 H. Snashall – R. Thomson
- 3 D. Harley – S. Klofa

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 7 (April 9)*

- 2 K. Mitchell – L. Gunson (Ballarat)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS**Theodor Herzl Congress**

Sunday 15th May, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue: 222 Balaclava Rd
North Caulfield 3161

Contact: Babi Ehrlich, 0417 593 101

Enter: <http://www.bridgewebs.com/thsc/>

Sale Congress

Saturday 21st May, 11:30 am: Swiss Pairs
Sunday 22nd May, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: Greenwattle Racecourse
Sale/Maffra Road
Sale

Contact: Helen Gault, 0439 456 206

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Bendigo Congress

Saturday 28th May, 10:30 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 29th May, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: Bendigo All Seasons Hotel
 171-183 McIvor Hwy
 Bendigo

Contact: Kevin Gunn, 0407 823 373

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Moonee Valley Congress

Saturday 4th June, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 5th June, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: 2a Pattison St
 Moonee Ponds 3039
 Melways 29 A8

Contact: Michael Halfpenny, 0428 458 566

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

STATE RESULTS

Fred Altman Swiss Pairs

- 1 P. Hill – R. Livingston
- 2 L. Ginnan – B. Thompson
- 3 M. Gurfinkiel – S. Hall

ANC SELECTIONS

Victorian Seniors Team Qualifying

- 1 Arthur Robbins – Doug Newlands
- 2 Felicity Beale – Robbie van Riel
- 3 Andrzej Krolikowski - Michael Gurfinkiel

Victorian Women's Team Qualifying

- 1 Helen Snashall – Cathie Lachman
- 2 Kae French – Jan Hackett
- 3 Jill Magee – Jeannette Collins

Victorian Youth Team

Jamie Thompson – Finn Rennie
 Pat Clifford – Conor Hosking
 Aiden Robertson – Liam Robertson

Congratulations and good luck to all our representative teams for the upcoming ANC in Brisbane.

FROM THE BALLARAT COURIER ... APRIL 7

Ballarat Festival of Bridge 2016 Underway

Two brothers from different states got down to business around the card table in Ballarat on Thursday.

Ballarat Bridge Club president Richard Giles and his younger brother, Canberra Bridge Club president Peter Giles, faced off at the inaugural Ballarat Festival of Bridge.

They organised the four-day festival after realising it was unique in Australian bridge to have two brothers as presidents at different clubs.

"So over the time we have discussed the idea and have been encouraged by members of the Australian Bridge Federation and the Canberra and Victoria Bridge associations to develop a program," Richard said.

"The Ballarat Festival of Bridge started on Wednesday night with 22 visitors from Canberra participating in the Rosebowl Competition."

Richard said he hoped the festival would be held annually, making it a regional Victorian feature event following the Ballarat Begonia Festival.



Peter and Richard Giles at the first Ballarat Festival of Bridge

ON GETTING BETTER RESULTS

Bill Jacobs

Do you have a regular partner that you enjoy playing with? But have your recent results been, shall we say, underwhelming?

Here's a suggestion that is rather likely to turn things around:

Change your system!

There is a research term called The Hawthorne Effect. No, it's not what happens when the best footballers in the land have the best coach in the land. It's the results of experiments conducted at the Hawthorne Works in Chicago in the 1950s. Essentially, it is that change, *any* change, improves performance. Management tried the effect of increasing the lighting in the factory. They found that the productivity of the workforce measurably improved.

A month or so later, they returned the lighting to its original intensity. Guess what happened ... worker productivity went up even further! It was the principle of the change in conditions that caused the performance boost, not the nature of the change.

The same concept applies to a bridge partnership. A change is as good as a holiday. One way to effect change is to switch partners. This always causes a boost in your results: it's the Honeymoon Effect. But it's a short-term improvement, and anyway, you like playing with your current partner.

Changing your system is the alternative. If you've been playing Standard American for the past umpteen years, why not try something else? Learn Precision, which used to be hugely popular in Victoria, due to the Borin Effect (Victoria's top pair of the time, Norma and Jim Borin, played and promoted Precision), but is now largely abandoned, and for no good reason.

If you want to try something more radical, you could explore the Polish Club. It's hugely popular in Europe, and of course particularly in Poland, but virtually unknown here. I know of only one pair in Victoria that plays it,

and this has recently become zero pairs, as the two people in question went to live in Poland! Now that's commitment to system.

There is plenty of literature available on all the popular systems out there. And if you don't feel like buying a book, there is a mass of information freely available on the internet. There's nothing stopping you. Yes, you will suffer some hiccoughs along the way, forgetting the system, but your enjoyment levels will increase, and so inevitably will your results. Performance is bi-directionally entwined with enjoyment.

There are other less dramatic changes available. If playing a new system is too radical for you, then try changing part of your current system. It has to be a significant change for this to work: it would be no use switching from 3014 Roman Key Card Blackwood to 1430. All that's going to do is lead to disaster when one of you forgets it, without getting the 'change is as good as a holiday' improvement.

No, it has to be something bigger. For example, change your 2-level opening bids. If you play normal weak two openings, try playing the Multi. It's good fun.

Another option is to employ transfer responses to 1♣ opening bids. It just so happens that this is a vastly better way of bidding than using natural responses, but that is largely irrelevant. It's a significant change; it comes up a lot; and it will generate enjoyment. And enjoyment breeds masterpoints.

The motivation for this article was a recent outstanding example of the Hawthorne Effect. In mid-March, I presented a seminar at Waverley Bridge Club on the Two-Over-One System. This is a significant, but not overwhelming, modification of Standard American where a 2-level response to one-of-a-suit shows 13+ HCP (and is therefore game-forcing) rather than the usual 10+ HCP. It is therefore an excellent vehicle for the 'change is good' theory.

The seminar was attended by regular partners Sylvia Kudelka and Shirley Wanz: they liked the concept, and decided to give Two-Over-One a try. Two weeks later, armed with their new system, they played in

the Australian Swiss Pairs in Launceston: a gold-pointed open national event. 120 pairs entered, and Sylvia and Shirley were seeded 54th. You can guess the end of the story: they won it.

Interviewing them on their return, they noted that Two-Over-One didn't give them any magical advantage: in fact in the lead-up event (the Roger Penny Senior Swiss Pairs) they forgot the system a couple of times for poor results. But they had renewed motivation, and were having fun with the new methods. The result was spectacular.



Sylvia Kudelka and Shirley Wanz

PLEASE TELL US YOUR VIEWS

The Match and Tournament committee is reviewing the methods used to select Victorian teams for future Australian National Championships. The 2016 Open, Women's, and Seniors teams were selected through a pairs playoff, with pairs qualifying through the accumulation of Victorian Qualification Points gained through state championships and all congresses. We are now seeking players' views and suggestions about the most appropriate formats and methods to use in future years. We have developed a short questionnaire which we hope you will fill in and return to the MTC. It will only take a minute or two to fill out. The questionnaire is available electronically on the VBA website, or at the club in paper format. The closing date is Monday June 27th. Your views are important and we very much want to hear from you. Please take this opportunity to make your views known.

VICTORIAN YOUTH CO-ORDINATOR

The VBA invites expressions of interest in the position of Victorian Youth Co-ordinator. The co-ordinator's duties include:

- provide support, including appropriate resource allocation within budget, for youth bridge and the Victorian schools bridge co-ordinator within the state
- develop and maintain a data base to facilitate maintaining contact with Victorian youth players, and their related contacts (eg parents)
- develop a youth budget in consultation with the VBA Finance Committee
- co-ordinate with and between the ABF Youth Committee and the VBA Council

Victoria has been very fortunate to have many tireless contributors to youth bridge over many years. The VBA would like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing youth co-ordinator Laura Ginnan in particular.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dir: South ♠ A53
 Vul: all ♥ 8764
 ♦ AJ32
 ♣ K4

N
S

♠ K4
 ♥ AK32
 ♦ 106
 ♣ AQ1083

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Yikes! You really are going to have to do something about your slam bidding.

West leads ♦K. 6♥ has an inescapable heart loser, and an almost inescapable diamond loser. So how do you plan to escape?

Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

	♠ A53										
	♥ 8764										
	♦ AJ32										
	♣ K4										
♠ J876	<table border="1"> <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		♠ Q1092
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ J9		♥ Q105									
♦ KQ954		♦ 87									
♣ 97		♣ J652									
	♠ K4										
	♥ AK32										
	♦ 106										
	♣ AQ1083										

You need a few things to go right, a 3-2 heart break being the first of them.

The clubs however: if you can somehow play five winners (discarding all three low diamonds from dummy) before a defender trumps in, then perhaps you can make this woeful contract.

You will need the defender with the three hearts to have four clubs: therefore you unusually require a 4-2 club break. A 3-3 division is useless, because a defender will trump the fourth round and cash a diamond.

If clubs are 4-2, the odds are that the player with four of them will have the jack. So the correct play is to win the diamond at trick 1, cash two top hearts, then play ♣K and a club, *finessing the 10 if East plays low*.

If you can't bid well, you better play well.



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

Saturday 4th June 2016

131 Poath Road, Murrumbena

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

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

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Anthony d'Apice	RACV
Prithiraj De Zoysa	Waverley
Sylvia Gluck	Bridge Fanatics
Timothy Hassett	Geelong
Tamar Rapoport	VBA

*State

Peter Cooke	Williamstown
Vair Preston	Geelong
David Scott	Yarra Valley
Ruth Spears	Paynesville

National

Lanny Chan	Moonee Valley
Monica Christopher	Sale
Bob Coker	Knox
Marina Darling	Waverley
Alison Feiner	Geelong
Christopher Leach	MCC
Dawn Wallace	Lakes Entrance

*National

Dot Emery-Smith	Yarra Valley
Trevor Haley	Moonee Valley
Kay Leeton	VBA
Christine Louie	VBA
Terry Nadebaum	Lakes Entrance
Iris Roberts	Paynesville
Sue Small	Dendy Park

**National

Faye Symons	Bendigo
Ken Tierney	Traralgon
Lea Woolf	Dendy Park

Life

Lorraine Griffiths	Bendigo
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Bronze Life

Jenny Hoff	Waverley
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Silver Life

Ken Anderson	VBA
Lindy Anderson	VBA
Simon Begg	Yarra Valley
Robyn O'Dell	VBS

Gold Life

Anna St Clair	Grand Prix
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Edgar Kaplan on bad contracts ...

"The best one can say for this contract is that it has not yet gone down."

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