

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

August 2016

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



In July, the VBA hosted the latest instalment of Laurie Kelso's ever-popular director training course. On September 24 we will be hosting a free marketing seminar for affiliated clubs, led by the ABF's National Marketing Officer Sandra Mulcahy (aside for club officials – if you haven't received it yet, the flyer's in the mail). We run teacher training days regularly.

It isn't "cool" attention grabbing stuff but these kinds of "infrastructure" programs are an important part of what the VBA does – if there are no directors, there are no duplicates; if there are no teachers, no one can learn; if there's no marketing, people won't know to try our game.

Just as in every sport and every recreation, time and money are very limited resources in the bridge world. We're always looking for better ways to support bridge players and bridge clubs, and more efficient ways to do it. Don't let the VBA or your club guess what to do! If you have a great idea to build and strengthen our game, do something about it! Tell other people – a great test is people volunteering to make it happen. If it's "infrastructure" and a bunch of people want it, your club and your VBA will definitely be interested.

NEWS FROM THE VBA

New State Championships

All clubs will soon receive a letter from the VBA seeking their feedback on a proposal to introduce a pairs championship that would be open to pairs from all clubs in Victoria. Please send us your thoughts so we can make this idea work!

Selecting Victoria's representatives for the Interstate Teams

Thanks to all the players and clubs who provided us with their views on how to select teams to represent Victoria. Watch this space for an announcement in the near future!

Simultaneous Pairs

The VBA would like to thank Quentin van Abbe and the FABCV for their efforts in running the Victorian Simultaneous Pairs over many years. The VBA will be running the event in 2017 as a club-based event, with the winner determined by performance in those club sessions.

Restricted Pairs

In 2017 the Victorian Restricted Pairs Championship will be held on Saturday 13th May. The top two pairs will receive a \$2,000 subsidy and free entry fees from the ABF to participate in the national restricted pairs championship to be held in Canberra in July 2017.

Entry will be open to all pairs where both players have fewer than 300 masterpoints as at 31st December 2016.

FOR STARTERS

Today, you hold this exceedingly average hand:

♠ 54 ♥ Q83 ♦ 8753 ♣ Q1097

No one is vulnerable, your partner is the dealer, and the auction begins:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♥	D'ble	?

Do you make a bid?

Well, on balance, you should. Give partner a raise to 2♥.

If RHO had passed the 1♥ opening bid, it probably would have been correct to pass with this hand (a 2♥ raise is just begging partner to then bid something you cannot make).

Things are different after the takeout double. Looking at your hand, it seems likely that the opponents are about compete in spades. You can remove a bit of bidding room from them by raising directly to 2♥: the less room they have, the less likely they are to bid accurately.

After your partner's opening bid is doubled, you don't need quite so much high card strength to raise, because partner should recognize that your raise is partly an attempt to block out the opponents. A single raise should show about 4-9 total points in support of partner's suit.

You bid 2♥ and the auction concludes

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♥	D'ble	2♥
2♠	3♥	3♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

This is a typical sort of competitive auction where no-one knows whether or when to stop bidding.

Partner leads the ♥K, and this is what you see:

4♠ by South

♠ AJ83
♥ 62
♦ AKQ9
♣ 864

♥K

	N		♠ 54
♥K	W	E	♥ Q83
			♦ 8753
	S		♣ Q1097

Plan the defence.

You expect two heart tricks (partner obviously has the ♥A to go with his king), so are looking for 2 more, and the club suit is the leading candidate. Best would be for you to gain the lead, so you can play a club through declarer's holding. That's possible if partner plays a low heart to your queen at trick 2.

What is needed is an *attitude* signal saying: "partner, I like hearts". Because you raised the hearts, that could only indicate that you hold the queen, because a shortage (looking for a ruff) is not consistent with the bidding.

Your heart card (rather than a smile on your face) indicates your attitude, and if it is positive, and partner is at the top of her game, she will continue with a low heart to your queen. The ♣10 through declarer's gizzard will then finish him off, the full deal being:

♠ AJ83
♥ 62
♦ AKQ9
♣ 864

♠ K
♥ AKJ975
♦ 1042
♣ AJ2

	N		♠ 54
	W	E	♥ Q83
			♦ 8753
	S		♣ Q1097

♠ Q109762
♥ 104
♦ J6
♣ K53

Two down! If partner had played anything other than a low heart at trick 2, the contract would have made, declarer taking 6 spades and 4 diamonds.

Which card indicates your positive attitude? If you agree to play Standard signals with

your partner, then it would be a high one, in this case the 8. If you agree to play Reverse or Upside-Down signals, then it is a low one, the 3.

Just about the first item you should agree with any new partner is: do we play Standard or Reverse signals?

Points to remember:

- When partner opens the bidding in a suit, and the next hand makes a takeout double, the requirements for a single raise drop by a couple of points. It becomes both a constructive and obstructive bid.

On this deal, supporting the hearts had two positive effects: it allowed your side to compete effectively (3♥ makes), and it also cramped the opponents' bidding room, resulting in their misjudging to go on to 4♠.

- The primary signal when partner leads to a trick, whether it be the opening lead or during the play, is one of attitude: whether or not you like that suit.

VBA Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Bridge Association will be held on November 21st at the VBA Clubrooms commencing at 6.30 pm. Nomination forms for the four Special Councillor Positions will be sent to all clubs in the next week.

The current Special Councillors are Rob Quirk (Metro near VBA), Helen McAdam (Eastern) and Richard Giles (Western). In 2016 there has been no representative from clubs in the Metro Arc zone. The existing Special Councillors are entitled to be re-nominated as per the regulations, and any new nominations must be made in accordance with the regulations which can be found on the VBA Website: go to The VBA / Document Library / Constitution.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

High level decisions

Nil vulnerable

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
2♠	3♥	4♠	1♥ ?

Competitive bidding decisions at the 4 and 5 level are some of the most difficult in the game. It requires a combination of judgment, guesswork and plain good luck. You can never get them all correct: your objective is to bat at above 50%.

In this typical auction, do you push on? Double? Pass it to partner? Here are some thoughts:

- If you are going to bid on, make sure you have plenty of trumps, a minimum of 9, preferably 10. Don't compete to the 5-level if you might hold only 8 trumps.
- Look closely at your holding in the enemy suit. They probably have about 9 of their suit between them (in this auction), so you can deduce partner's length in the suit.
- Your decision might not be the final one in the auction. If you pass, partner is still there. And if you bid, then the opponents might keep going.
- The vulnerability is relevant. Can you tell whether the opponents are bidding to make, or to sacrifice? On this auction, with no-one vulnerable, it's hard to say!

So, let's see if you can bat above 50% with each of the following hands:

- ♠ QJ10 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ 96 ♣ A2
- ♠ 962 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ QJ10 ♣ A
- ♠ 2 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ QJ10 ♣ A96
- ♠ 62 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ A96 ♣ KQ
- ♠ - ♥ AQJ873 ♦ 62 ♣ AJ962
- ♠ A62 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ AK9 ♣ 2

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♥
2♠	3♥	4♠	?

(a) ♠ QJ10 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ 96 ♣ A2

D'ble. You have 3 probable defensive tricks, and expect partner to contribute at least one, so 4♠ rates to go down. 5♥ could make, but it's against the odds. There are no guarantees (are there ever?), but this is the percentage choice.

(b) ♠ 962 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ QJ10 ♣ A

5♥. You have three spades, so expect partner to have at most a singleton. With all those cards outside of spades, you must have a fair chance of making 5♥. There are no guarantees, but this is the percentage choice.

(c) ♠ 2 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ QJ10 ♣ A96

Pass. Partner has some length in spades, but we don't know what strength is there. On the whole, both 4♠ and 5♥ are unlikely to make, but you don't have enough certainty to double. 4♠ will probably be passed out, but partner is still there, and might double or bid on himself, if he is at the top of his range.

(d) ♠ 62 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ A96 ♣ KQ

D'ble. The doubleton spade is a huge warning against bidding on, as partner might have two spades also. But this hand has extra strength, and 4♠ is highly unlikely to make.

(e) ♠ - ♥ AQJ873 ♦ 62 ♣ AJ962

5♣. This serves as a try for slam, but also to help partner should the opponents compete to 5♠. Bidding a new suit here when you already have a major suit fit indicates length and strength in that suit.

(f) ♠ A62 ♥ AQJ873 ♦ AK9 ♣ 2

4NT. Don't forget to thank your opponents when you have bid and made this slam. Their bidding told you that partner has a singleton or void in spades.

CONGRESS RESULTS**Kattery Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 G. Johnson – V. Zhang
- 2 S. White – R. Berlinski
- 3 H. Stewart – M. Allison

Swiss Teams

- 1 G. Ghali, V. Zhang, J. Yang, K. Zhang
- 2 M. Clarke, D. Clarke, L. Saoud, T. Ranasinghe
- 3 S. Klofa, R. Gallus, D. Harley, A. St Clair

Berwick Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 J. Yang – M. Zhang
- 2 E. Samuel – S. Ozenir
- 3 M. Darling – J. Howard

Swiss Teams

- 1 K. Zhang, M. Zhang, J. Yang, D. Nie
- 2 C. Hughes, K. Bechet, M. Phillips, B. Lindsay
- 3 A. Maluish, A. Mill, B. Mill, T. Garipey

Theodor Herzl Congress*Butler Pairs*

- 1 G. Ghali – C. Ding
- 2 M. Zhang – M. Willcox
- 3 G. Peston – A. Czapnik

Yarrowonga Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 J. Hackett – T. Hackett
- 2 M. Allison – H. Stewart
- 3 G. Hill – L. McKenna

Swiss Teams

- 1 A. Mill, A. Maluish, G. Bailey, K. Bailey
- 2 A. St Clair, D. Harley, R. Stewart, P. Fent
- 3 M. Allison, H. Stewart, A. Feiner, A. Gunst

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 13 (July 2)*

- 3 Y. Mears – K. Douglas (Phillip Island)

Victorian Teams of Three

- 1 R. O'Dell, M. Allison, B. A'Beckett, S. Ozenir
- 2 J. Masters, M. Lambert, L. Wolff, J. Magee
- 3 L. Attwood, P. Knightley, J. Adey, S. Arber

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS

Knox Congress

Saturday 6th August, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 7th August, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Bayswater Senior Citizens Centre
 Cnr Scoresby Rd and Mountain Hwy
 Bayswater

Contact: Clare Stratton, 9725 9806

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Traralgon Congress

Saturday 20th August, 11 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 21st August, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Building 3E Auditorium
 Federation University
 Churchill

Contact: Rhonda van Dyke, 0448 319 660

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Dendy Park Congress

Sunday 28th August, 11 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue Breen Drive
 East Brighton

Contact: Boris Tencer, 0414 353 996

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Northern Region GNOT Qualifier

Sunday 28th August, 10 am Swiss Teams
Gold Point Event

Venue Shepparton Bridge Club (U3A Hall)
 Esson St
 Shepparton

Contact: Richard Harmanm 0413 010 478

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Note: All bona-fide regional residents are eligible to participate.

STATE RESULTS

Victorian Master Teams

Section A

- 1 W. Jacobs, B. Thompson, J. Thompson
E. Caplan
- 2 S. Klofa, R. Gallus, A. St Clair, D. Harley
- 3 P. Hollands, E. Samuel, A. Mill, A. Maluish

Section B

- 1 S. Ozenir, B. A'Beckett, R. Livingston, P. Hill
- 2 C. Arul, K. French, A. Paul, E. Ji
- 3 E. Linton, P. Corrigan, F. Halmos, J. Hall

EAST GIPPSLAND NOVICE PAIRS

22 players from Lakes Entrance, Bairnsdale and Paynesville Bridge Clubs took part in the East Gippsland Regional Heat of the Novice Pairs at Bairnsdale Bridge Club on Thursday 7th July.

Equal winners on the day were Fritz Riedacher and Lyn Wilkinson and Maureen Broome and Maree Haylock, both registering an impressive 62.5%. The top six pairs from the day will have the opportunity to travel to Traralgon in October to contest the Regional Novice Pairs Grand Final against finalists from Sale, Traralgon, South Gippsland and Phillip Island Bridge Clubs.



Fritz Riedacher, Lyn Wilkinson, Maureen Broome,
 Maree Haylock



Victorians had a generally miserable time at this year's ANC, held in Brisbane, but there was one excellent result: Laura Ginnan and Ben Thompson winning Playoff Points in the ANC Butler Pairs. Here is Laura's account ...

ANC BUTLER PAIRS
Laura Ginnan

Recently I was fortunate enough to escape the Melbourne winter and head up to Brisbane to compete in the Australian Open Butler Pairs at the National Championships. Ben Thompson and I played in the Altman Pairs at the VBA earlier in the year which gives the winners free entry into the event. We didn't win but Paul Hill and Rex Livingston who did weren't taking up the spot so it was offered to us. I was pretty excited that Ben wanted to give it a swing.

I had never played the event before and Ben hadn't played it in decades. The event runs for 6 days with 2 days to qualify the top 20 and a 4 day second stage where you take on each of the other pairs in 12 board encounters. We finished a pretty creditable 6th.

The eventual winners were Michael Courtney and Paul Wyer by the smallest margin 229.22 vs 229.21 over Sartaj Hans and Tony Nunn. Michael and Paul are legendary card players but their bidding is somewhat primitive coming from the rubber bridge days where what you see is what you get.

They had the auction (uncontested):

Ben	Paul	Me	Michael
Pass	1♥	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	?	

I held:

♠ AJ86 ♥ KQJ98 ♦ J54 ♣ J

I couldn't bid over the 1♥ opening, I had hearts. What I could do though was double 3NT. In auctions like this a double is used to say: partner I have a stack sitting over the dummy's suit.

Ben dutifully led a heart (he even had the 10-spot) and the contract sailed off. Declarer eventually won the heart ace and played a spade. I jumped up with my ace and took the setting trick and didn't bother to look at the rest knowing declarer had the remaining tricks.

Here is the full hand:

Dlr: West ♠ K1072
 Vul: E/W ♥ A654
 ♦ A982
 ♣ Q

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 3 ♠ AJ86
 ♥ 103 ♥ KQJ98
 ♦ Q1073 ♦ J54
 ♣ 1098764 ♣ J

♠ Q954
 ♥ 72
 ♦ K6
 ♣ AK532

I was pretty happy at the time and thought that we might be chalking up a game swing because 5♦ or maybe even 5♣ was likely to be making on an auction that started 1♦ by North and a 1♥ overcall by me.

Of course after seeing the hand record I discovered that South had skipped over their 4 card spades and that N/S actually had a spade fit and couldn't make 4♠! I'm glad I didn't realise this at the time because instead of thinking that we had a good score to come I would have realised that in fact all we did was dodge a bullet! If the hearts had divided nicely for declarer or even if a couple of the heart honours were in Ben's hand there would be no way that I could make a double of 3NT and Ben's hand would make the natural lead and the contract would have much better chances of making than a 4♠ contract (although on the hand neither makes).

On the other end of the rubber bridge intuition-vs-scientific bidding scale there was the young NZ pair of Michael Whibley and Matthew Brown. There were two grand slams that were only bid at one table: they had both! Here is the first:

♠ A32 ♠ J10
 ♥ AQ ♥ K10865
 ♦ A832 ♦ KQ10764
 ♣ 6543 ♣ -

	N	
W		E
	S	

West (Whibley)	East (Brown)
	1♦
2♦ (inverted)	2♥ (minimum)
2♠ (what you got)	3♦ (short clubs)
4♦ (slam interest)	4♥ (cue bid)
4NT (RKCB)	5NT (odd with void)
6♣ (last train)	7♦

This auction¹ combined a whole bunch of my favourite gadgets!

- Having opener limit their hand through a step bid in a forcing auction (2♥)
- Shortage showing bids (these are so handy for valuing a hand)
- 4 minor to set a suit and look for slam
- Cue bidding
- Ability to show a void in keycard responses
- Last train which says- we have to go to 6♦ but in relation to your minimum hand that I already know has a void in clubs and one keycard with a void do you want to play grand slam?

Not a bad effort to find a 23 HCP grand.

Here's the other:

We held this N/S hand but didn't get to play the board. I overheard the next table speaking loudly about making 13 tricks. If you overhear something like that from another table you should let the director know but don't say what you heard to the rest of your table. This is because you still might be able to play the board because the information might not be relevant to your side. Simply call the director and tell them privately what you heard.

♠ AK6	N	♠ 2
♥ KQ104	W E	♥ AJ7
♦ A65		♦ Q108
♣ KQ9	S	♣ A106542

West (Whibley) 2NT (20-22) 4♠ (I like clubs) 5♦ (0 or 3) 7NT	East (Brown) 4♥ (clubs) 4NT (RKCB) 5♥ (queen-ask)
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Again great minor suit slam bidding by these guys. When Brown asked for the club queen, Whibley knew that he was interested in a grand slam contract and they must have all of the keycards. Whibley can count 12 tricks off the top (6 clubs, 1 diamond, 3 hearts, 2 spades) and only needs partner to have the ♠Q, ♦K, or ♥J to ensure a 13th. Without any

of those Brown would be unlikely to look for grand and the worst case scenario is that the ♥J might come down in 3 rounds.

I'm glad I will have these guys on my team at the NZ Nationals in September!

Aside from seeing the wonders of a solid partnership's bidding at work I was very impressed by the turnout of less experienced players at the event. Many of the locals decided to give the event a crack for the experience and to learn something. One of the players who qualified for the top 20 was a Queenslander with 230 masterpoints and his partnership finished up with 5 wins and 4 draws (out of 19 encounters). Not bad for a guy competing against Australia's top masterpoint earner of all time (Pauline Gumby) with 11,898.43 of the suckers.

If you are looking for a way to improve, immersing yourself in one of the long national events is one of the quickest ways to do it!



THE SETTING TRICK

Dlr: West ♠ 1096
 Vul: N/S ♥ A
 ♦ K109873
 ♣ 852

♠ J8752	N
♥ 8	W E
♦ J62	
♣ QJ63	S

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	1♥	D'ble
Pass	2♦	3♣	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
D'ble	Pass	Pass	Pass

Although the vulnerability is right for a sacrifice, you decide your five spades should be sufficient to embarrass South. It looks right to lead your singleton heart. Surprise! Dummy also has a singleton heart. Declarer crosses to ♣A and leads a heart, returning with a club ruff to lead another heart. What to do?

Solution over page.

¹ which should not be attempted in your own home ... BJ

THE SETTING TRICK Ian McCance

♠ 1096			
♥ A			
♦ K109873			
♣ 852			
♠ J8752	N	♠ -	
♥ 8	W E	♥ KQ652	
♦ J62		♦ AQ5	
♣ QJ63	S	♣ K10974	
		♠ AKQ43	
		♥ J109743	
		♦ 4	
		♣ A	

Declarer has ♠AKQ43 and can make 5 tricks by ruffing clubs. With 2 aces and 3 ruffs in dummy he'll make 10. Your small trumps are waste paper. You had better take your only trick, ♠J, and lead a trump.

Did you consider a trump as your opening lead?² That would have brought 500.



International Player Performance Committee

Kim Frazer (delegate to the ABF) has been appointed to Chair this committee which is investigating ways to increase the performance of our international teams.

In announcing the formation of this group, Bruce Neill – President of the Australian Bridge Federation – stated that he hoped Kim would be able to use her experiences as an international elite athlete in leading this committee.

Kim says *"I am delighted to be leading this committee which includes great players such as Sartaj Hans, Liam Milne, Peter Hollands and Marianne Bookallil. I know lots of players have ideas about what could be done better based on their own experiences and we also need to gather some base information too. As a first step, the committee will be*

² I did not. But perhaps I should have. It's amazing how often a trump lead is the winner against these doubled contracts where both declarer and dummy have length in trumps ... *BJ*

conducting a survey of players during August, and we will be asking all current and former international and/or state team representatives to complete this survey which will be used to help with the development of recommendations which will be delivered to the ABF later in 2016".

The survey will be emailed to players, and will also be available on the ABF website.



RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Maria Campbell	VBA
Terry Earle	Beaumaris
Laura Hedberg	Macedon Ranges
Chris Lovelock	Yarra Valley
Bronwyn Sund	Phillip Island
Kailun Zhang	VBA

*State

Krystena Casey	Moonee Valley
Patricia Donges	Royal South Yarra
Martin Symons	VBA

National

Gillian Campbell	Moonee Valley
Delma Casabene	Whittlesea
Rob Gault	Bairnsdale
Bianca Gold	Waverley
Diane Hood	Echuca
Ming Zhang	VBA

*National

Helen Gault	Sale
Frances Pohlen	Bayside
Sally Thornton	Frankston

**National

Jenny Johnstone	Geelong
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Life

Jenny Codognotto	Waverley
Gus Ghali	Moonee Valley
Denis Upsall	Bendigo
Sandor Varga	Lakes Entrance

Bronze Life

Kaye Douglas	Phillip Island
Sue Duff	Geelong
Jo-Anne Heywood	RACV
Gordon McRobert	Moonee Valley

Silver Life

Clive Hope	South Gippsland
Lynne Veenstra	Traralgon