

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

February 2018

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



During the Summer Festival in Canberra last month, I had the privilege and pleasure of presenting the trophies and prizes at Youth Week. This year it was organised by our very own Laura Ginnan, Pete Hollands and Juzz Mill, and by all accounts it was a superb week – congratulations to them.

When I arrived, I was struck by the sight of tables full of young people playing all sorts of card games, including bridge because only a week of bridge is not enough! It seems to me that the Millennials are a very social generation, and that bridge as an inherently social game is perhaps surprisingly attractive.

We have our Affiliated Clubs' Day coming up on March 3. The Victorian Youth Coordinator, Jamie Thompson, will be there to discuss youth bridge development and promotion with us all. One of the challenges for many clubs is simply having enough potential youth players to form those important bridge-based social groups. To help overcome that, we are considering ideas like running grandparents-grandkids bridge days at the VBA.

What ideas do you have? Tell Jamie, or me, or your club's representatives to Affiliated Clubs Day. Let's ensure the future of our beautiful game together.

2017 AUSTRALIAN YOUTH AWARDS

The ABF has announced that **Jamie Thompson**, along with his regular partner Matt Smith from Sydney, are joint winners of both the Andrew Reiner Trophy, and the Hills-Hurley Trophy, which are awards given to outstanding youth players. Congratulations, Jamie and Matt!



The *Andrew Reiner Trophy* is granted to the best performed Youth pair in international competition taking account of performance in the events themselves, commitment to preparation and contribution to team success.

Matt and Jamie were the choice of the two non-playing captains at the PABF Championships in Korea. They performed consistently throughout the round robin event, and were also successful in winning the Open Swiss Pairs event.

The *Hills-Hurley Trophy* is to encourage talented young bridge players in forming long-standing partnerships and reward successful pairs which have developed a well-organised partnership to harness their full potential.

FOR STARTERS

It's 2018 and you have made a New Year's Resolution: "*I will bid according to the rules, and not go off on any more flights of bidding fancy.*" A fine resolution to be sure. Early in your first game of the year, you pick up:

♠ AQJ982 ♥ 7643 ♦ 82 ♣ 9

You are dealer with no-one vulnerable. What do you do?

This would be a perfect weak 2♠ opening, but for one thing: the 4-card heart suit. You are not meant to open a weak-two with a side 4-card major – it's one of the rules that you have decided to obey in 2018.

But they're such nice spades and such puny hearts! You can't resist, the New Year's resolution has not lasted long: you open 2♠.

The auction continues in alarming fashion:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			2♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♦	Pass	?

You read partner's 4NT as Roman Key-Card Blackwood (RKCB) with spades as trumps. You have agreed to play 1430 with your partner (you have no idea why), so 5♣ should show one keycard. But what is this 5♦ bid, and what do you bid now?

Don't pass! 5♦ is part of the RKCB structure. After a 5♣ or 5♦ response to 4NT, the next step (other than a return to 5 of the agreed trump suit) is a *trump-queen-ask*. It is asking: "do you have the queen of trumps", in this case the spade queen.

Unfortunately, most new partnerships are either not aware of this part of the RKCB, or if they are, don't have an agreement on how to answer this question. Here's my suggested approach.

If you don't have the trump queen, return to 5 of your agreed suit. That says: "sorry, no trump queen", and your partner will probably pass.

If you do have the trump queen, jump to 6 of your agreed suit. As an extension, if you do have that queen, *and* you also have a king of a side-suit, you can bid that suit to show that king, as well as the trump queen. For example, bids of 5♥, 6♣ or 6♦ here would confirm that you have the spade queen, and also show the king of the suit you have bid. That could help partner bid a grand slam.

On this deal, you do have the spade queen, but no side king, so you simply bid 6♠, hoping that partner's New Year's Resolution is not: "*bid like a complete maniac.*"

Everyone passes your 6♠ bid, the ♦J is led, and you await dummy with interest:

6♠, South	♠ K10
	♥ KQ
	♦ AKQ3
	♣ AJ642
	N
	S
♦J led	♠ AQJ982
	♥ 7643
	♦ 82
	♣ 9

OK, that's a good dummy.

Planning the play in a slam contract is more about counting your winners, rather than counting your losers, of which there had better be few. On this deal you have 6 spades, 3 diamonds and 1 club on top, that's 10 tricks. Dummy's ♥KQ will certainly turn into a trick, that's 11.

Where are you going for the 12th?

You could try to set up dummy's fifth club, but that requires good breaks (essentially clubs 4-3, spades 3-2). A much better plan is to trump a heart.

Win the ♦A and play a heart. Suppose they win the ♥A and play a trump (the defenders can see what you're trying to do). Win that in dummy, cash your heart trick, play ♣A and trump a club, then trump a heart. You can get back to your hand with another club ruff to draw trumps and fulfil your slam. Your last heart will be discarded on dummy's ♦Q.

The full deal:

♠ 754	♠ K10	♠ 63
♥ J985	♥ KQ	♥ A102
♦ J1096	♦ AKQ3	♦ 754
♣ K3	♣ AJ642	♣ Q10875

♠ AQJ982	N	♠ 63
♥ 7643	W	♥ A102
♦ 82	E	♦ 754
♣ 9	S	♣ Q10875

Playing even one round of trumps first would have been fatal.

Points to remember:

- What about that New Year's Resolution? The rule about 'no side 4-card major' for a weak two has to be taken with a grain of salt. If your hearts had been stronger and your spades weaker, then a 2♠ opening might have been unwise.

Another way of looking at it: *some bidding rules are actually bidding guidelines.*

Yet another way of looking at it is: winning players look for opportunities to pre-empt, rather than reasons to *not* pre-empt. Pre-empts are powerful weaponry.

- After a 5♣ or 5♦ response to Roman Keycard Blackwood, the next step, other than a return to 5 of your trump suit, is a queen ask. Respond in the negative by returning to your trump fit at a minimum level. Respond in the positive by jumping in your trump suit, or by cue-bidding a side suit king.
- A fundamental component in planning the play of a trump contract is to ask yourself the question: *should I draw trumps?* More often than not, the answer is yes, but a common reason for answering no is that first, I want to trump something in the short-trump hand.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

After Partner's Negative Double

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♠	D'ble	Pass	1♣ ?

In this important auction, partner's double specifically indicates that he would have responded 1♥, had he the chance. The negative double is a surrogate for 1♥.

In principle this means that you should make the same rebid as you would have after a 1♥ response. However there are some twists to this.

First, you have lost your 1♠ rebid – you will need to find an alternative. That could be awkward.

Second, if your rebid would have been in notrumps but your hand lacks a spade stopper, you again have to find an alternative.

So matters can occasionally get a little sticky. One major alteration that needs to be made is that a simple new suit rebid is no longer forcing. For example, a 2♦ rebid here would normally be a reverse bid – strong and forcing. But after the negative double, it no longer is that, but instead is just a simple non-forcing bid showing diamonds.

On the plus side, a new bid: the 2♠ cue bid becomes available, which is used to show a powerful hand of one sort or another.

Try rebidding the following hands:

- (a) ♠ 104 ♥ KJ3 ♦ KJ96 ♣ A1062
- (b) ♠ 1042 ♥ K3 ♦ KJ96 ♣ AJ62
- (c) ♠ A1042 ♥ K3 ♦ A6 ♣ AJ652
- (d) ♠ A104 ♥ K3 ♦ AJ6 ♣ AQJ62
- (e) ♠ 1042 ♥ KJ3 ♦ A6 ♣ AKQJ6
- (f) ♠ 104 ♥ AQ43 ♦ 62 ♣ AKQJ6

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♣
1♠	D'ble	Pass	?

(a) ♠ 104 ♥ KJ3 ♦ KJ96 ♣ A1062

2♥. Your normal rebid (after 1♣ - 1♥) would have been 1NT, but with a low doubleton spade, that is not on. So put yourself into a possible 4-3 heart fit, and play it well.

(b) ♠ 1042 ♥ K3 ♦ KJ96 ♣ AJ62

2♦. Again, your normal 1NT rebid would be unwise. Instead try your other suit, non-forcing. Partner can choose between the minors, rebid 2♥, non-forcing with long hearts (which you would pass), or make other arrangements.

In America, they like to open 1♦ with 4-4 in the minors, to avoid this particular problem, but the 1♦ choice comes with separate issues of its own.

(c) ♠ A1042 ♥ K3 ♦ A6 ♣ AJ652

2NT. This no longer shows 18 or 19 points. Now it shows extra values (about 16-17) with good spades. It is not forcing.

(d) ♠ A104 ♥ K3 ♦ AJ6 ♣ AQJ62

3NT. There's no room for finessing. You have oodles of points and a spade stopper. Suggest a final contract of 3NT by bidding it.

(e) ♠ 1042 ♥ KJ3 ♦ A6 ♣ AKQJ6

2♠. This is where the cue-bid comes in handy. There's probably enough strength for game, but where? It could be hearts, clubs or notrumps. So you must force a bid out of partner to get the dialogue going.

(f) ♠ 104 ♥ AQ43 ♦ 62 ♣ AKQJ6

3♥. On the first five hands, you needed to change your rebid from what you would have bid after 1♣ - 1♥. But usually, you don't. Here you would have given a jump raise of 1♥ to 3♥, so that is what you should do on the negative-double auction.

CONGRESS RESULTS**Yarra Valley Mini Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 M. Tiplady – C. Fernando
- 2 S. Gluck – B. Kingham
- 3 V. Warbey – M. Stewart

Gardenvale Summer Congress*Boxing Day Swiss Pairs*

- 1 S. Ozenir – E. Samuel
- 2 D. Sharp – D. Roseman
- 3 C. Leach – P. Hollands

Paul Lavings Swiss Pairs

- 1 I. Gulec – G. Lovrecz
- 2 J. Ebery – K. Frazer
- 3 M. Henbest – J. Rennie

Matchpoint Swiss Pairs

- 1 B. A'Beckett – S. Ozenir
- 2 M. Gurfinkiel – J. Yang
- 3 R. van Riel – D. Harley

Rothfield Swiss Pairs

- 1 J. Ebery – K. Frazer
- 2 D. Sharp – S. Sharp
- 3 J. Mill – A. Hegedus

Tricks and Trumps Congress*Matchpoint Pairs*

- 1 S. Sharp – D. Sharp
- 2 S. Klofa – D. Harley
- 3 M. Darling – J. Mill

Swiss Pairs

- 1 M. Darling – J. Mill
- 2 R. Gallus – S. Weisz
- 3 H. Stewart – L. Parker

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 23 (December 2)*

- 1 E. Ramshaw – C. Woodley (Ballarat)

Event 1 (January 6)

- 1 B. Romeijn – J. Day (Berwick)
- 2 C. Bailey – V. Whitby (Yarra Valley)

(Congratulations go to octo/nona-genarians Pamela Ramshaw and David East also, who scored 71% in a heat of the Nationwide Pairs held at the VBA)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS

Dendy Park Summer Congress

Sunday 11th February, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue Dendy Park clubrooms
Breen Drive
East Brighton

Contact: Boris Tencer, 0414 353 996

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Rye Beach Congress

Saturday 10th March, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
Sunday 11th March, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Rosebud Memorial Hall
994 Point Nepean Rd, Rosebud

Contact: Brian Morgan, 0439 845 753

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Berwick Congress

Sunday 17th March, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue Solandra Community Hub
7-9 Solandra Blvd
Clyde North (Melway 134 J3)

Contact: Bob Westrip, 8786 7878

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>



Congratulations to Lisa Yoffa and James Thomas, from Waverley Bridge Club, who ran second in the Penline 500 Swiss Pairs in Summer Festival in Canberra, perhaps the best Victorian result in the Championship.



RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Maryanne Bird	Kings & Queens
Ruth Bourne	VBA
Dan Craine	Kings & Queens
Pamela Dunstan	Mornington
Kathleen Elkington	Traralgon
Peter Geran	Williamstown
John Haylock	Paynesville
Geoffrey Keenan	RACV
Tim Legge	Waverley
Tony Lester	Williamstown
Barbara Lonergan	Melbourne
Alistair Lowe	Bayside
Christa Riedacher	Bairnsdale
Margaret Roberts	Bendigo
Matthew Roberts	Moonee Valley
Brian Sampson	Bairnsdale
Helen Schapper	Northern
Vivian Westaway	South Gippsland

*State

Rosemary Chard	Mornington
Susie Groves	Bayside
David Hoad	Sunbury
Prue Helen Montgomery	Geelong
Lee Opray	Rye Beach
Marjorie Phillips	Benalla
Linda Picone	Warrnambool
Tony Seed	Geelong
Jenni Turner	Knox

National

Peter Barbore	Moonee Valley
Jenny Gray	Waverley
Susan Ruffin	South Gippsland
David Stubbings	Yarra Valley
Narelle Szuveges	Moonee Valley

*National

Monica Christopher	Sale
George Del Papa	Ocean Grove
Colin Hinde	Bayside
Alan Hu	Waverley
Pam Lawson	Waverley
Rosemarie Schwabegger	Lakes Entrance
Elizabeth Vanselow	Ravens
Vic Warbey	Yarra Valley

**National

David Haywood	Bairnsdale
Jan Rothlisberger	Waverley
Timothey Woodley	Ballarat

Life

Nina Fraser	Moonee Valley
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Bronze Life

Frances Engelman	VBA
Alan Johnston	South Gippsland
Brian Morgan	Rye Beach

Silver Life

Cecile Senior	Kooyong
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Gold Life

Robyn Couch	Traralgon
Greg Nicholson	Phillip Island

Silver Grand

Dee Harley	Grand Prix
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**A GAME CHANGER FROM THE
AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S PLAYOFFS
Kim Frazer**

Recently my partner, Anna St Clair and I contested the playoffs for the Australian women's team. This was the penultimate board of the 5 day tournament run with multiple 10-board matches, and at this point we were behind in our match.

Dir: South	♠ J10942								
Vul: All	♥ A3								
	♦ KJ2								
	♣ Q92								
♠ KQ5		<table style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">N</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">W</td><td></td><td style="padding: 2px 10px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		E	W		S	♠ A873
N		E							
W		S							
♥ 85			♥ -						
♦ 108643			♦ A975						
♣ KJ7			♣ A10643						
	♠ 6								
	♥ KQJ1097642								
	♦ Q								
	♣ 85								

Sitting South, I kicked off the bidding with 4♥, which was where I played. Vulnerable this is an 8 playing trick hand, and is worthy of a 4♥ opening, at equal vulnerability.

West led the ♠K, and on seeing dummy switched to a heart, won by me at South (preserving the heart entry), with East pitching a low club. I continued ♦Q won by East who now played ♣A, ♣8, ♣7, ♣2. West now had to decide whether to continue with clubs or spades. E/W play low encourage, but my play of the ♣8 misled East since the ♣5 was missing, and so it looked like a discouraging signal. Consequently when East played the ♠A, I could claim 10 tricks with the club loser going away on the high diamond.

Editor's Note: Perhaps Kim had read, or already knew about, the December newsletter article on false-carding. With the defenders playing "low encourage", Kim correctly "discouraged" a club play by playing a high card when East led the suit.

Kim and Anna ran third in the Playoffs, thereby qualifying for the Australian Women's Team. Congratulations to them, and to Diana Smart who, playing with Paula McLeish from Queensland, came second in the event.

VALE FRANK McCONVILL



The premature loss of Frank McConvill at 67 will be greatly felt by clubs around Victoria, and the Mornington Peninsula in particular.

Frank was well known on the Congress circuit, both as a player and as an assistant director. Just two weeks before his passing he had been appointed as a Congress Director, and as a player he achieved a high placing in the Yarra Valley mini-congress on his final weekend.

I first met Frank as a fellow committee member of the FABCV when he was still living in Wodonga and travelling to meetings by train – typical of his commitment to Victorian Bridge. Soon after, he and Pat moved to McCrae on the Peninsula and he joined the Rye Beach Bridge Club. He was appointed to the VBA Council and served as Treasurer for two years.

Frank was Director at Frankston, and provided enormous support to all clubs in the Mornington Peninsula Bridge Association with both his technical and directing skills. He was a lateral thinker and not many days would pass without another phone call or email from Frank suggesting ways we could improve bridge on the Peninsula.

Frank had a great sense of humour and was liked by everybody. He was a regular member of the Rye Beach contingent at the Gold Coast Congress – his cooking on the first Friday was legendary.

He will be very sadly missed.

... Brian Morgan

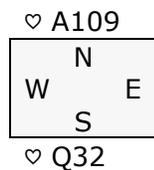
MY FAVOURITE SUIT COMBINATION
Bill Jacobs

Bridge is a multi-faceted game: in the bidding, the opening lead, the declarer play and the defence, there are a myriad of aspects, some technical, some human, some a combination of the two.

One of the technical matters is that of correctly playing various suit combinations. There are hundreds of them, literally, and you cannot play a decent game of bridge without understanding and applying the principles involved.

My favourite suit combination is any where the missing honour cards are the *king* and the *jack*. I regularly read a discussion of one of these, and often end up irritated by what is written.

It happened again over Christmas, in the Australian Youth Bridge Bulletin (irritations aside, an enjoyable read). The unnamed author discusses this one:



where your aim is to take two tricks. Missing the king and jack, I was immediately drawn to the problem.

Perhaps you would care to choose a play before reading on. It's a simple enough setup, but there's more than one way to go about it.

My hackles were raised as soon as I read the start of the author's solution: "*There are two options and they are fairly close.*" Oh no, not again. But yes, two incorrect solutions are then presented.

The first is to run the queen. If that loses to East's king, play small towards the ♥A10, hoping West has the jack. This will work approximately 75% of the time, winning two tricks if West has either the king or the jack.

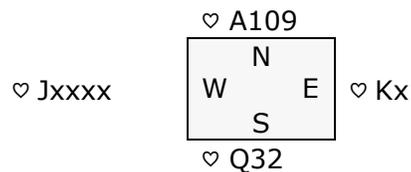
The second, is essentially the same play: low from hand putting in dummy's ♥9, again winning two tricks if West has either the king or the jack. The 'advantage' of the second option is that if West discards on the first round, you can win with the ace and play back towards your queen, gaining you a massive extra chance of 0.26%. Woohoo!

Both these approaches are completely wrong, and by a wide margin.

The correct play is to lead the nine from dummy, and if East plays low, play low from hand. If West wins with the jack, then subsequently lead the queen from hand, finessing against West's hoped for king.

This play also works approximately 75% of the time, in theory. It works if East has the jack, or West has the king.

But in real life, the actual likelihood of success is closer to about 95%. Consider this layout for example:



This is a losing position for my recommended play, but what are the chances of East smoothly playing low when the nine is led from dummy? Approximately 0%. If East is able to duck smoothly, more power to him, and ask him for a game sometime.

The fact is that East is highly likely to play the ♥K whenever he has it, grabbing the trick whilst the grabbing is good. Or at least hesitating before playing low (in which case you have the option of switching to another 75% chance, playing the queen, with a second finesse in reserve).

So it turns out that this issue is one of those that is both technical and human. Technically, the play recommended in the youth bulletin is correct, due to an obscure piece of maths involving vacant spaces. Realistically, it's wrong, and very wrong at that.

To be continued ...

LEERON'S BRIDGE VACATIONS

(Bridge at Tivoli Club)

Bali Holiday at The Trans Resort Bali
In the heart of Seminyak
21st - 28th May 2018

Single Option

AUD **2,100**_{nett}

Twin Share/Person

AUD **1,540**_{nett}



SPECIAL PACKAGE OFFER INCLUSIVE OF:

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 - Shuttle Service within Seminyak area
- AIRFARES NOT INCLUDED**

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Full payment upon booking - deposit into BSB633-000 Acc. 160532081 must include Name in reference.

Fully refundable if cancelled before 31/1/2018.

If cancelled by 15/3/2018 then 50% refundable and thereafter non refundable.

Cancellation for world or other events beyond our control may require travel insurance claims.

You are urged to take out travel insurance.

Non Bridge Players welcome at a reduced cost of AUD\$300.

BOOKINGS/CO-ORDINATOR

leeron.branicki@gmail.com or Booking form at bridge.webs.com/tivoli
Enquiries Leeron 0412884446.

THE TRANS RESORT BALI
Kerobokan - Seminyak
Bali 08361, Indonesia
T +62 361 898 1234
www.transresortbali.com

