

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

May 2018

Editor: Bill Jacobs



2018 VICTOR CHAMPION CUP FESTIVAL of BRIDGE



THURSDAY 7TH JUNE – MONDAY 11TH JUNE 2018

Bayview Eden Hotel: 6 Queens Road, Melbourne Victoria

SWISS PAIRS EVENTS - 10.30AM START

WOMENS, SENIORS, OPEN, RESTRICTED (<300 MP), AND <200 MP **7TH JUNE - 8TH JUNE**

SWISS TEAMS - 10AM START

(OPEN, MIXED, WOMEN, SENIOR, RESTRICTED, LIFE MASTER) **9TH JUNE – 11TH JUNE**

COME AND JOIN US. STAY WHERE YOU PLAY.
PRESENTATIONS AND HOSPITALITY ON FRIDAY AND MONDAY.

For more details visit the website at www.abfevents.com.au/events/vcc/2018

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson

This month we have the Victorian Restricted Pairs Championship on Saturday May 12 (details on page 8), with a terrific prize on offer to the winner – free entry, airfares and a per diem to play in the Restricted Butler Pairs national final at the Australian National Championships in Hobart. The ANC is a great two-week bridge bonanza, and it includes the oldest national championship in Australia – the Interstate Teams Championship.

Why not get a few pairs together from your club and give it a go? The state final, or the national final (any pair meeting the masterpoint limit can enter), or both. These sorts of events are a good mixture of the social and competitive aspects of bridge, and are increasingly popular around the world.

On a completely different note, I'd like to congratulate Dr Bill Bennett, who played his regular Thursday night duplicate at the VBA last month ... on his 100th birthday! He is a remarkable man who has led a remarkable life, about which he is remarkably humble.

Bill speaks 8 languages, and there's a story behind how he came to learn each of them. I'll share just one. He mentioned the other day that his Spanish is a little rusty. I asked how he came to learn Spanish and he replied "because I wanted to visit the Alhambra". Of course. I should have guessed. Many happy returns Bill; I wish you many more.



Bill Bennett at 100

FOR STARTERS

In a matchpoint duplicate, you pick up:

♠ AKJ6 ♥ K94 ♦ 72 ♣ 10973

No one is vulnerable, the dealer is on your right and she opens 1♦.

Should you make a bid, and if so, what?

You could pass with a clear conscience.

Some might bid 1♠ on the fine 4-card suit, but it's a bit naughty. You are meant to have 5 cards for an overcall.

If you are going to bid, make a takeout double.

The shape is good: you are short in the opened suit, and have at least 3 cards in each of the other suits. You are meant to have opening strength for a double, and that's the one questionable issue.

On the whole, it's winning bridge to try to get into the auction when you have some length in the major suits, as you do here. It means that you have a decent chance of either winning the contract, or forcing up the auction to an uncomfortable level for your opponents.

The fact that you are not vulnerable is also a positive factor for bidding: if you go down say -50 (one down) or even -100 (two down) that could be a good matchpoint score when compared to your opponents' making partscore.

We'll say you double, and the auction continues as follows.

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1♦	D'ble
1NT	Pass	3NT	All pass

It would seem your double was a futile effort.

Your partner leads the ♥5, and this is what you see:

♠ Q1082
♥ QJ
♦ AKQ93
♣ AJ

	N		♠ AKJ6
♥ 5	W	E	♥ K94
		S	♦ 72
			♣ 10973

You play the ♥K and it wins the trick, declarer following with the ♥2.

Now what?

It would seem partner has the ♥A: if declarer has it, then he would likely have swallowed up your king with the ace. It seems natural to return a heart, as you may be able to take lots of tricks in the suit. The right card to return is the 9, top of the remaining doubleton, to tell your partner that you only have three hearts. (With an original 4-card holding, you would return your lowest heart.)

But playing back a heart is not the right play. Before you do so, you play specifically the spade king. When this wins, partner will know you have the spade ace as well, and likely also the jack.

This defence is crucial as this is the full layout:

♠ Q1082
♥ QJ
♦ AKQ93
♣ AJ

♠ 53		N		♠ AKJ6
♥ A7653	♥ 5	W	E	♥ K94
♦ 1065			S	♦ 72
♣ 864				♣ 10973

♠ 974
♥ 1082
♦ J84
♣ KQ52

When you subsequently play the ♥9 back, and declarer plays low, partner will realise declarer started with 10xx in hearts and has a stopper in the suit. Tipped off by your ♠K play, he will win the ♥A and fire back a spade. You take the first 5 tricks to defeat the contract.

Now consider what happens if you play back a heart without first cashing the ♠K. Partner will likely let declarer win the heart in dummy to maintain communications with your hand, hoping that you can get the lead soon and play back your third heart. That play would work a treat if your spade king were instead the club king.

Points to remember:

- It is worth making a light takeout double of 1 of a minor, because your side may be able to compete successfully in a major suit.
- Be on the lookout for that spade play. It occurs when you hold AKJ sitting over dummy's queen. Playing the king tells partner that you're keen on this suit, but you want him to play a second round through dummy should you get the chance.
- One more thing: what do you think of South's bidding on this deal? I don't care for it. If you had passed the 1♦ opening, then South's 1NT response would have been eminently correct. With 6 HCP, he owes partner a bid. But when you double, South is not required to bid with a lousy 6 points (and his 6 points were rather lousy in a hand that is as flat as a pancake). South no longer has to keep the auction open for North, and should refrain from bidding notrumps with 3 small cards in each major.

The Doctor was checking on the mental capacity of three elderly bridge players.

He asked "How many high card points in a deck of cards?"

"60" replied patient 1.

"Wednesday" replied patient 2.

The Doctor then asked patient 3.

"40" came the reply.

"Excellent - How did you get to that?"

"Oh easy" she said, "Just subtract 60 from Wednesday."

TEST YOUR BIDDING

Partner's 1NT is doubled

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1NT	D'ble	?

Your first step in this situation might be to play for time and ask your LHO what the double means. Usually it is some sort of strength-showing device, but there are conventions (eg DONT or Multi-Landy) where it can show one or two suits.

Irrespective of the double's meaning, here is my strong recommendation:

Bid naturally

2♣ shows clubs, 2♦ shows diamonds, etc. Forget Stayman. Forget transfers. Your main objective is to get to a logical contract, which could well be 2♣, given that your RHO has some strength.

That's not quite all she wrote. With a goodish all-round hand (about 8+ HCP) you can redouble to show your strength; subsequent doubles by your side are for penalties.

With a weak hand but with a long suit, you can jump to the 3-level to try to pre-empt your opponents.

Finally with a strong but distributional hand, unsuitable for playing 1NT doubled (perhaps you fear doubler having a running suit), bid 2NT. (Don't worry about this one: it'll never happen, except maybe in this quiz.)

Make your call with the following:

- (a) ♠ 65 ♥ J93 ♦ J10652 ♣ 972
- (b) ♠ 65 ♥ J73 ♦ Q652 ♣ 10972
- (c) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ97532 ♦ 652 ♣ 2
- (d) ♠ J654 ♥ K3 ♦ A652 ♣ J72
- (e) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ973 ♦ Q6532 ♣ 2
- (f) ♠ 8654 ♥ A532 ♦ 3 ♣ 10752

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1NT	D'ble	?

(a) ♠ 65 ♥ J93 ♦ J10652 ♣ 972

2♦. On balance, this is likely to do better than 1NT. In a diamond contract, you will take some tricks with diamonds, and this may combine with partner's high cards to avert disaster. In 1NT doubled, unless partner has long and strong enough diamonds, he is only going to take his high cards. And even the diamonds can be run, you might get killed first in the other suits.

(b) ♠ 65 ♥ J73 ♦ Q652 ♣ 10972

Pass. Yes there might be a better spot in a minor, but there's no way to reliably find it, even if it exists. You're probably heading for a significant minus score, but just remember: all the other pairs sitting in your direction have the same problem. And at least partner has to play it!

(c) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ97532 ♦ 652 ♣ 2

3♥. This is quite a powerful playing strength hand, and you should take action to make it difficult for your opponents to find *their* correct contract.

(d) ♠ J654 ♥ K3 ♦ A652 ♣ J72

Redouble. LHO has nothing: this double may rebound on your opponents. You will double a subsequent spade or diamond runout for penalties, and hope partner can do the same to hearts or clubs.

(e) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ973 ♦ Q6532 ♣ 2

2♥. This one could get competitive. Start with hearts (the higher of two 5-card suits) and be prepared to compete with 3♦ should the opportunity arise.

(f) ♠ 8654 ♥ A532 ♦ 3 ♣ 10752

2♣. A toughie - 4441s usually are. It might be best in 1NT (so it could be right to pass), but your shape suggests a suit fit, if you have one will be better. If 2♣ is doubled for penalties, then make an SOS redouble.

VICTORIAN TEAMS FOR THE ANC

In April, events were held to finalize our representative teams for the upcoming ANC.

Open Team

Jamie Ebery – Leigh Gold
Michael Gurfinkiel – John Yang
Dee Harley – Rob van Riel

Women's Team

Robyn Hewson – Laura Ginnan
Maggie Callander – Penny Corrigan
Jean Hall – Franci Halmos

Seniors Team

Neil Ewart – Simon Henbest
Richard Greenfield – Sam Arber
Stephen Weisz – Bob Gallus

Congratulations to all, and good luck in Hobart!

STATE RESULTS

Fred Altman Swiss Pairs

- 1 P. Fent – M. Chrapot
- 2 B. Thompson – D. Thompson
- 3 K. Frazer – M. Phillips

MORE VICTORIAN SUCCESS AT THE GOLD COAST CONGRESS

Congratulations to Mary and Steve Colling from Mornington Bridge Group, who won the two-session 0-50 MP Pairs at the Gold Coast Congress in February.



Steve (left) and Mary being presented their award by Tim Runting at the Gold Coast.

CONGRESS RESULTS

Gardenvale Easter Congress

Easter Saturday Swiss Pairs

- 1 K. Frazer – J. Ebery
- 2 P. Hollands – M. Henbest
- 3 M. Yuill – M. Allison

Easter Monday Swiss Pairs

- 1 S. White – R. Berlinski
- 2 S. Klofa – D. Harley
- 3 C. Fernando – M. Tiplady

Ballarat Festival of Bridge

Pattie Neerhut Swiss Pairs

- 1 E. Ramshaw – M. Willcox
- 2 T. Tonkin – J. Fairhurst
- 3 D. Newland – D. Newlands

Festival Swiss Pairs

- 1 D. Newland – E. Ramshaw
- 2 I. Webb – T. McGregor
- 3 H. Stewart – S. Wurf

Whittlesea Congress

- 1 B. Geyer – G. Lovrecz
- 2 K. Frazer – C. Leach
- 3 S. Collins – A. Hegedus

Frankston Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 H. Stewart – T. O'Loughlin
- 2 K. Frazer – J. Ebery
- 3 R. Muir – I. Muir

Swiss Teams

- 1 K. Frazer, J. Ebery, D. Nie, C. Ding
- 2 J. Mill, P. Bolling, S. Read, J. Rennie
- 3 S. Hinge, J. Coutts, M. Henbest,
P. Hollands

VBA ANZAC Day Swiss Pairs

- 1 E. Moskovski – J. Coutts
- 2 N. Ewart – D. Harley
- 3 J. Yang – M. Willcox

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs

Event 7 (April 7)

- 1 A. Race – R. Kingham (Yarra Valley)

Event 8 (April 22)

- 2 R. Moss – A. Drury (South Gippsland)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS

Bayside Congress

Saturday 5th May, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 6th May, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Beaumaris Bowls Club
 Martin St
 Beaumaris

Contact: Jan Clyne, 9592 9273

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Sale Congress

Saturday 19th May, 11:30 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 20th May, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Laurels Greenwattle Racecourse
 Sale – Maffra Road
 Sale

Contact: Rob Gault, 5145 6206

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Bendigo Congress

Saturday 26th May, 10:30 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 27th May, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue All Seasons Resort Hotel
 171-183 McIvor Hwy
 Bendigo

Contact: Ken Simpson, 0409 330 112

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Moonee Valley Congress

Saturday 2nd June, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 3rd June, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Moonee Valley Bridge Club
 2a Pattison St
 Moonee Ponds

Contact: Bob Geyer, rgeyer@unimelb.edu.au

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

TIP OF THE MONTH

The Dreaded 4-4-4-1 Shape

4-4-4-1 is the most awkward distribution in bridge. It is the one shape where the hand is not balanced (there is a singleton) but there is no 5-card suit.

It can be very difficult to bid hands of this shape. Here are some tips for dealing with it.

Pass marginal 4-4-4-1 shapes.

Suppose you pick up:

♠ Q874 ♥ K632 ♦ AQJ8 ♣ 9

12 HCP, but the dreaded 4441 shape. Your only possible opening bid is 1♦, but what will you rebid if partner responds 2♣?

I would pass this hand instead ... it's only just got enough HCP for an opening, and the world won't come to an end.

4-4-4-1 is good for defence!

Suppose the opponents are bidding and you have 4-4-4-1 shape. That is good news. Think about it: not a single one of their suits is going to break well. If they land in your singleton, then that suit doesn't break: partner has length. And if they end up in one of your four-card suits, it's even better.

So don't strain to get into (or stay in) the auction, particularly if the opponents bid one of your four-carders.

For example:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♦	Pass	1♠	?

You hold:

♠ Q874 ♥ KJ102 ♦ 4 ♣ AQ106

You could make a takeout double: you have a decent hand and 4-card support for both the unbid suits. But it's best not to get involved in the auction: wherever the opponents end up, you will have fine defensive prospects.

Danger, danger: 1=4=4=4 shape

A hand with a singleton *spade* and 4-4-4 in the other suits is the worst possible distribution in the game. Suppose you hold:

♠ 4 ♥ Q1076 ♦ KJ32 ♣ AK84

You open 1♣ and partner, predictably, responds 1♠. Now what?

There's no good solution, there really isn't. A 2♦ or 2♥ rebid constitutes a reverse, so 16+ HCP, which you don't have. You can't repeat your clubs, as that would show at least 5, if not 6. That leaves 1NT, even with a singleton ... this would be my choice.

(This is one of the reasons why, if partner now repeats his spades, then that is best done with a 6-card suit: a point made in a previous TotM.)

An alternative strategy is to open 1♦, planning to rebid 2♣ after the 1♠ response. This promises 5+ diamonds, but some would regard this as the smallest lie.

'Flatten' a strong 4-4-4-1

What do you open with

♠ AQ102 ♥ 2 ♦ AKQ6 ♣ KQJ5

21 HCP but absolutely nothing fits. Opening 2NT with a low singleton is revolting. But choosing 1♣ or 1♦ instead and hearing it go 'pass pass pass' is repulsive. (And worse, even if the bidding doesn't die, partner will never realise you have this strong a hand.)

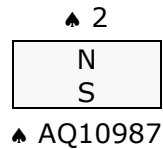
Revolting or repulsive – take your pick. My approach is to pretend such hands are balanced and bid accordingly. At least you won't have to stress further over the bidding.

In summary:

- Be cautious and conservative with 4-4-4-1 distribution.
- Plan your rebid in advance, and don't be afraid to rebid in notrumps if partner bids your singleton.
- As a last resort, treat your hand as balanced.

MY FAVOURITE SUIT COMBINATION
Bill Jacobs

Try this suit combination. It might be the trump suit, and you'd like to take as many tricks as possible. There are no problems with entries to either hand.



There you are, missing the king and the jack again. And four small cards. You would like to lose only one trick in the suit.

How do you go about it?

This one probably has to be learned. You should lead the ♠2 from dummy, and when East plays low, put in the ♠Q ... not the ♠10.

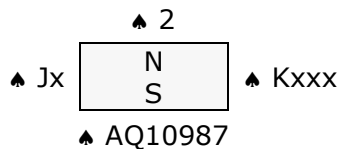
Can you work out why?

Suppose the suit divides 3-3. If East has both the king and jack, or neither the king nor jack, then it matters not one bit what you do. You will have one loser in the former case, and two losers in the latter.

If East has just the king, then you win by playing the queen. If East has just the jack, then you win by playing the ten.

So it's just a 50-50 guess which one works: neither the queen nor the ten has any theoretical advantage.

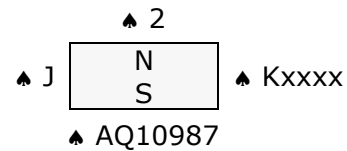
Now consider the suit dividing 4-2. There is one, and only one, layout where your play makes any difference:



In this layout, you must play small to the queen. The ace will then drop the jack, and you lose just one trick. If instead you play small to the ten, then the jack wins, and the king also wins later.

Play around with any other 4-2 layout, and you will find that playing small to the queen takes exactly the same number of tricks as small to the ten.

Finally, should the suit divide 5-1, then this is the layout you must hope for:



Again small to the queen works rather well.

Are you sick of suit combinations missing the king and the jack? I hope not, because I'm not finished.

To be continued ...

A Quickie

What is the technical term for an 8-card suit headed by the ace, king and queen?

Answer on next page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dir: South ♠ 762
 Vul: all ♥ A1092
 ♦ QJ
 ♣ K832

♠4 led

N
S

♠ AK54
 ♥ KQJ8764
 ♦ A4
 ♣ -

West	North	East	South
Pass	3♥	Pass	1♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	6♥

West leads the ♠J to your slam.

There are a number of ways you might make this contract. Your task is to find a line of play that gives you **four** distinct chances.

Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

♠ J1098	♠ 762	♠ Q3			
♥ 52	♥ A1092	♥ -			
♦ K1076	♦ QJ	♦ 98532			
♣ AJ4	♣ K832	♣ Q109765			
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N					
S					
	♠ AK54				
	♥ KQJ8764				
	♦ A4				
	♣ -				

Here are your four chances:

1. The diamond finesse works (you just lose a spade, ruffing your fourth spade)
2. Spades divide 3-3 (you set up the suit, and discard a diamond on your long spade)
3. When you lead a low club from dummy, East clatters up with the ace, fearful that you might otherwise win a singleton queen
4. Someone has the club ace short (at most three cards in the suit)

To combine all four chances, win the spade at trick 1, cross to ♥A and play a low club (chance 3).

Assuming this doesn't work, ruff the club, cross to dummy's ♥10 to ruff another club. Then to dummy's ♥9 to ruff a third club. Perhaps the club ace has fallen by now (chance 4 – see hand diagram).

If not, play ♠K and another spade, hoping for a 3-3 break (chance 2).

Finally, if none of those plays works, then ruff your long spade and take the diamond finesse, which indeed was your best chance in the first place.

Solution to 'A Quickie'

Trumps

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS**State**

Mary Colling	Mornington
Steve Colling	Mornington
Eveline Fallshaw	Moonee Valley
Jennifer Sammels	Rye Beach
Steven Shochet	VBA
Florence Vawdrey	Rye Beach

***State**

Marilyn McInnes	Ocean Grove
Carmella Rauchberger	Theodor Herzl
James Thomas	Waverley

National

Robynne Owen	Paynesville
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***National**

Lynette Bradley	Knox
Marg Wylie	Ocean Grove

****National**

Sarah Livingston	Dromana
Philip McDermott	Frankston

Bronze Life

James Simpson	Warrnambool
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Silver Life

Bruce Gibson	South Gippsland
Donna Wilderness	Ballarat

Restricted Pairs at the ANC

One of the events at the Hobart ANC is a Restricted Butler Pairs to be held on the weekend of August 4th and 5th. It's a great event which offers both gold masterpoints and cash prizes.

Whilst anyone with fewer than 300 masterpoints as of 31/12/17 can enter, the ABF will provide a subsidy to two pairs from each state. The subsidy consists of an airfare plus a \$500 allowance for each pair, and free entry into the event.

A Restricted Pairs event will be held at the VBA over a single day on May 12th, starting at 10 am, comprising seven 8-board matches. The two leading pairs at the end win the subsidy.

Why not call on your favourite partner and try out. Enter via the VBA website or send email to andrewmb@vba.asn.au.