

# Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

July 2020

Editor: Dee Harley

## VBA CULTURE & BEHAVIOUR INITIATIVE

While COVID19 has kept us all away from the bridge table, the VBA Culture Crew has been busy working on plans to welcome players back to bridge at the VBA.

Our work has been based on the responses from over a hundred VBA members to our culture and behaviour questionnaire. The Team has developed action plans across the key aspects in our Bridge environment.

Every month there is to be visible action; even though we are yet to return to face-to-face play. Strategies implemented will continue as companions to your Bridge experiences over the coming months and years.

Following the survey, we have adopted a cultural vision endorsed by the majority of respondents.

"A culture that attracts, welcomes and supports bridge players of all standards to enjoy playing their bridge at the VBA."

To enable this culture, we will be actively WARM!

**W** = **W**elcoming

**A** = **A**biding by the Rules

**R** = **R**espectful of others

**M** = **M**indful of the balance between passion and ego

We strongly encourage all players, directors and administrators to embrace the behaviours inherent in our vision WARMly. As Albert Einstein said, "*Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving*".

The VBA Council has approved wide ranging actions for moving towards the Vision, including:

- Active support and guidance from the State Council
- Adjustments to the role and approach of each director and teacher
- The evolution of the physical environment and playing conditions to enhance comfort and attractiveness
- The monthly State Newsletter and weekly bulletins which will assist with promoting and supporting change through their content
- Player education and awards
- Re-surveying over time to identify the direction, amount and persistence of change

We note the efforts of other clubs in this regard, and so have embraced:

- The ABF's banner promoting the Please Be Considerate principles
- The player's Code of Conduct
- Awards, subscription contracts, regular educative articles and tips before play, Suggestion Box, and more.

The Culture Crew would welcome any suggestions that can support our journey together and trusts that we will all embrace the challenge of reaching for our Vision.

**VBA** Culture Crew 2020

## VBA BULLETIN LEAGUES

We had 21 teams who requested entry into the VBA Bulletin Leagues. I would have preferred 24 as we could have had 3 leagues of 8, with 22 we would have to go with 2 leagues of 11 and with 23 teams we would need to cast about for another entry!

Anyway, we have been resolved into three leagues of 7 teams and Laurie very kindly agreed to seed them as follows:

Name	Captain
Big Dills	Andrew Macready-Bryan
Get Smart	Neil Ewart
International	Thilak Ranasinghe
BuKKLe	Kitty Muntz
Half-Baked	Dee Harley
Marks	Martin Willcox
JEM in the ruff	Michael Phillips
Milly	Justin Mill
Unhinged	Margaret Yuill
Four desperados	Len Meyer
Glorious	Gloria Peston
T-Delights	Serhat Ozenir
The Four Belles	Jean Hall
Jerry, Elaine, George & Kramer	Lisa Yoffa
Sanhedrin Sphielers	Les Ajzner
Herded Cats	Kim Hoff
Kill Bill 4	Steven Thorne
Veering	Dianna Middleton
Bird Team	Maryanne Bird
Mornington Madames	Lindsay Young
Mister Slam & the Miss Bids	Steve Colling

The season started on 28/06/2020 and the week runs from the nominated start date to the following Saturday (4<sup>th</sup> July) at 5pm.

The second week starts 7 hours later - on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July, and will run until 5pm the following Saturday (11<sup>th</sup> July). Seven consecutive weeks like that will make up the full season.

The matches will be played very much in the manner of the VBA Bulletin Cup. Each team

will play the other 6 teams in their league, and each team will have a one week 'rest' when the other 6 teams play each other.

I have sent a schedule to each team captain, along with the email addresses of their opponents. The data protection act prohibits us from displaying the email addresses on the website. If you are having trouble getting a response from an opposing Captain, please let me know.

I have decided to be Draconian should a match be unable to be arranged or completed. If that happens then both teams will get 0 Victory Points for the match. I do however reserve the right to adjust the score in special circumstances (as yet unimagined!).

If such a result involves me then I will ask Laurie to award a result.

The [VBA Website](#) has also got considerable coverage of the League Teams. You can see the schedule, the latest league tables and lots more information about the leagues there.

## SUIT COMBINATION

You: AJ874      Partner:    K963

You have reached a small slam playing with this trump suit.

Your immediate thought is that you have missed a grand slam in No Trump as you have 11 guaranteed tricks not using the trump suit at all, so the two tricks in this suit give you thirteen.

Do not lose your focus though! How do you play this suit so as to guarantee you make your small slam? (given no adverse ruffing)

[Solution](#) on P7.

**BELTER - SOLUTION**

Robert Fruewirth was the first person to come up with the correct solution:

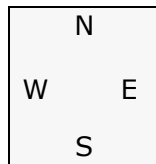
IMPs

Dir: South

Vul: None

- ♠ KJ8
- ♥ 743
- ♦ Q75
- ♣ A632

- ♠ ?
- ♥ J2?
- ♦ ?
- ♣ ?



- ♠ ?
- ♥ AK?
- ♦ ?
- ♣ 10?

- ♠ AQ10
- ♥ Q5
- ♦ A8632
- ♣ K54

Lead: ♥J

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

West leads the ♥J. East cashes ♥AK, then kindly switches to the ♣10. It's teams, and opps are world class ... they won't let you get away with anything

Robert's solution:

I have 3 spades and 2 clubs.

Hearts appear to be 6-2 so we need to keep West off lead.

I need 4 diamonds to come to 9 tricks - so they need to be 3-2 and specifically Kx with East.

If I cash the ♦A, East could drop the ♦K under it, so to avoid this I lead a diamond from the board. If East plays low, I hop ♦A and then duck one. If instead, East plays ♦K, I duck.

Well done Robert. Tim-Tams were delivered.

**EDITORIAL  
DEE HARLEY**

I have been very busy getting the VBA Bulletin League system up and running. Pretty much like the VBA Bulletin cup was based on the Scottish Cup (loosely!), the Leagues are slightly based on the Scottish Eastern District League matches. There are significant differences however! The Scottish version was of course face-to-face, and the matches consisted of teams of 8 players, hence pools of around a dozen players to select from. One final difference was the scoring in the Scottish was Aggregate! That was archaic even way back then when I ran one of the teams but getting the impetus to change something which has been running successfully for a number of decades is quite tricky!

I do remember one match where our opponents had a bidding misunderstanding and their "s.o.s. redouble" was not recognised. They made 2 tricks in 2♠XX as I recall, 2800 for our team was a match-turner. That order of score was often the half-time aggregate of a team. We had gained it all one one board!

Anyway, here we are stepping out on the road to running three leagues. After a few weeks we will test the water out to see if we wish to have promotion and relegation, and have another season, or perhaps we could stage another VBA Bulletin Cup. I have no idea at the moment how that future will play out, so it is important that you let me know what you think of these online competitions.

Setting up the matches seems to cause the odd problem, when you end up playing your team mates! However, once you have done a few of these it becomes second nature.

As always, I'd be fascinated to hear your views. [dee\\_harley@hotmail.com](mailto:dee_harley@hotmail.com)

**PLAY PROBLEM #8 - SOLUTION**

Last month you had a mystery to solve

IMPs

Dlr: North ♠ J1092

Vul: None ♥ Q3

♦ J1096

♣ AKQ

♠ ? N ♠ ?

♥ 72? W E ♥ AK?

♦ 32? ♦ A7?

♣ ? S ♣ ?

♠ AK874

♥ J654

♦ KQ

♣ 73

Lead: ♥7

Bidding:

	W	N	E	S
	-	1♦	1♥	1♠
	Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
	All Pass			

This is an IMPs team match. East, having overcalled 1♥ takes the two top hearts and then switches to the ♦A and continues the suit, West following suit. In hand with the ♦K what do you play – and why?

This hand is a psychological thriller! East has taken three tricks and decides not to play another heart. Something is wrong! If East had (say) 2 small spades, another heart would have hit the table at the speed of light! All he required his partner to have to beat the contract would be ♠Qx (or ♠K or ♠A), yet he plays diamonds. The only explanation is that East holds the ♠Q and does not want to expose the fact. Well by playing this way the position IS exposed! Careful though, East may be sitting on a void club, so when you win the ♦K, you should cash a top spade and then ruff a heart in dummy (assuming West doesn't ruff in with the ♠Q after all!) then you can take the marked spade finesse for the contract.

Correct solutions from: Arthur and Kitty

**Play Problem #9**

This month you have to try to make 4♠ on the lead of the ♥K

IMPs

Dlr: North ♠ Q1096

Vul: None ♥ A85

♦ A3

♣ Q632

♠ ? N ♠ ?

♥ K? W E ♥ ?

♦ ? ♦ ?

♣ ? S ♣ ?

♠ KJ875

♥ 632

♦ J42

♣ AK

Lead: ♥K

Send me your solution please:  
[dee\\_harley@hotmail.com](mailto:dee_harley@hotmail.com)

**Solution to Suit Combination ([page 2](#))**

How to avoid two losers in this suit?

You: AJ874 Partner: K963

This is a standard position with which you should be familiar, - if you weren't then you are now!

If the suit breaks 2-2 or 3-1 then you can just cash your two top honours.

So if a 2-2 or 3-1 break is not a problem, you must consider a 4-0 break. If you cash the King and your LHO has all 4 trumps, you cannot stop him from making 2 tricks.

if you cash the Ace first you will be able to lead towards the K96 in dummy and restrict yourself to one loser. If instead your RHO has all 4 trumps you can play across to the King and then lead up towards the J87, also restricting yourself to one loser in the suit.

The answer to this riddle then, is to cash the Ace first then you will be able to guarantee you will have at most one loser in the suit regardless of how the trumps lie.

**DEE HARLEY**

I have some playing foibles which I think make so much sense, but somehow, I find it very difficult to explain to people.

One of these foibles is – if declarer calls for a small card from dummy and you are going to split your honours, play the top card you have.

It clarifies the suit position for your partner. If instead you play a lower honour, it will still force declarer to play his big card to win the trick, but your poor partner will be none the wiser.

An example hand should help to clarify this.

I have attempted to reconstruct this layout from a hand played many years ago at rubber bridge.

We were four good friends and we had all had a few beers which may explain my poor memory of the exact hand and any dodgy doings which follow:

Rubber Bridge:

Dir: South      ♠ 9xx  
 Vul: N/S      ♥ xxxx  
                   ♦ x  
                   ♣ A10xxx

♠ Ax	N	♠ xxx
♥ 10xxx	W      E	♥ KQJ
♦ QJ10x	S	♦ xxxxx
♣ KQJ		♣ xx

♠ KQJ10x  
 ♥ Ax  
 ♦ AKx  
 ♣ xxx

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	-	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Dbl	Pass	Pass	Rdbl
All Pass	-	-	-

Lead: ♣K

Well it was rubber bridge! West led a top club and I played low from both hands. Seeing

dummy's diamond singleton he decided to play ♠A and another spade to cut down ruffs. I won in hand and played ♦A and ruffed a diamond.

To get back to hand I had to play a heart from dummy, East played the ♥J and I won with the ♥A, drew trumps and played a club and ducked again.

West now had to guess which red King his partner had started with. In the event he played a diamond back and so I ended up making a redoubled contract.

Now I have not fully remembered this hand, and I have made West bid very badly and play worse, I'm sure it wasn't as bad as all that. However, forget all that - the salient point is East's contribution.

This is the thing which had stuck in my mind for over thirty years....What a difference it would make to his partner if, when I lead that heart from dummy, East plays the ♥King! Now West, when he gets in with that club can play a heart to his partners ♥Jack, (or ♥Queen) and I'm one in the soup

Note that had West led a heart initially, it would be correct for East to play the ♥J, that has not changed! It is when declarer leads a small card from dummy that you should play your top card.

Or indeed, if declarer leads a small card towards (say) Axx in dummy, and you hold KQJx or QJ10x. By playing your top card you tell your partner what your holding is.

Defence is about communication. You need to help your partner to do the right thing (unless of course you are playing rubber bridge against me!)

♣♣♣ **KNAVE OF CLUBS** ♣♣♣  
**Look before you leap**

This hand is from a match at the Interstate teams. The North hand is a possible light opener and was opened at some tables but not at the one I was watching. The auction started simply enough but North had a problem on the second round as they had considerable undisclosed values. North also reflected that South clearly had long hearts but hadn't opened 4♥ or 4♣ which was a stronger kind of 4♥ bid.

A 4♠ bid might now be seen as an attempt to play there. A 5♦ cue bid, trying to draw attention to the lack of a club control, might be better but North simply bid the slam. South might have been better but one can see that South was trying to make a practical bid opposite a passed partner. The defence missed the killing club lead when West led the singleton spade. Declarer has eleven tricks with six hearts, three diamonds and two black aces. Clearly, declarer has to develop one trick and it has to come from spades.

Teams:

Dlr: North

♠ A10942

Vul: Both

♥ 874

♦ AQ2

♣ 83

♠ 8

♠ KJ753	N	♠ 8
♥ 96	W	♥ 103
♦ J106	E	♦ 9875
♣ K74	S	♣ QJ10962

♠ Q6

♥ AKQJ52

♦ K43

♣ A5

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	6♥	All Pass	-

South ducked the spade in dummy and East won the ♠K and immediately gave West a spade ruff which was 13 imps away since they had stopped in game in the other room.

Declarer should have reflected that West had led dummy's suit and good players do not lead through dummy's long suit unless they have a singleton! Once this is realized, the contract can be seen to be safe. Win the ace of spades at trick one and draw trumps. Now surrender the ♠Q to the ♠K and win the club return. Enter dummy with the QD and lead the 10S for a ruffing finesse and throw the losing club on the 10 or 9 of spades. The hand emphasizes the need for planning before playing to trick one.

Declarer here was not unlucky that the lead was a singleton since it is obviously such when led by a good player. Notice that if declarer avoided the club lead and got a red suit lead, there are three red suit entries to dummy, after trumps split 2-2, and the spades can be ruffed up on any 3-3 or 4-2 split and some 5-1 splits.

### BBO SERVER SETUP

Everything changes! The Corona virus has had a huge impact on the numbers of BBO players. We have seen - even in Victoria, many new players who were not using BBO before, are now fast becoming BBO experts!

So, imagine what has happened worldwide. BBO has had a huge influx of new players and has seen such a change in traffic that it was becoming overwhelmed.

To cope with the increase in traffic BBO has had to split its servers into two, so logging on to BBO - you join the "competitive" server. This handles team matches (our league matches included) and all major competitive things (like the VBA pairs tournaments).

If you want to just play a few hands you click the "Casual" button which switches you out of the competitive server and onto the new "Casual" server. There you can join a table, create a table and play a few hands against friends. Note that there is no live connection between the two servers, so if you log onto one of them you cannot "see" (or chat to) your friend who is on the other server.

In order for you to exchange messages etc, you both need to be on the same server.