

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

November 2020

Editor: Dee Harley

MYSTERY WRITER CHEEKY MONKEY

Can you identify someone from their bridge play and writing style alone? I will throw this one out there as a challenge. Since I will not tell you their name under any circumstances, I am giving this bridge writer a non-de-plume of "cheeky monkey".

It was an online teams match. You are South and your (International level) opponents are playing a fancy system. Both sides are vulnerable, and you are in 4th seat.

Your Hand:

♠ AKQ96 ♥ 6 ♦ KQJ ♣ K953

Bidding (with explanations):

W	N	E	S
1♦(1)	Pass	1♠(2)	Dbl(3)
2♦(4)	Pass	Pass	2NT(5)
Pass	3NT(6)	All Pass	

- 4+♥ could be canape 9-14
- 4+♠ Non-Forcing
- I had options but decided to double
- 4♥ 5+♦
- Partner is known to have Heart length (including a stopper please partner!)
- My hearts look well-placed, and you play them well.

Dlr: South

♠ 1072

Vul: Both

♥ AQ932

♦ 4

♣ 8762

♠ ?
♥ ?
♦ Q?
♣ ?

	N		
♠ ?			♠ ?
♥ ?			♥ ?
♦ ?	W	E	♦ ?
♣ ?			♣ ?

♠ AKQ96

♥ 6

♦ KQJ

♣ K953

The lead was ♦7 (3rds & 5ths)

I took East's ♦10 with my ♦Q then paused to think.

It looked easy - play 2 rounds of spades unblocking the 10 and then finesse the heart. Cash my 8 winners and exit a Diamond.

But what if West didn't have the ♥K? it would be catastrophic. So, I decided that if he didn't have the Heart King, he may very well think that I have got it and get a bit desperate in the defence.

Or he might clear the diamonds and then when I try heart finesse and it fails, I will be worse off, but what the heck I nonetheless decided to exit with the ♦K. Sure enough, he decided I had to have ♥K and went after the club suit. 10 tricks. The full hand:

IMPs

Dlr: South

♠ 1072

Vul: Both

♥ AQ932

♦ 4

♣ 8762

♠ 5

♥ J875

♦ A97532

♣ AQ

	N		
♠ J843			♠ J843
♥ K104			♥ K104
♦ 1086	W	E	♦ 1086
♣ J104			♣ J104

♠ AKQ96

♥ 6

♦ KQJ

♣ K953

You might initially have wondered why I gave our mystery writer a non-de-plume of "cheeky monkey", but when you follow the play, I think you will understand.

You may send in your guess as to the identity of cheeky monkey, but I will not publish the name, although I will report anyone who managed to identify our mystery writer correctly.

VBA BULLETIN SPRING LEAGUE

LEAGUE TABLES AS AT 25/10/2020

Team	Played	Net Imps	VPs
Half-Baked	8	223	117.02
Milly	8	176	113.99
International	8	87	88.67
Get Smart	8	50	88.35
Klofa	8	-28	74.84
Marks	8	-69	67.52
Lovrecz	8	-154	60.9
Sandpit	8	-98	60.85
Hotties	8	-187	47.86

Team	Played	Net Imps	VPs
JEMs	8	89	92.89
Four Desperados	8	71	91.88
T-Delights	8	40	89.7
Bird	8	25	83.74
Herded Cats	8	33	83.44
The Gentry	8	6	81.96
The Mad Maskers	8	-58	72
Lola's Ladies	8	-57	71.94
FLG	8	-149	52.45

Team	Played	Net Imps	VPs
MisFits	8	260	114.56
QSSZ	8	126	102.67
Veering	8	57	90.11
stepmates	8	20	83.79
Sanhedrin Shpielers	8	10	78.33
The Young Ones	8	-21	75.8
The Four Belles	8	-47	73.12
Mercargeosal	8	-206	58.2
ANSAHALI	8	-199	43.42

The league tables as shown above were after eight weeks of competition, with one week to come. The blue league in particular is going to be a very close finish! Probably by the time you read this, the situation will have resolved itself, but as I write it now, it looks like an exciting prospect (you will be able to see the final results [here](#)).

The Spring league has come to a close. We have had an interesting time as organisers. Here are the notable points from my position.

- Getting used to setting up matches takes a bit of computer understanding, a bit of practise and a lot of common sense. The captains who have managed to create the matches and run them seamlessly are few and far between! Most players have encountered a match where they find themselves playing their team-mates, or waiting for players to arrive, or playing the wrong number of boards. I am delighted to report that every player has been understanding about the situation, and what's more **ALL** of the matches have managed to reach a conclusion. I can also report that as a whole we are getting better at setting up the matches. Troublesome incidents are occurring less and less as we gain experience.
- The biggest trouble point is the standing instruction about Undo. We have had two appeals concerning the undo feature. I repeat that VBA policy is to allow all undo requests. However, people should only request an undo if they made an accidental bid or play that was not what they intended to do. If, for example, you suddenly remember the system after having made your bid, you should not request an undo. I once had a situation where we had been playing North/South all event but suddenly in the last round we were East/West and I had not noticed. My partner opened 1NT and the next hand passed. I thought that my partner had passed and my RHO had opened 1NT so I passed with my 11 count. Lazy stupidity on my part. I did not request an undo, what do YOU think should have happened?
- The best bit for me has been the number of times I get an email results along these lines: "In an enjoyable and friendly but competitive match Blah beat blah2 65-58. I really have had a lot of such emails. And very very few matches are 'troublesome'. Looking through the email results file I have, it appears most of you enjoy the format and the competition and the camaraderie.

So that leads me nicely onto what will we do next? (page 3!)

**VBA BULLETIN SUMMER LEAGUE
AND
VBA BULLETIN CUP**

We have Christmas coming up, so my proposal is that we start a new league on Monday 11th January. **Entries for the Summer league will be accepted in December only.** As you will appreciate, I need time to apply the relegation and promotion, to seed the new teams and to work out how many leagues of how many teams will suit the numbers of entries we get.

In the meantime, now that you know how to run team matches, why don't you replay some of your most enjoyable matches on a regular basis. Team matches, as you have discovered are great fun and easy enough to manage once you get the hang of it. It will be good practice for the coming season!

Thinking further into the future, when the summer league is complete, it will be around 1 year since we implemented the VBA Bulletin Cup – the knockout teams competition which was our first venture into online teams matches. So, I propose that the summer league will be followed by the VBA Bulletin Cup 2021.

I'm hoping we get at least as many entries as last year, and that **"Big Dills"** and Plate winners **"International"** will be among the contestants as reigning champions.

Entries for that competition will open after we have finished the Summer league.

KITTY IN ACTION

It's not often that a weak two bid is passed around to you in 4th seat and you hold a 4 count. Kitty Muntz was playing in an international online match in the [ReynoldsTeamMatches](#).

These events were started by Tom Reynolds when the ACBL cancelled the Columbus NABC. Anyone can enter, but it is intended for experienced players. This month Kitty's team (Kitty Muntz-Leigh Gold Kim Frazer-Jamie Ebery) have won all their matches against foreign teams and are through to the 4th round (the last round before the quarter finals)

Back to the hand....It wasn't any old 4 count:

Dlr: West ♠ A10854
 Vul: E/W ♥ AK98
 ♦ AJ72
 ♣ -

♠ KQ9732	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 100px;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N		W	E		S	♠ J6
N								
W	E							
	S							
♥ Q32		♥ J5						
♦ 9		♦ KQ86543						
♣ KJ3		♣ Q6						

♠ -
 ♥ 10764
 ♦ 10
 ♣ A10987542

Lead: ♠K
 Contract 5♣
 Bidding:

W	N (Leigh)	E	S (Kitty)
2♠	Pass	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT	Pass	4♣
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
All Pass			

Kitty "knew" her partner had a penalty pass and after some thought she just bid a quiet 3♣. She couldn't have been surprised that her partner Leigh Gold bid 3NT. Over this she bid 4♣ hoping for a pass. Leigh bid 4NT and Kitty now pulled this to 5♣.

The ♠K was led and Kitty ducked and ruffed and played the ten of clubs. West won the Knave and persisted with a small spade and Kitty ruffed again and played Ace and another trump. West exited with a Diamond. It looked to Kitty that prospects were dim but undaunted she saw a possibility - if West had 6 spades and three hearts they would be come under pressure. So, she won the Diamond exit ruffed a Diamond and ran her clubs. West was squeezed and eventually had to let go a heart and now Kitty played the hearts from the top. Well done!

Can you see the way for West to beat the contract?

VIEW FROM THE RESTRICTED ZONE
TONY GEORGESON

This article is a reprint from the Bayside U3A Newsletter.

All our lives have been changed by this pandemic. But we are fortunate that the U3A has been a window into the perspectives of others and helped keep us all calm....even though it is a time of major change.

The pandemic has transformed the world of Bridge and adapting to the changes was necessary to prevent Bridge Deprivation Syndrome developing in those whom I describe, tongue in cheek, as the most 'calm' of all U3A members.... the Bridge enthusiasts.

There is no doubt that the social aspect of meeting friends in pleasant Bridge venues in Bayside was a valued part of our weekly lives. It was possible to play each day of the week and most nights. In addition to the U3A Bridge classes, Bayside is well endowed with well run, affable and pleasant Clubs. Jan and Peter's big Club over many venues in Bayside, Terry and his friends at Beaumaris, George and Boris at spacious premises in Dendy and Jeff at Gardenvale. Plus, Community Centres such as Sandy and Castlefield held Bridge sessions. Of course, the Golf Clubs had regular sessions plus the many convivial private gatherings made Bridge a healthy anchor for the weekly lives of many, many people.

So, it all stopped in March 2020.

Then the transformation took place. Bridge went 'online'. It actually had already been thriving on a website known as Bridge Base Online. But the close-down in March meant that Bridge players took to BBO with increasing enthusiasm.

A rumour was that Bill Gates and Warren Buffett who are Bridge enthusiasts gave support to BBO? If true, the moral support they gave to BBO has been greatly appreciated. Because there was now a serious interpersonal vacuum to be filled for people worldwide and BBO needed more IT resources to handle it. These were acquired quickly, it seems. Suddenly online, new, but different friendships were possible because players were in contact with others from all over the

world, not just bayside and Melbourne. People with differing skills and Bridge experiences. Tournaments were started online and it was remarkable how quickly people accepted that they had to learn how to log on, navigate their way around the pages so they could make bids in the usual manner and then bliss of bliss, play the cards. We learned how to 'chat' also! Their iPads, tablets, laptops, and smart phones became even more beneficial. Then the Bridge Clubs, The Victorian Bridge Association and the Australian Bridge Federation took the initiative to 'Australianise' online Bridge. It has succeeded.

We have to acknowledge though that not all can gain easy access to such online facilities, nor have the desire to substitute the internet for real human contact during this enforced isolation. I was a reluctant newcomer. I had to be dragged to BBO. I already spent so much time in front of my PC that the thought of more internet time did not excite but then I realised something. For me, the alternative was not attractive. No Bridge at all!

Bridge as it was, could well have now gone for some time. Think about it. We sat at small tables, handled the same cards and being human, coughed and sneezed when a 'bug' was spreading. Possible health issues may require permanent change in the future when we get back together.

A good number of Clubs from around the World also realised this and went online. Once I noticed 40,000 people logged on and playing Bridge on BBO. Some Bayside Clubs moved their contact with their friends and members online. We found ourselves playing against people from the rest of Australia, from South America, the USA and Canada of course, plus Asia and Europe. The most 'exotic' person I met was from Andorra. He suggested that we all should visit one day and play Bridge.....my response was we would be delighted once the virus is under control....and the airlines were flying...and our government let us leave the country....

So as with the Bayside U3A and its great uptake of Zoom, for Bridge players the week now involves regular online Bridge games. The World has certainly changed. But let us hope it changes back....

PLAY PROBLEM #12 - SOLUTION

Last month you had a 4♠ contract to play.

IMPs

Dlr: East ♠ K94
 Vul: Both ♥ A8532
 ♦ A52
 ♣ J5

♠ ?	N	♠ ?
♥ ?	W E	♥ ?
♦ ?	S	♦ K?
♣ 87?		♣ QA?

♠ AQJ10873
 ♥ 7
 ♦ 984
 ♣ 92

Lead: ♣8

Contract 4♠

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	1♣	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

West leads the ♣8, East wins the ♣Q and cashes the ♣A before switching to the ♦K.

Denny got this problem somewhat right, but I'm a bit fussy about using correct technique.

It is entirely correct to duck the ♦K, since East may err and switch to a club. Also, by doing this you rectify the count for any potential squeeze which may emerge. No other continuation can harm your line of play, since you should play to set up the heart suit, retaining an entry to dummy with the ♠4. Most likely East will continue diamonds.

You win with the ♦A and play ♥A and ruff a heart (with a high spade – why not the Ace!), play the ♠Q to the ♠K (check everyone follows - as a 3-0 spade break will likely defeat you) and then ruff a heart with the ♠J and play the ♠8 to dummy's ♠9 and ruff your third heart. By this time, if the hearts were 4-3, then your ♥8 in dummy is now established, you can play the ♠3 to dummy's ♠4 and throw your losing diamond on the ♥8. Glorious.

PLAY PROBLEM #13

Here is a routine 4♥ to play. – On ye go!

IMPs

Dlr: South ♠ J3
 Vul: Both ♥ J105
 ♦ K75
 ♣ KQ954

♠ ?	N	♠ ?
♥ ?	W E	♥ ?
♦ Q?	S	♦ ?
♣ ?		♣ ?

♠ KQ2
 ♥ AQ986
 ♦ A43
 ♣ 82

Lead: ♦Q

Contract 4♥

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	-	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

Send me your solution please:
dee_harley@hotmail.com

SUIT COMBINATION

This month we have:

You: K432 Partner: J765

How would you play this suit to guarantee one trick in the suit regardless of the suit layout.

You may assume you have as many entries to either hand as you need.

[Solution](#) on P6.

♣♣♣ **KNAVE OF CLUBS** ♣♣♣
A STRONG PASS METHOD

It is difficult to bid really long suits accurately. The methods for bidding 7 card suits are well known but using them with 8 or 9 card suits leaves one a bit anxious about the extra, undisclosed length. When a 10-card suit makes an appearance, it is scary. These are very rare, occurring about once every quarter of a million hands. To get that in context, if you play 25 hands per day, 7 days per week with extra sessions on some weekends, 52 weeks per year and keep this up for 25 years then you will be approaching the quarter of a million hands mark. At a VBA congress event, I picked up my second ever 10 card-suit with the first having been more than 40 years previously while at university. Look at the West hand. You are the dealer, and you feel every emotion from excitement to panic as you try to decide what to open. Most of the field opened 4♥ (or 4♣ Namyats), North doubled and South bid 5♣. Now the auctions started to deviate.

Teams:

Dir: West		♠ AQ873	
Vul: E/W		♥ -	
		♦ K543	
		♣ Q1098	
♠ J	N	♠ K10964	
♥ AKJ10875432	W E	♥ Q	
♦ 102	S	♦ AQ96	
♣ -		♣ KJ7	
		♠ 52	
		♥ 96	
		♦ J87	
		♣ A65432	

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
4♥	Dbf	Pass	5♣
5♥	All Pass		

Lead: ♥8

Most Wests felt they hadn't bid enough with 4♥ and so backed in with 5♥. One pair played it there redoubled making 13 tricks! Others faced an unsound 4♠ overcall and had to pass partner's penalty double to collect 800 or 1100 rather than bidding 5♥. Of those who opened

5♥, some played there and some had to make a decision after North's double and South's 6♣ bid. If they passed, the penalty for 6♣X was a paltry 500.

Are there any other bidding options? There is an exotic option to pass and try to judge what to bid on the next round since we cannot be shut out. I tried that and North opened 1♠. Partner, a well-known operator, made a strong 1NT overcall despite the singleton Q♥! Now 6♥ seems quite attractive although partner's eyes certainly bulged as I pulled the 6H card from the bidding box. North led the AS and followed it with a small one. The ♠K is going to let us avoid the diamond finesse so declarer must take care to not let East ruff it if the spades are 6511 Play small and ruff in hand and then claim 12 tricks after what turned out to be a good auction.

Solution to Suit Combination ([page 5](#))

From this combination you need to guarantee just one trick:

You: K432 Partner: J765

Imagine you played up towards the King and LHO plays low. If you play the King and RHO wins the Ace, it is entirely possible that the Ace was singleton and unless you can endplay LHO, you cannot make a trick in the suit.

Having completed that mind exercise, you realise you must play low from dummy. Now on retaining the lead you again lead low towards the King (Always good practice to lead up to honours!). This time if LHO follows suit with any card except the Ace, you may play the King knowing you cannot fail to make a trick! For if RHO wins with the Ace, the suit must break 3-2 and you can claim a trick in the 4th round of the suit. If LHO shows out on the second round you can lead up to the Jack for a trick. If RHO shows out on the second round, your King will already have won a trick.

Playing low from both hands will guarantee one trick in the suit. Any other play has the possibility to make 0 tricks in the suit!