

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

April 2011

Editor: Bill Jacobs



ABF **vba**

2011 VICTOR CHAMPION CUP

VENUE: New Melbourne Convention Centre
Opposite Crown Casino

9th June — 13th June
10 am start each day, no night play

NOTE: NEW OPEN PAIRS EVENT

Swiss Pairs: McCance Seniors*, VCC Womens*, VCC Restricted, Wally Scott Open: June 9 -10
Swiss Teams: Victor Champion Cup*, Charlie Snashall Trophy Restricted: June 11 -13

Tournament Organiser: Mary Bertuna (03) 9589 3537 or 0419 340 504
Email: vcc2011@abf.com.au Website: www.vba.asn.au/vcc2011

Restricted: Less than "Life Master" @ 01/04/11

Gold Points and *Playoff Points
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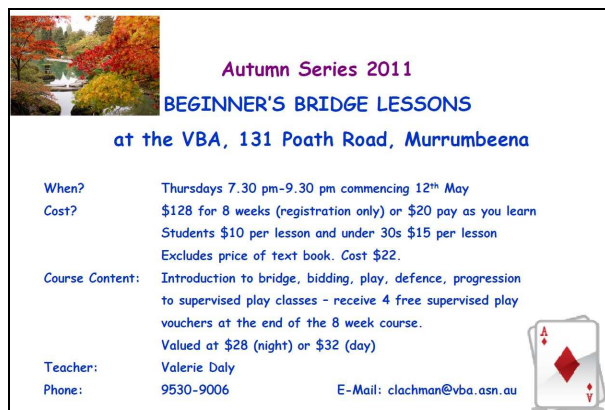
Special ABF Prize for 1st & 2nd Restricted Pairs

ABF NEWS

The Australian Bridge Federation has announced an incentive to encourage new players into the bridge family.

All new players (i.e. those who do not currently hold an ABF membership number) who register with the ABF will have their ABF \$12 capitation fee waived. Applications for membership during the period 1/4/2011 to 31/3/2013 will be eligible for this waiver.

Please encourage players at your club to take advantage of this generous offer.




Autumn Series 2011
BEGINNER'S BRIDGE LESSONS
at the VBA, 131 Poath Road, Murrumbena

When? Thursdays 7.30 pm-9.30 pm commencing 12th May
Cost? \$128 for 8 weeks (registration only) or \$20 pay as you learn
Students \$10 per lesson and under 30s \$15 per lesson
Excludes price of text book. Cost \$22.

Course Content: Introduction to bridge, bidding, play, defence, progression to supervised play classes - receive 4 free supervised play vouchers at the end of the 8 week course.
Valued at \$28 (night) or \$32 (day)

Teacher: Valerie Daly
Phone: 9530-9006 E-Mail: clachman@vba.asn.au



Cathie and Helen have done it again!

Congratulations to the VBA's Cathie Lachman and Helen Snashall, who have qualified for the Australian Women's Team at the recent playoffs in Sydney. A stunning 86-13 scoreline in the last 16 boards of the Final resulted in a 28 imp victory over their highly rated opponents.

They will be off to Kuala Lumpur for the Far East Championships, and then to Eindhoven in the Netherlands to contest the world women's championship: the Venice Cup.

The VBA
invites you to the
2011 ANZAC Congress
to be held
Monday 25th April (Swiss Pairs) and
Tuesday 26th April (Swiss Teams)
Commencing at 10.00 a.m.
at
131 Poath Rd, Murrumbena

PANACHE - XI Ben Thompson

Ishmael Del'Monte, who we're now claiming as a Victorian (he owns the Kings and Queens bridge club in Brighton), narrowly lost the final of the prestigious Vanderbilt Cup at the US Nationals last month to the powerful squad that will be USA1 for the world championships later this year. This month's hand is from the semi-final, where Ish's team won comfortably over the Chinese-American Kang team.

| | | |
|-----------|--------|----------|
| Dealer: W | ♠ K64 | |
| Vul: E/W | ♥ A98 | |
| | ♦ A86 | |
| | ♣ KJ87 | |
| ♠ AQ872 | | ♠ J3 |
| ♥ 4 | | ♥ K10765 |
| ♦ J932 | | ♦ 1054 |
| ♣ 1092 | | ♣ A54 |
| | ♠ 1095 | |
| | ♥ QJ32 | |
| | ♦ KQ7 | |
| | ♣ Q63 | |

At Ish's table, and both tables in the other semi-final, North opened 1NT (around 15-17), got raised directly to 3NT, and made easily on the mundane heart lead from East.

With Kang N/S, the auction had a bit more bite to it:

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| Pass | 1♣ | Pass | 1♦ |
| 1♠ | D'ble | Pass | 1NT |
| Pass | 2NT | Pass | 3NT |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

South's 1♦ was a transfer to hearts. North's double was a support double, showing exactly three hearts. Some people play support doubles as mandatory (you have to do it with 3-card support, even if you regret opening). Some play them as optional.

Notice that all three Souths who faced a strong 1NT opening didn't bother with Stayman. With their sterile 4333 shape, they just bid 3NT directly. Even with a 4-4 heart fit, 4♥ would have to make **two** extra tricks to be right (ie NT making 8 tricks and hearts making 10 tricks), and that just isn't likely.

To the play!

Wang for Kang got the ♠7 lead. Given the overcall, he assumed correctly that the ♠A was on his left, so he jumped up with the ♠K and ... oops.

He had to knock out ♣A, and when he did, East had a spade to return to his partner's now-cashing suit.

What should declarer have done? He should have ducked the opening lead. There was no risk of the defence setting up a different suit since he had all the other suits well held. By ducking, he could have sliced up the communication between the defenders' hands. East would have won the ♠J, but West's spades wouldn't have been set up yet, so E/W wouldn't be able to cash the suit later.

If North as declarer receives the ♠J lead, he should also duck. In fact Fred Gitelman in the other semi-final got a heart lead but ♠J switch in the mid-game when he didn't know yet if he had 9 tricks. He carefully and correctly ducked the ♠J, and cruised home.

Expert aside: Transfers after a 1♣ opening are now ubiquitous in the expert community¹. Just like transfers over a 1NT opening, they give you extra time and space to describe your hand. And opener can describe his support better. Many experts deliberately pack many of their balanced openings into 1♣, and that actually makes the transfer responses more effective.

The takeaway

Be careful when you take your finesse. *When* it wins can be as important as *that* it wins.

NOT SO RECENT RESULTS

Ramsden Handicap Swiss Pairs (take 2)

- 1 V. Rugless – D. Wilson
- 2 P. Nankin – A. Rauchberger
- 3 J. Collins – A. Czapnik

(Apologies for the misreporting of this result last month. The editor had a senior moment.)

¹ They are indeed ubiquitous. That doesn't make them right. We'll return to this topic ... BJ

MYSTERIES OF DEFENCE

Bill Jacobs

One of the advantages of writing a series of articles about defence is that there is no shortage of material to choose from. In the first article I suggested that I averaged 5 defensive blunders per session. If the three other players at the table do likewise, there are 20 defensive errors in a single session.

Seeing them and analysing is easy enough – doing something about them is not so easy.

This deal from the 2010 Victorian Open Pairs struck me as instructive:

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|--|
| Dealer: E | ♠ 92 | | |
| Vul: E/W | ♥ KQ32 | | |
| | ♦ 974 | | |
| | ♣ QJ108 | | |
| ♠ A83 | | ♠ 654 | |
| ♥ 874 | | ♥ A10965 | |
| ♦ AQ53 | | ♦ 102 | |
| ♣ K75 | | ♣ 962 | |
| | ♠ KQJ107 | | |
| | ♥ J | | |
| | ♦ KJ86 | | |
| | ♣ A43 | | |

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| | | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 1NT | Pass | 2♦ |
| Pass | 2♠ | All pass | |

I played 2♠ as South and West led ♥7. East won ♥A, dropping my ♥J, thought for a moment, and returned a low heart.

I gratefully threw a couple of diamonds on dummy's ♥KQ, as West looked a little disgusted, then took the club finesse, East signalling odd. West returned a club to my ace, and now I played ♠K winning, and a low spade towards dummy's ♠9. West stepped in with ♠A and returned a third spade.

That drew trumps for me, and I was able to cross to dummy's club to play the 13th club, pitching another diamond, and lose just the diamond ace. Making 9 tricks, +140, for an 80% board.

Well – you be the judge. How would you allocate the blame for this less-than-perfect defence?

The post-mortem was revealing. East jumped in and said: "I thought he was false-carding with that ♥J, sorry". West was pretty unhappy, but gracious about it. This is one of the better and more long-standing partnerships at the VBA, and the post-mortem suggested why.

I allocate 20% blame to East and 80% to West.

East's heart return was probably wrong. For starters, it's not too likely that I would falsecard with ♥J from ♥J84, throwing a potential trick in the heart suit for the sake of deception – East paid me quite a compliment by thinking I might have done so.

More seriously, suppose West does ruff the heart – what is he to play next? A diamond or spade is leading up to declarer's suits, and whilst a club is probably safe (declarer will have a singleton club in this scenario), will West know that? East clearly didn't give this aspect any consideration.

Still, the heart return could have been the winner – for example, if declarer started with

♠ KQJ10x ♥ Jxx ♦ KQxx ♣ A

it's the only defence to beat the contract!

But whilst East's defence was probably wrong, West's was definitely wrong. When he won the ♠A, he had only to play a third club, rather than a third spade, to put me in dummy with trumps outstanding so I could no longer enjoy the 13th club. The situation was double-dummy at this point. Converting 8 tricks into 9 actually cost E/W more matchpoints than converting 7 tricks to 8.

West was upset with the earlier defence and not thinking straight.

How often has this happened to you? Something goes wrong in the defence – perhaps an unfortunate opening lead – and then you lose concentration with the bad turn of events, make a mistake and it all gets worse. It's a very common occurrence.

I've said this before: bridge is an intensely emotional game. One of the secrets of improvement is to remove, or at least minimise, the emotional content. Mr Spock, of Star Trek fame, would be the world's

greatest bridge player. Most of the matchpoints lost in this month's deal were due to emotion, not skill.

SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: E ♠ K9862
 Vul: N/S ♥ -
 ♦ Q1043
 ♣ A842

♠ Q43
 ♥ J7
 ♦ J92
 ♣ J10976

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | Pass | 4♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Partner leads ♦A and correctly reads you for a 3-card holding. He switches to a trump to your ♥J and declarer's ♥K. He wins the ♥Q continuation with ♥A and exits a third heart. Declarer puts out a spade (partner ♠5) and dummy's ♠K is played, then another spade.

Are you taking the right inferences?

Problem 2:

Dealer: N ♠ Q10432
 Vul: E/W ♥ Q1092
 ♦ 43
 ♣ 97

♠ J87
 ♥ J64
 ♦ AK102
 ♣ K63

| | | | |
|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | Pass | Pass | 1♣ ¹ |
| Pass | 1♦ ² | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

1 Precision: any 16+ points

2 0-7 points

You lead ♦A and continue ♦K, dropping declarer's ♦Q, partner signalling *odd*. You have to find a switch to (a) a neutral trump (b) a spade (c) a club. You choose.

Solutions on page 8.

INTERVIEW WITH FREDDIE SHEINWOLD

Alfred (Freddie) Sheinwold (1912-1997) was a major pioneer of bridge in the 20th century. Co-inventor of the Kaplan-Sheinwold system, he had many other roles, as a player, captain, administrator and prolific author. This ACBL interview was conducted in the early 1990s.

You are very special in the world of bridge. You've witnessed the history of bridge. You were there when Charles Goren was on the front page of Time Magazine and you are probably one of the few people who actually met the famous Ely Culbertson.

Did I meet him?! I worked for him for a year and a half and he fired me 12 times, which might not stand up to the modern records but it was pretty good in those days.



Freddie Sheinwold (left) and Ely Culbertson

Did you like him? Were they jovial firings?

No, no – they were serious. We disliked each other. I was in my very early twenties and I would take no nonsense from anybody; and he was a man who had no respect for anybody, including himself. He was a con-man, a crook, but a wonderful PR man.

He wrote some of the best selling books of his time.

Yes, his best sellers were about bridge – first the Blue Book, and then the Red Book on the play of the cards. All of these were written for him.

By his wife? I heard that his wife Josephine was the real power behind him. True or not?

No, not true. *He* was the real power behind his throne. She was a very lovely woman

and she was unfortunate enough to have a drinking problem, and he was sympathetic about that, because one of his two brothers had a drinking problem also.

I remember reading that Ely promoted bridge with ego, sex and fear – they were the three things he wanted to put into it, and the people loved it. That wouldn't go down so well today, would it?

Perhaps not, but people are used to that sort of thing today.

He had a simple bidding system, didn't he? Was that what made it so popular – his drive, but also the simplicity of the system?

Yes, the original Culbertson system. But eventually, he changed it – he copied the Four Aces system. Slavishly plagiarized it. He did make contributions – the 4-5 Notrump convention for example was his, and the so-called Josephine 5NT – the grand slam force. She didn't like it a bit, but he did, and he made it her invention. He had a sense of humour. He fired me several times that I thought shed credit on me, but some of them were because I was just stubborn. I think there was a little to be said for him – but not very much.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dealer: N ♠ A
 Vul: N/S ♥ A108
 IMPs ♦ Q104
 ♣ AKQ763

♠ J5
 ♥ QJ9754
 ♦ A62
 ♣ 105

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 1♣ | 2♠* | 3♥ |
| 3♠ | 4NT | Pass | 5♦ |
| Pass | 6♥ | All Pass | |

* weak jump overcall

West leads ♦5. What do you play from dummy? Whether your play from dummy works well or poorly, what do you do next?

Solution on page 6.

AFFILIATED CLUB NEWS

The **Royal South Yarra Lawn Tennis Bridge Club** has now affiliated with the ABF. Congratulations to the RSYLTBC – that's an acronym-and-a-half. The club will hold duplicates on two Tuesdays each month, and a Duplicate Bridge Dinner every second month when members may invite guests.



RSYLTBC members (l-r): Jill Chambers, Lucille Steven, Bob Baenziger, Mary Church (convenor), Ann Glenny

The **Traralgon Bridge Club** has awarded life membership to two stalwarts of the club:



(l-r) Doreen King and Eula Beasley

Doreen King is a foundation member that has worked on the club committee for the last 10 years, and works in many areas of the club, including operating the dealing machine, and helping out at Beginners classes and Supervised Play evenings.

Eula Beasley is a past president of the club. As the highest ranked club member, she has represented Traralgon with distinction both in Melbourne and interstate, and has taught many classes at the club.

For eight years, the **Bairnsdale Bridge Club** has run a red point teams event, the Riviera Teams, that requires players to enter as pairs. The director then sets up the teams with the strongest pair teamed up with the least experienced pair, and so on.

The event has great support from the stronger players – they see it as a way of putting something back into bridge and helping new players to gain experience. Newer players are enthusiastic also, and enjoy coming back to the table to score up.

The event is played on two Monday evenings, the second being on Melbourne Cup eve. In 2010, the winning team (pictured below) included two new players, neither of whom had any masterpoints.



(l-r) Judy Banks, Anna Kearon, Mary Windham-Smith, Wendy Martin

COMING UP AT THE VBA ... FRED ALTMAN SWISS PAIRS

Dates: Wednesdays, April 6, 13, 20, 27, May 4

Format: 10 rounds of 14 board matches, scored via imps against a datum. Held simultaneously with the Restricted Swiss Pairs (to qualify in the Restricted, each player must have less than 300 masterpoints).

This is the premier Swiss Pairs event on the VBA calendar.

Defending Champs:

Open: Chellia Arul – Andrew Kaszubski

Restricted: Phillip Knightley – Larry Attwood

MEMORIES OF FRED ALTMAN Ian McCance

Fred Altman was my partner during much of the later 1960s and early 1970s. In 1967 we won an Australian Pairs and finished second in a Butler to qualify for the Australian team at the Olympiad in 1968. That would have been our best tournament. The team finished 5th, not surprisingly given the calibre of our team-mates, Tim Seres, Dick Cummings, Denis Howard and Roelof Smilde. We also came third in the team-qualifying Butler in 1972, but I was unable to travel.

Fred was the best of partners - he never asked why I did something stupid, he always knew it was for an apparently good reason. His temperament was excellent, and few could match his skill at play of the hand. He was an ornament to bridge in Victoria.

THE TWELFTH TRICK Bill Jacobs

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| ♠ A | | |
| ♥ A108 | | |
| ♦ Q104 | | |
| ♣ AKQ763 | | |
| ♠ Q874 | | ♠ K108632 |
| ♥ 3 | | ♥ K62 |
| ♦ K853 | | ♦ J97 |
| ♣ J982 | | ♣ 4 |
| ♠ J5 | | |
| ♥ QJ9754 | | |
| ♦ A62 | | |
| ♣ 105 | | |

You should play ♦Q at trick 1. If this is covered by the king, then the odds are very good that the heart finesse is working – East is not likely to make a weak jump overcall with two side kings.

If the ♦Q is covered with ♦K, win ♦A and take the heart finesse.

If the ♦Q holds, as shown in the diagram, cash ♠A and play a *low* trump from dummy (*not* the ace: take a look at what happens if you do). If someone wins ♥K and gives their partner a ruff, you can count yourself extremely unlucky. If that doesn't happen, you can ruff a spade and claim soon after.

CASES FOR ACES – IX KICKING BACK EVEN MORE Bill Jacobs

These were the E/W cards on the penultimate deal of the recent NOT Quarter Finals in Canberra:

| | |
|----------|------------|
| ♠ AK7 | ♠ 10 |
| ♥ QJ6532 | ♥ K109 |
| ♦ K2 | ♦ Q9 |
| ♣ K9 | ♣ AQJ10843 |

Ben Thompson and I bid it as follows:

| West | East |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1♥ | 2♣ |
| 3♦ ¹ | 3♥ ² |
| 3♠ ³ | 4♣ ³ |
| 4♦ ³ | 4NT ⁴ |
| 5♦ | 5♥ |
| Pass | |

- 1 Extra values with long but not strong hearts
- 2 Sets hearts as trumps, extra values
- 3 Cue bids, showing 1st or 2nd round control
- 4 Blackwood

Sadly, clubs were led, and the defenders navigated a club ruff to defeat 5♥ by a trick. And we lost the match by just 3 imps.

This deal was played six times, and on four occasions, E/W strayed up to the 5-level. Two pairs managed to play safely in 4♥.

How could we have stayed at the 4-level? The early auction was ok – in fact, a pair of two-over-one bidders would do it similarly: 1♥-2♣-2♥-3♥. The problems came later.

Some ancient history

In 1977, I was a callow 21-year-old, and Bob Gallus invited me to play with him in the Australian Butler trials in Perth. Bob was cradle-snatching, seeing in me a more-or-less blank canvas on which to paint his innovative ideas.

He unleashed several concepts on me, including transfer-rebids-by-responder (!), but by far the most important was the idea that you should know how many aces the partnership has.

His theory was simple. If you've agreed a suit in a game-forcing situation, the very next thing you need to know is whether you are missing two aces. If you are, then there is no point progressing past game.

Putting his theory into practice, once our partnership had agreed a suit in a game-force, the next step bid was Blackwood. You didn't *have* to use the device – for example, with no interest in slam, or perhaps with a void, you could do something else.

This theory led to the amazing auction, reported in the May 2003 bulletin, where Bob and Rob Smart had an auction involving a splinter bid, which was doubled by the opponents: when one of the Bobs passed that double, the pass was alerted as Blackwood!

To prove how strongly Bob felt about this, consider the simple Acol auction 1♣ - 1NT. For Bob, 1NT is a completely idle bid. If responder has a suit of diamonds, hearts or spades, he would bid that suit. And with only clubs, he would raise the natural 1♣ bid. So in 1977, he explained to me that the 1NT response to 1♣ must be Blackwood. And that's how we played it.

Back to the NOT hand

Using Galluswood, this hand is duck soup. When West hears 3♥, he has the perfect hand on which to check for aces: plenty of second round controls, but a shortage of key cards.

So he bids 3♠, Blackwood, East gives the two key-card response, and West signs off in 4♥. And to the semi-finals we would have progressed.

Will my partnership now switch to this new lower level of Blackwood? I doubt it. We don't play Minorwood, Redwood or Kickback either, although we probably should.

If I had to recommend one of these devices, it would probably be Redwood/Kickback: the bid of one higher than 4-of-the-agreed-suit as Blackwood. This is a genuine space-saver, not too hard to remember, and most importantly, *it's optional* – you don't have to use it. For me, that is the key downside of Minorwood.

SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS

Ian McCance

Problem 1

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|----------|
| Dealer: E | ♠ K9862 | |
| Vul: N/S | ♥ - | |
| | ♦ Q1043 | |
| | ♣ A842 | |
| ♠ AJ5 | | ♠ Q43 |
| ♥ A95 | | ♥ J7 |
| ♦ AK876 | | ♦ J92 |
| ♣ K5 | | ♣ J10976 |
| | ♠ 107 | |
| | ♥ KQ1086432 | |
| | ♦ 5 | |
| | ♣ Q3 | |

It's clear that partner had a lot of high cards, and not wanting to broach clubs was hard put to find exits. Don't force him to find another one. Rise ♠Q so that you can lead ♣J.

Problem 2

| | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|
| Dealer: N | ♠ Q10432 | |
| Vul: E/W | ♥ Q1092 | |
| | ♦ 43 | |
| | ♣ 97 | |
| ♠ J87 | | ♠ K5 |
| ♥ J64 | | ♥ 5 |
| ♦ AK102 | | ♦ J9876 |
| ♣ K63 | | ♣ Q10542 |
| | ♠ A96 | |
| | ♥ AK873 | |
| | ♦ Q5 | |
| | ♣ AJ8 | |

Dummy's spades are a big threat and your ♠J is in the pocket, so passive is contra-indicated. Leading a club could be wrong but it looks the best shot. Declarer's clubs could go away on spades but not *vice versa*.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Vu-Graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan:

An exchange between commentators Kaplan and Jean Besse:

Besse: "Well you must do a lot of things before you can endplay East."

Kaplan: "Yes, but that's your job, Jean. If you don't want to do a lot of things, then you must stay in Switzerland."

RECENT RESULTS

Ailsa Tandy Eclectic Pairs

Monday Competition

- 1 P. Fent – R. Stewart
- 2 E. Windmiller – P. Hemingway
- 3 P. Nolan – M. Porter

Wednesday Competition

- 1 C. Arul – A. Kaszubski
- 2 A. Hegedus – A. Mill
- 3 R. Stewart – S. Vardi

Victorian Master Pairs

Section A

- 1 R. Kaplan – A. Segal
- 2 S. Klofa – R. Stewart
- 3 B. Howe – S. Weisz

Section B

- 1 T. Chira – S. Arber
- 2 E. Hardy – G. Wikinski
- 3 L. Meyer – P. Moritz

Section C

- 1 E. Linton – E. Matheson
- 2 D. Selwyn – M. Granovski
- 3 D. Sharman – C. Arul

Section D

- 1 J. Adams – E. Hynes
- 2 M. Yuill – M. Allison
- 3 F. Engelman – A. Gedge

Open Butler Interstate – Stage 2

- 1 J. Magee – T. Strong
- 2 B. Wein – D. Morgan
- 3 G. Kilvington – I. McCance

Thwaites Victorian Mixed Pairs

Championship

- 1 J. Thompson – B. Thompson
- 2 M. Yuill – S. Klofa
- 3 E. Hardy – L. Gold

Plate

- 1 P. Moritz – L. Meyer
- 2 S. Stock – B. Tencer
- 3 D. Jacobs – W. Jacobs

Consolation

- 1 K. Bechet – C. Hughes
- 2 M. Tencer – M. Chrapot
- 3 J. Savage – C. Arul