

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

November 2013

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson

A friend of mine, a former elite athlete, recently expressed her surprise to me at presentations at bridge



events. In her experience of sport, whether it's a small local event or a strong event featuring elite athletes, the participants stay at the end to applaud the winners and the place getters. She was surprised when she first started playing bridge congresses to find that most participants head for the exit the moment they've finished playing. By the time the winner gets announced, it can feel like the only people left to applaud them are the convener, the director and themselves.

In bridge I've found at many club events, and all international events I've attended, that the players do stay around to congratulate the winners. At congresses and even nationals, I have to agree with my friend (one exception is the Interstate Teams Championship where there's a very well-attended victory dinner).

At club and congress events, it really doesn't take much longer to take part in the presentation. Maybe 10-15 minutes. Conveners can help motivate people to stay by providing a drink and/or light refreshments. Maybe even sell drinks.

It turns out applause is good for everyone – the people being applauded, the people doing it, and even the people who just witness it. Think about all the times you applauded your kids (and everyone else's kids) at a school event. Didn't everyone feel good walking out at the end?

Getting older doesn't change the psychology of applause, just how much we show how

good it makes us feel to take part in it. Next time you play a congress, whether you win or not, try staying around a few minutes more and taking part in the presentation. And drive home with a smile on your face!

YARRA VALLEY CONGRESS WINS SUPER-CONGRESS STATUS

The Yarra Valley Congress is held annually in February (in 2014, it will be the week of 8th and 9th February) and regularly attracts a large field at its excellent venue at the Hungarian Community Centre in Wantirna.

For 2014, the congress has been granted "Super Congress" status by the ABF: the first Victorian congress to achieve this. To be awarded super-congress status, a congress must satisfy several requirements in terms of superior venue, senior director, appropriate director-to-player ratio, hand records and so on. The benefit to players is that masterpoints are awarded at a much higher rate. You can expect to win 50% more masterpoints at a super-congress than at an ordinary congress. So book in February 8-9 into your diary now!

Well done to the Yarra Valley Bridge Club on this achievement.

FORTHCOMING STATE EVENT AT THE VICTORIAN BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The next State event will be the
THE VICTORIAN SWISS PAIRS



A 3 session event commencing on
Wednesday 6th November 2013 at 7.30 p.m.
Entries close midnight 5th November

Dates of play are:
6th, 13th and 20th November
Table Fees: \$16.00 per night

Enter: via the website: www.vba.asn.au or phone 9530-9006

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

Playing in a matchpoint duplicate, you hold this modest collection:

♠ 1042 ♥ AQ953 ♦ Q54 ♣ 92

Everyone is vulnerable, your partner deals and passes, and right-hand-opponent opens 1♦. Do you overcall 1♥?

At least 8 HCP? Check. Decent 5-card suit? Check. These are the requirements for making an overcall at the one-level. You should bid 1♥. Don't worry about the skimpiness of your hand, or being vulnerable. More good things can happen if you bid 1♥ than bad things. For example, if partner winds up being on opening lead, your bid might help.

If you had to bid this suit at the 2-level (for example, RHO opens 1♠), then an overcall would be too dangerous. You need a better hand and/or a better suit to overcall at the 2-level.

The auction continues:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	Pass	1♦	1♥
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

and you find yourself on lead to 3NT. What will it be?

Lead the ♥5. You expect ♥K to be with declarer, in light of his 1NT bid, so this lead will give declarer a quick trick. But defence against notrump contracts is often a long campaign; you sometimes have to give a trick for a longer term benefit.

You are hoping that partner will get the lead at some point and return a heart, and maybe you can then run off the suit.

You lead ♥5, and this is what confronts you:

Dlr: North ♠ AK765
Vul: N/S ♥ 64
♦ 106
♣ AJ86

♠ 1042
♥ AQ953
♦ Q54
♣ 92

	N	
W		E
	S	

Partner plays ♥J to the first trick, and declarer wins ♥K. Declarer now plays ♠3 to the ♠A (partner follows ♠9) and leads ♦10 from dummy, ♦2 from partner, ♦3 from declarer and you win ♦Q.

Now what?

Maybe you can take 4 heart tricks now to defeat 3NT, if both partner and declarer started with 3 hearts. Or maybe declarer started with ♥K10xx (and partner has ♥Jx), in which case declarer has another heart stopper unless the next heart lead comes from partner. Declarer certainly has ♥10, because partner would not have played ♥J at trick 1 when also holding the ♥10.

How do you decide? Well, if partner started with 3 hearts, maybe she would have given you a heart raise. After all she must have a few points: declarer has about 12-14 HCP, which if you do the math, leaves partner with between 6 and 8 HCP. Given that partner did NOT raise, she likely has only 2 hearts, meaning you cannot run the hearts at this point.

Don't play hearts. Here is the full deal:

♠ AK765
♥ 64
♦ 106
♣ AJ86

♠ 1042
♥ AQ953
♦ Q54
♣ 92

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 83
♥ K1082
♦ AKJ73
♣ Q3

♠ QJ9
♥ J7
♦ 982
♣ K10754

If you return any suit other than hearts (probably a spade is best) declarer has only 8 tricks on top. Sooner or later your partner

will get the lead, to fire a deadly heart through declarer's holding.

Points to remember:

- To make an overcall at the one-level all you need is a minimum of 8 HCP and a decent 5-card (or longer) suit. The definition of "decent" varies from player to player, but in my language, if you have two of the top four honours (ace/king/queen/jack) then that constitutes a decent suit. If you are dealt a 6-card suit, then one of the top 3 honours is sufficient.
- Even though your heart opening lead gave declarer a trick, it represented the best strategy for beating 3NT. In notrumps, you sometimes need to give declarer a trick or two in a suit in order to establish your long cards.
- Imagine you had not overcalled 1♥ and South had played 3NT with the play starting the same way. When in with the ♦Q, you would have had a genuine guess on your hands, with little clue whether partner had started with two hearts or three. Your overcall actually helped your own decision making in the defence.



**Australian Youth
Bridge Triathlon**

MELBOURNE

Fri Dec 6 - Sun Dec 8, 2013

Friday Night- BAM teams

Saturday- IMP Teams

Sunday- Matchpoint Pairs

Entry is open to all players under 30 years old at 31 December 2013. Enter via email to vicyouthbridge@gmail.com.

Venue: Waverley Bridge Club.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

Long Suit Trial Bids

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	?

Partner's single raise of your opening bid shows about 6-9 HCP and 3 or 4-card support. You often must then decide whether to try for game in your major.

An essential tool in the search for a major suit game is the *long suit trial*. Since you have already found a fit in a major suit, there is little point in looking for a contract in another suit. Bids in a new suit are therefore freed up as trial bids, showing some length in that suit (typically 3 or 4 cards) and asking partner to bid game in your major if she can provide some assistance in the trial suit.

A holding of Axx(x), Kxx(x) or Qxx(x) is perfect for a long suit trial in that suit. Avoid trialing with three or four-small in a suit: a single honour opposite such suits doesn't help much. You are more typically looking for holdings where your combined honours fit together.

Partner will look fondly on honours in the trial suit, as this will fill in your holes in the suit. Shortage can also be useful, particularly if partner has 4-card support in the major: your long cards can be trumped in dummy.

Partner should also look at the general strength of the raise as input to the decision of whether to bid game.

What is your rebid on each of these hands?

- ♠ AKQ76 ♥ A2 ♦ 65 ♣ K1043
- ♠ KQ1054 ♥ AJ2 ♦ Q93 ♣ K5
- ♠ AK954 ♥ AQJ ♦ K2 ♣ Q75
- ♠ A108653 ♥ AKJ ♦ K2 ♣ 75
- ♠ AQJ54 ♥ Q82 ♦ KQJ2 ♣ 7
- ♠ AQJ54 ♥ J42 ♦ AKJ93 ♣ -

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
Pass	2♠	Pass	1♠ ?

(a) ♠ AKQ76 ♥ A2 ♦ 65 ♣ K1043

3♣. The perfect hand for a long suit trial. You want partner to give you help in the club suit. For example, suppose partner has a minor suit of QJx. Would you like that suit to be clubs or diamonds?

(b) ♠ KQ1054 ♥ AJ2 ♦ Q93 ♣ K5

Pass. It's 15 HCP opposite 6-9 HCP so the points are lacking for game purposes and there's no distribution to compensate. Stay cool at the 2-level.

(c) ♠ AK954 ♥ AQJ ♦ K2 ♣ Q75

3NT. This time you do have enough points for game, and you can offer partner a choice between 3NT and 4♠. If partner has only 3 spades and a flattish hand, then it's quite likely that 9 tricks in 3NT will be a better prospect than 10 tricks in 4♠.

(d) ♠ A108653 ♥ AKJ ♦ K2 ♣ 75

3♠. There's no particular suit where you want help, so avoid making a long suit trial. Here 3♠ asks a general question: are you minimum or maximum partner?

(e) ♠ AQJ54 ♥ Q82 ♦ KQJ2 ♣ 7

3♥. Here is a situation where you want to make a long suit trial but not in your longest side suit. There's no point asking partner about diamonds: there are no problems in that suit whatever he holds. But hearts is the suit where honours in partner's hand are golden.

(f) ♠ AQJ54 ♥ J42 ♦ AKJ93 ♣ -

4♠. Try for game. You could ask in hearts via 3♥ but 4♠ should have chances whatever partner holds. Give partner

♠ Kxx ♥ xxx ♦ xx ♣ xxxxx

and you have quite a good chance of making 4♠. And partner will have more than this.

SETTING TRICK PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dlr: East
Vul: N/S

♠ AK
♥ 9854
♦ KQJ7
♣ J108

	N		♠ 7532
W		E	♥ QJ7
			♦ A853
	S		♣ A9

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Your partner leads ♥A, to which you follow ♥7. (Your card says "high discourage"). Declarer follows ♥6. Partner switches to ♣2, dummy's ♣J and you win ♣A. How should you continue?

Problem 2:

Dlr: East
Vul: E/W

♠ J765
♥ QJ1042
♦ AK104
♣ -

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 42
♥ A987
♦ 98
♣ J8542

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣**	1NT*	Pass
Pass	4♠	All Pass	3♠

* 15-17 HCP
** majors

You lead ♦9, won in dummy. ♠J wins the next trick, and another spade is won by partner's ♠A. He tries ♣3 and declarer wins ♣Q. Now comes a heart and partner wins ♥K. He exits ♦Q to dummy's ♦K and declarer enters his hand with ♠K, dropping partner's ♠Q. He plays another low heart. How will you defend?

Solutions on page 11.

PANACHE - XXIX
Ben Thompson

The Victorian Individual has just finished. One of the joys of an Individual is that you get to play with and against players across a huge range of skill and experience, and with almost no system. The most important skill is to be a good partner. It's best not to get too fancy.

Dir: North	♠	96															
Vul: nil	♥	AQ8763															
	♦	Q93															
	♣	Q9															
♠ QJ542			<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N			W	E			S		♠ AK10873				
N																	
W	E																
	S																
♥ 94				♥ 52													
♦ AK6				♦ 85													
♣ J103				♣ A85													
	♠	-															
	♥	KJ10															
	♦	J10742															
	♣	K7642															

West	North	East	South
5♠	2♥ Pass	2♠ Pass	5♥! Pass

It's almost impossible to get me to sit North, but they make you do it in an Individual. I played this board from there with Dubravka Zec and opened a good ordinary weak 2. Max Henbest, one of the young stars who recently came home from the Junior World Championships with two silver medals, overcalled 2♠.

Dubravka had a good think about what to do with her hand and emerged with the killer 5♥. We make 9 tricks easily and they make 10 tricks in spades, so she had found 'par' in one shot. George Lovrecz bid 5♠ as I guess we all would and that was 70% to Dubravka (and me, but it was really all her).

I would normally expect partner to have another trump or two for 5♥ but there's actually a sound basis for it. The Law of Total Tricks suggests the total number of tricks available on a hand is the sum of each side's longest suit. Here, it would be 20 (11 spades + 9 hearts) which is actually off by one as it happens.

If I have a straight weak 2 style, I'll have 6 hearts and no more than 3 spades. From

Dubravka's point of view that means we have 9 hearts between us and EW have at least 10 spades, making the total trick count at least 19. As on this hand, the trick count according to the Law is often off by one at high levels, it can be dangerous to sacrifice at the 5 level with only 19 total tricks, but there are several points in favour of bidding 5♥:

1. E/W might have more than 10 spades – and they do (the more total tricks the merrier)
2. If you bid 4♥, they will certainly bid 4♠ and then you'll feel like maybe you should bid 5♥. It's easier for E/W to decide what to do that way, even if you guessed correctly. You want the opponents to have the last guess – and 5♥ did that.

It would have been easy for my partner to go straight down the middle playing with and against much more experienced players, so well done to Dubravka on having the courage to bid what she thought was right – and thank you!

Expert aside: Dubravka did a 2nd nice thing on this hand. She led ♥K. That gives her a chance to hold the lead and maybe switch to something good. If you let that sort of lead hold, you should signal suit preference (a middle card says no preference).

The takeaway

Try to give the opponents the last guess, and it's usually best to give it to them as quickly as possible. Even if you're slightly wrong, they'll guess wrong sometimes, and they'll have guessed wrong last.

RECENT STATE EVENT RESULTS

Victorian Individual

- 1 Helen Snashall
- 2 Frances Engleman
- 3 Kim Frazer

Teams of Three

- 1 S. Weisz, M. Tildesley, E. Windmiller, E. Samuel
- 2 C. Chakravorty, J. Adams, L. Woolf, G. Harband
- 3 M. Chrapot, A. Paul, J. Hare, H. Silver

(Thanks to the 18 team captains who donated their time to playing in this event.)

RECENT CONGRESS RESULTS

Mildura Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 E. Brasier – B. Brasier
- 2 W. Gerber – P. Anderson
- 3 J. Stanbrook – G. Moyle

Swiss Teams

- 1 G. Warman, S. Warman, J. Stanbrook, G. Moyle
- 2 W. Gerber, P. Anderson, J. Tozer, G. Hammond
- 3 D. Blair, P. Smith, J. Tunks, J. Moore

Albury Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 G. McRobert – R. New
- 2 K. Frazer – E. Hynes
- 3 S. Klofa – D. Harley

Swiss Teams

- 1 A. De Livera, E. Havas, M. Bourke, N. Ewart
- 2 K. Frazer, E. Hynes, G. Lovrecz, H. Blakeman
- 3 B. Krishan, B. Hastie, D. Brennan, J. Rava

Warrnambool Congress

Restricted Pairs

- 1 D. Fitzpatrick – A. Smith
- 2 B. Horton – P. Thomas
- 3 B. Duncan – G. McDonald

Open Pairs

- 1 D. Harley – D. Newlands
- 2 K. French – M. Wilcox
- 3 J. Fust – L. Gold

Swiss Teams

- 1 D. Clarke, M. Clarke, K. French, M. Willcox
- 2 S. Klofa, P. Fent, G. Ridgway, A. Robbins
- 3 D. Harley, D. Newlands, L. Gold, J. Fust

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs

Event 20 (October 20)

- 2 I. Wright – B. Coling (Yarra Velley)
- 3 D. Delcourt – L. Griffiths (Bendigo)

Bairnsdale Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 D. Happell – J. Day
- 2 M. Obenchain – S. White
- 3 S. Klofa – D. Harley

Swiss Teams

- 1 D. Clarke, M. Charke, K. French, M. Willcox
- 2 S. Klofa, P. Fent, G. Ridgway, A. Robbins
- 3 D. Harley, D. Newlands, L. Gold, J. Fust

VICTORIAN BRIDGE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Bridge Association Limited will be held at the VBA Clubrooms, 131 Poath Road, Murrumbeena, Victoria, 3163 on Tuesday 3rd December 2013 commencing at 6.30 p.m.

All Members Welcome

All financial members of the VBA are welcome to attend the AGM and enjoy a free game of duplicate bridge thereafter. Any person whose name does not appear on the register of financial members will not be entitled to vote.

Notice of Motion

Any member wishing to give notice for the AGM must lodge a copy of the details of the motion with the VBA Secretary, 131 Poath Road, Murrumbeena, Victoria, 3163 no later than close of business on Friday 8th November, 2013.

The details of any such motion must include the exact wording of the motion, the full names and ABF membership numbers of the mover and seconder of the motion, signed and dated by both members, and a short background/purpose of the motion.

A copy of each notice of motion will be sent to all members as part of the mail out of AGM papers.

Nominations for Council

Members are invited to nominate for the positions of President, Vice-President (2), Treasurer, Secretary and eight ordinary Councillors. The closing date for nominations is Friday 29th November 2013.

Please refer to the Nominations Sheet posted on the Grey Noticeboard in the Sara Tishler Room.

THE MIND SPORTS FESTIVAL FRIDAY 11TH OCTOBER

Eager minds converged on the VBA for the Bridge and Mind Sports Festival. The festival proved to be a great day with the highlight being David Astle's wizardry with words.

The VBA was also fortunate enough to have other mind sports clubs donate their time to teaching Chess, Sudoku, Backgammon, Scrabble and crossword solving. Victorian bridge player Simon Hinge also ran a session on Grabble, the fun-to-play anagramming game that uses Scrabble tiles (ask him about it when you see him around).

Thanks to Cathie Lachman and June Pulford who provided an amazing lunch on the day and to the volunteer presenters: Barbara Berlin, Simon Hinge, Peter Hollands, David Kinston, Frank Meerbach and Patrick Street.



*Lunch,
scrabble,
laptop:
a heady
mix*

MIND GAMES AT THE VBA: CRYPTIC CROSSWORD SOLVING Grant (Kilvo) Kilvington

We were treated to a lecture from David Astle (of "DA" fame in Friday's Age). He might also be familiar to watchers of "Letters and Numbers" on TV.

David started with a talk about the history of crossword puzzles and how they vary across countries, and moved on to the different clue types available in cryptics and how to recognise them. Throughout we were encouraged to ask him questions.

To support his talk he had prepared for us a short cryptic which covered the major clue types. Unfortunately I no longer have my copy as I passed it onto my kids - who have developed an interest in them after seeing the devotion we (my community of pals who love them) have for them. We then walked

though his crossword and everything was explained in detail. Remember there were experienced puzzlers who are in awe of David along with complete beginners.

For lovers of cryptics it's just like bridge - you have lots of clues available such as points, implied shape, probable distribution, defensive signals and the plan that declarer has embarked on. But just like in bridge when declarer controls all her resources, the defensive (solver) position is murkier. Your task is to get inside the setter's head.

The other thing about cryptics that may be surprising is that they are more fun when you attack them communally. Not only do you get real synergy, but it is always more fun to laugh along with others.

Sometimes he has "themed" puzzles - where a lot of the clues have something in common. One such from a few months back was all about the Great Ocean Road.

He has a liking for the occasional risque clue, for example (and I don't remember the exact wording of the clue) "Girl removes lingerie (5)" with the answer being "Debra".

And once he had a pair of clues across the bottom row (mostly cryptics have a 15x15 grid) which were "South China geese (7)" = "Honkers", paired with "Crazy porn stars (7)" = "Bonkers".

Every Friday we look forward to the latest battle with the diabolical DA.

Finally I should say that David stayed around for a considerable time just chatting about this and that. He would make a wonderful dinner party guest. Thank-you David!



David Astle getting down to the nitty-gritty (he's a left-hander - of course!)

VICTORIA CUP NEWS



With only a month to go before the round robin completion, the Victoria Cup event is reaching its climax. Here is a list of the current top-four placings in the three sections.

Victoria Cup current leader board

Group A

<i>Team</i>	<i>Matches played</i>	<i>VP average</i>
Ginnan	4	15.6
Arber	4	13.7
Frazer	4	7.6
McAdam	3	5.7

Group B

<i>Team</i>	<i>Matches played</i>	<i>VP average</i>
Strong	5	17.0
Jacobs	3	15.1
Thompson	5	11.0
Hall	3	10.5

Group C

<i>Team</i>	<i>Matches played</i>	<i>VP average</i>
Glenn	4	15.5
Rennie	5	13.6
McNeil	4	9.5
Cousins	4	8.0

The top two teams from each section will qualify for the final stage, which will be held

at the VBA clubrooms over the weekend of December 14 and 15.

It's been interesting to see how teams have got on with the slightly unfamiliar process of playing a bridge match over the internet. The experience seems to have been almost universally positive, with a relaxed attitude being taken to playing a match on Bridge Base Online (BBO). And it's nice to be able to undo a slip of a mouse.

Group C has a varied combination of players, including this three-generational setup:



Here is Anne Roberts with daughter Jane Rennie and grandson Finn Rennie.

Finn is one of the growing crop of youthful players who attend the weekly Youth Bridge Program held on Tuesday afternoon (4:30 pm to 6:30 pm, after school, times flexible) at Waverley Bridge Club. The session is run by Laura Ginnan, Peter Hollands and Ella Pattison and it is a joy to behold. The kids come to grips with bridge in a relaxed but educational environment, starting of course with food. If you have a son, daughter or grandchild who you think might be interested in the game, there can be no better way to begin.

Email vicyouthbridge@gmail.com for more information on the Youth Bridge Program.



Practising for the Victoria Cup at the Youth Bridge Program.

COUNCIL NEWS

VQP and Playoffs Update

The playoff to select Victoria's Open team for the 2014 ANC (Australian National Championship) will be held on April 26-27, 2014. The dates for the Women's playoff will be May 17-18, with the Senior's playoff to be held on May 31 and June 1.

VQPs for the Open playoff will be credited for events held in the period Monday 12 March - Monday 10 March. So, the first congress of the qualifying year was Rye Beach in 2013 and the last will be the event to be held (if there is one) over the 8-10 March 2014 weekend. For state events, the Mixed Pairs of 2013 was the first event and the Butler pairs will be the last. Events after that date will earn VQPs towards selection for 2015. The only exceptions will be the regional playoffs currently scheduled for February 2014 but which are the start of the process to select the regional champion, which is the regional team that participates in the Pennant (the Victorian Teams Championship).

Please see the VQP page on the VBA website for further details.

Here is the current Leaderboard for the Open Team playoff (comprises points earned both from congresses and state events):

Player	Open VQPs
Stan Klofa	67
Dee Harley	66
Charlie Schwabegger	63
Neil Ewart	50
Hayden Blakeman	45
Jeff Fust	44
Eva Samuel	44
George Gaspar	36
Kim Frazer	33
Terry Strong	32

Teacher Training Program

The VBA is pleased to announce that Joan Butts will once again visit Victoria to conduct a Teacher Training Program on the weekend of March 29 & 30, 2014 at the VBA in Murrumbeena. TTP's are 9 hours in duration

and are held over the two days. They provide a great opportunity for teachers to further their skills.

However TTP's do not need to be restricted to teachers only. People interested in bridge education in general, helpers at Supervised games etc are invited to attend. Also, people may attend for a second time, and it is often beneficial to do so.

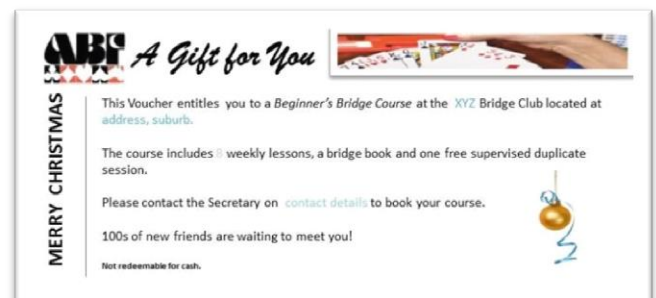
Joan's programs have received excellent reports from participants in the past and we encourage potential participants to reserve this date in their diaries. More details and information regarding booking for this event will be available in due course on the VBA website and in the bulletin.

ABF Marketing Grant

The VBA has been awarded one of just seven ABF marketing grants to support development of our innovative bridge teaching and teacher accreditation program in 2014. Part of the program will involve delivering our now-proven one-day crash courses and follow-on workshops in several regional centres in partnership with local affiliated clubs, and we'll be discussing timing and implementation with affiliated clubs over the next few months.

ABF Gift Vouchers

The ABF will shortly be promoting the concept of a Christmas Gift Voucher that can be used by clubs to encourage new people into the game. Keep an eye out for your club participating in the program: such a voucher would certainly make a fine (and different!) Christmas gift.



BRIDGE FROM HERE AND THERE
Ian McCance

An Elegant Deception

This deal from the 2013 World Championships in Bali (round robin 17, #10) is shown rotated to have declarer at South. There were 22 teams in each section (Open, Women's and Seniors') so we have 66 results. We have records for bidding and play for the 7 matches shown on BBO, but only one or two in addition from the tournament website.

Dir: North	♠	J954																		
Vul: All	♥	J83																		
	♦	972																		
	♣	A65																		
♠	Q76	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">♠</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td><td style="text-align: center;">♥</td><td>10962</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="text-align: center;">♦</td><td>A3</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">♣</td><td>KJ9872</td></tr> </table>	N		♠	8	W	E	♥	10962		S	♦	A3			♣	KJ9872	♠	8
N		♠	8																	
W	E	♥	10962																	
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♥	75		♥	10962																
♦	KQ864		♦	A3																
♣	1043		♣	KJ9872																
		♠	AK1032																	
		♥	AKQ4																	
		♦	J105																	
		♣	Q																	

As you would expect from the diagram, the final contract was almost invariably 4♠, which figures to fail, losing 3 tricks in diamonds and ♠Q.

Failure would be guaranteed if West leads ♦K (♦K to ♦A, ♦Q, ♦ ruff) as is most likely after an unopposed auction, but frequently East must have introduced clubs:

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♠	3♣	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

resulting in West's leading ♣3.

We can see that this seems to give declarer an extra chance. After winning ♣A and failing to fell ♠Q, South could aim to shed one losing diamond on the fourth round of hearts. This would be thwarted if West trumps the third round and leads a low diamond for a cash-out.

Yet 13 times South managed to make 4♠. How did this come about?

Success came from the following line, adopted by 5 declarers on BBO. After ♠A, ♠K declarer played ♥A, ♥K, following with ♥4. West, not knowing that ♥J would win, didn't trump. Declarer then trumped a club back to hand and took the crucial discard.

None of the Wests tested by this play rose ♠Q to the occasion and 4♠ was made. Their list includes some distinguished names, as is also the case for those declarers who did not adopt this deceptive play of the hearts.

West's problem is genuine. South has shown up with 5 spades and one club, so 7 reds. If these are 5-2 (in hearts-diamonds) it would be wrong to trump the third heart, since the defence needs a heart trick to go with two diamonds and ♠Q.

So what is critical here is defender's count. If East has shown even hearts West can afford to trump ♥4 (in case of subterfuge), since there will still be 3 diamond tricks to come (East must hold ♦A). If East has signalled odd West must withhold ♠Q.

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Barry Fullwood	Mornington
Kevin Spratt	Eastern

***State**

Bruce Turner	Whittlesea
Sandor Varga	Lakes Entrance

National

Michael Halfpenny	Moonee Valley
Rosemary Lill	MCC
Christine Paine	Eastern
Simon Rose	VBA

***National**

Edward Hynes	Kings & Queens
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****National**

John Lawrence	Bairnsdale
Helen Rial	Benalla

Life

Jean Barbour	South Gippsland
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Bronze Life

Beryl Coling	Yarra Valley
Frank Vearing	Macedon Ranges
David Yoffa	Berwick

Gold Life

Alison Talbot	Waverley
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SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS
Ian McCance

Felicity Beale points out that defending 4♠ in problem #1 for October, West does better to switch a heart at trick 3 in case partner's diamond was from three, in which case declarer could discard a heart on dummy's 13th diamond.

Problem 1

Dlr: East ♠ AK
 Vul: N/S ♥ 9854
 ♦ KQJ7
 ♣ J108

♠ 84	N	♠ 7532
♥ AK3	W E	♥ QJ7
♦ 10942	S	♦ A853
♣ Q532		♣ A9

♠ QJ1096
 ♥ 1062
 ♦ 6
 ♣ K764

You will need 6 tricks to defeat this contract. If partner began with only 3 hearts that will be good, 3 there and your two Aces. You can't hope for a trump trick, so you need another trick, obviously in clubs.

Partner's ♣2 must be from ♣Q. If you return a club now you set up the setting trick, preserving partner's entries to it - don't cash out the hearts first.

Problem 2

Dlr: East ♠ J765
 Vul: E/W ♥ QJ1042
 ♦ AK104
 ♣ -

♠ 42	N	♠ AQ3
♥ A987	W E	♥ K5
♦ 98	S	♦ QJ76
♣ J8542		♣ K1063

♠ K1098
 ♥ 63
 ♦ 532
 ♣ AQ97

You must withhold ♥A. Taking it establishes dummy's hearts, to which ♠7 provides an entry. Refusing this heart means that South winds up with four tricks in trumps, two diamonds, two clubs and only one heart.

Suit Combination of the month

Partner has really dropped you in it this month. He has left you in 4♠ without a spade in his hand, and you can only afford two trump losers.

How do you play a trump combination of:

(1)

-
□
♠ AJ108432

or

(2)

-
□
♠ AJ10832

for only two losers?

Solution on page 12.



THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dlr: North ♠ A54
 Vul: N/S ♥ AQJ762
 IMPs ♦ A
 ♣ K102

N
S

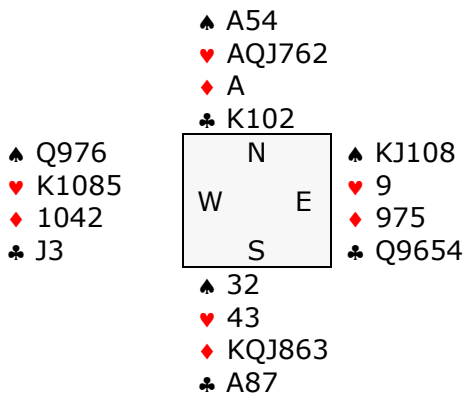
♠ 32
 ♥ 43
 ♦ KQJ863
 ♣ A87

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

This deal (slightly modified) comes from the recent Teams of 3 at the VBA. ♠6 is led. Plan the play.

Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK
Bill Jacobs



This is going to need a following wind to make. A winning heart finesse should see us home, but the hand contains a trap.

You will win ♠A, clear ♦A, come to your hand with ♣A, draw trumps, and take the heart finesse which had better win. What then?

If hearts are 3-2, you can cash ♥A, ruff a heart and enjoy an overtrick. But if West has ♥Kxxx, you need to find a way back to your hand to repeat the heart finesse. And the only way back is by trumping a spade.

So whilst drawing trumps, you must keep dummy's precious ♠54. When the heart finesse wins, play a spade and subsequently trump a spade and play another heart to repeat the finesse.

This play gives up an overtrick should hearts divide 3-2, but was necessary on the day when hearts were 4-1. Declarer, who was a team captain and therefore meant to be a good player, didn't see this position and went down in ignominy.



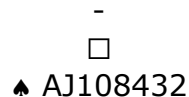
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Suit Combination of the month

(1)

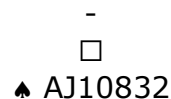


There are six outstanding spades. If they divide 3-3, there will be no problem: you lose two tricks and the rest are yours.

But what if spades are 4-2? Then if one opponent started with ♠Kx or ♠Qx, then you can pick up the suit for only one loser by starting with ace, then playing a *low* spade. An honour will beat thin air, and then your ♠J10 will be poised to drive out the remaining honour+nine.

This play loses if one opponent started with ♠9x (then the winning play would be ace then jack, with our ♠108 poised to deal with the remaining honour-small), but ♠Kx or ♠Qx is twice as likely as ♠9x.

(2)



This time there are seven missing spades, and they better divide 4-3. You must hope that the 9 is in the hand that has only 3 spades. Then if you play the ace, then the *jack* (losing to an honour) then the 10 (losing to the other honour, the 9 will have dropped and your 8 will deal with the last outstanding spade.

This picks up the suit if either opponent started with ♠KQ9, ♠K9x, ♠Q9x or ♠9xx: not a bad chance all, in fact a 30% chance.

As usual, this play could lose: if one opponent started with ♠KQx, and the other with ♠9xxx. In that layout, you needed to start by playing ace, then a low one. The probability of that is only 7%.

If that is indeed the layout, you will just have to stop getting to trump fits that contain only 6 cards!

