

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

June 2014

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson

I've been thinking recently about less experienced players and how to help them to take the next step in their bridge development – whatever that might be.



The VBA and especially Brian Morgan (one of our ABF Councillors) have been encouraging the ABF to introduce a national event for less experienced players to replace the Grand National Pairs. I attended the ABF Annual General Meeting in late May and I was very pleased that the entire ABF Council is equally enthusiastic about this. The Management Committee, under new ABF President Bruce Neill, is investigating three interesting options with a view to putting a new event in place in 2015.

Our national bridge festival, the Victor Champion Cup is starting very soon, starting with a light evening hit-out on Wednesday June 4th through Monday June 9th. We have three different restricted masterpoint events across the tournament. If you'd like to dip your toes in the competition waters, this is a great opportunity to give it a go.

Just a few Victorian congresses hold restricted events. I'd like to see more of those events, giving less experienced players more opportunities to experience competing at their own level with and against players from other clubs.

Many clubs hold events designed to encourage more and less experienced players to mix it up and play together and learn from each other (yes, each other!). At the VBA for example, our "Teams of Three" event matches one expert with three less experienced team mates.

What does your club do to help less experienced players develop? Talk about it at your club and share your experiences with other clubs (and of course the VBA is keen to help collate and share all that experience).



COUNCIL NEWS

Vacant Special Councillor Position

The VBA Council would like to remind clubs in Western Region that a vacant position remains available on council for a member from Western Region. Clubs included in the region are Geelong Bridge Club, Bendigo Bridge Club Inc, Ballarat Bridge Club, Ocean Grove Bridge Club, Warrnambool Bridge Club, Macedon Ranges Bridge Club, Echuca Bridge Club, Mildura U3A Bridge Club, Donald Bridge Club and Torquay Bridge Club.

Nominees must be a home club member of one of the clubs in the region, and the nomination must be endorsed by the Secretary and President of a club in this region. For more information or to nominate contact the VBA secretary Kim Frazer c/- the VBA.

Schools Coordinator

The VBA is creating the Victorian Schools Coordinator position to build on the success of the schools program in Eastern Victoria and facilitate the growth of bridge in schools around Victoria. The coordinator will capture and share successful methods and learnings, support clubs and players in getting bridge into Schools, and seek government or other financial support. This position may suit a bridge player who is a current or former educator. The VBA will provide some financial support for the schools program.

If you'd like to volunteer (or find out more and then volunteer), please email Kim Frazer (secretary@vba.asn.au) by June 30.

FOR STARTERS
Bill Jacobs

In a local duplicate, you pick up this 11-pointer:

♠ K64 ♥ KQ9865 ♦ K5 ♣ 82

Partner is the dealer and opens 1♣. You announce "3+ clubs", and RHO passes. What do you respond?

Bid 1♥. This shows at least 4 hearts and at least 6 HCP. The emphasis is on the "at least". You are allowed to have a lot more hearts than 4, and a lot more points than 6. Your response is forcing – partner must not pass – and you will be able to further describe your hand later.

Some starters want to jump to 2♥ instead, hoping to show their extra length and/or points. This is a false economy. Partner will not only look puzzled, but might be preempted from describing her hand.

The auction continues:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	?

What now?

Now is the time to show your extra length in hearts and extra points. You repeat your hearts to show a 6-card suit (or perhaps an excellent 5-card suit), and you jump the bidding to show strength over and above the minimum range of 6-9 HCP. A jump rebid typically shows about 10-12 HCP.

You bid 3♥ and the auction concludes:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	

LHO leads ♦Q, and you see that partner has shown plenty of faith in your declarer play, as she puts down the dummy:

♠ A753
♥ J104
♦ A8
♣ KJ103

♦Q led

N
S

♠ K64
♥ KQ9865
♦ K5
♣ 82

Plan the play

Before doing anything, count your losers. This is the way to start the plan when declaring a suit contract.

There is one loser in spades (you can win the ace and king, but the defenders will then have a winning spade), one in hearts (the ace), none in diamonds, and on a bad day, two in clubs (imagine your RHO sitting over dummy with the ace and queen).

That adds up to four losers, one too many – so you need to do some work.

There's nothing you can do about the trump loser, nor the two club tricks that you might have to lose, but the third round spade loser can be eliminated if you can set up a discard.

If you play on *clubs*, then even if you have to lose to the ace and the queen, a club trick in dummy will be established – dummy's jack and king might lose to the queen and ace, but then the 10 will be good. You can use that 10 to discard the losing spade from your hand.

So how do you play it?

The time to act is NOW. Win ♦K at trick one, and lead a club to the jack. Even if you lose the trick to RHO's queen, and RHO plays a spade, you can win the spade and play a second round of clubs.

The play on this deal is a race, between your clubs and their spades, and it's a race you can win. You will build your club trick before they build their spade trick.

However the race might be lost if you stop to play a trump. Look at the full layout to see why:

♠ A753		♠ J1092
♥ J104		♥ A3
♦ A8		♦ 9763
♣ KJ103		♣ AQ4
♠ Q8	N W E S	♠ J1092
♥ 72		♥ A3
♦ QJ1042		♦ 9763
♣ 9765		♣ AQ4
♠ K64		
♥ KQ9865		
♦ K5		
♣ 82		

If you play a trump at trick 2, RHO will win and play a spade. And he will keep plugging away at spades to build the setting trick before you can do anything about it. But if you start the clubs immediately, then you justify your partner's faith in your declarer play.

Points to remember:

- That 1♥ response to 1♣ represents a central plank in modern bidding. Just because you have a good hand or a long suit, you don't have to tell your partner that immediately.

It is often responder's *second* bid that fully describes both the strength and distribution of their hand. You can practise that in the "Test your bidding" segment that follows.

- Trump contracts are often the most complicated to play. There is a multitude of possible strategies. The best way to create a plan is to start by counting your losers. This is the way to get your brain thinking in the right direction.
- Most of the time in trump contracts, when you gain the lead, you draw the opponents' trumps. This will eliminate the risk that they can use these trumps to ruff winners that you have in your side-suits. However, on occasions, such as this deal, you need to defer drawing trumps. You can only work out what to do by taking a moment to create a plan.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

What now?

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	?

Here's a simple sort of auction that happens every day. You have shown at least 6 HCP and at least 4 hearts. Partner has shown you at least 4 diamonds, and probably exactly 4 spades, and his 1♠ bid should be treated as forcing, so you need to find another bid. That bid will depend on both your high-card points (HCP) and your distribution.

Your strength is the primary guide. With **6 to 9** HCP, your hand is a minimum responder, and you should make a minimum bid: a simple preference for one of partner's two suits, or a rebid of your hearts if you have length there, or perhaps 1NT.

If you have **10 to 12** HCP, your hand is worth *inviting* a game contract, given that partner has opened the bidding and therefore has at least 12 HCP. You invite by making a *jump* bid.

And with **13 or more** HCP, you are strong enough to finish in at least a game contract. You proceed either by bidding a game directly (if you are confident about the denomination), or by bidding the *fourth suit*, in this case 2♣: a bid that doesn't show clubs, but simply indicates strength and asks partner to further describe his hand.

Count your points and consider your distribution to find a rebid with the following hands:

- (a) ♠ J5 ♥ QJ10762 ♦ 4 ♣ KJ64
- (b) ♠ K875 ♥ 10942 ♦ A4 ♣ A63
- (c) ♠ 74 ♥ Q9653 ♦ 108 ♣ KQ62
- (d) ♠ 74 ♥ KQ53 ♦ A32 ♣ KQ62
- (e) ♠ A74 ♥ KJ1062 ♦ A2 ♣ J62
- (f) ♠ A4 ♥ Q965 ♦ AJ65 ♣ 1062

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	?

(a) ♠ J5 ♥ QJ10762 ♦ 4 ♣ KJ64

2♥. 8 HCP, so you make a minimum (non-jump) bid. The good 6-card heart suit tells you what suit to show. 2♥ will play OK even if dummy only provides a singleton heart.

(b) ♠ K875 ♥ 10942 ♦ A4 ♣ A63

3♠. 11 HCP, so this time you jump the bidding. Partner has shown 4 spades, you have 4 spades: there's your 8-card fit.

(c) ♠ 74 ♥ Q9653 ♦ 108 ♣ KQ62

1NT. 7 HCP indicating a minimum bid. Partner has diamonds and spades which you don't like; you have hearts and clubs. When you don't have prospects of a suit fit, then notrumps is probably the place to be.

Don't even think of bidding 2♥! It might be character-building to play 2♥ with dummy giving you a singleton heart, but that is the *only* positive to take out of such an outcome.

(d) ♠ 74 ♥ KQ53 ♦ A32 ♣ KQ62

3NT. 14 HCP = game. Partner has diamonds and spades, you have the other two suits well handled. You could have a nice diamond fit, but you need 11 tricks to make game in diamonds, only 9 for 3NT, and 3NT making with overtricks scores better also.

(e) ♠ A74 ♥ KJ1062 ♦ A2 ♣ J62

2♣. 13 HCP = game, but where? You don't know (clubs might be a problem in a notrump contract). Wheel out 4th suit forcing, and enlist partner's input into the search.

(f) ♠ A4 ♥ Q965 ♦ AJ65 ♣ 1062

3♦. 11 HCP = a jump bid. You were right to bid 1♥ in case you had a heart fit, but now you should show your diamond fit to partner, and your points. Partner can pass this with a minimum, or seek out a game contract with extra values.

SETTING TRICK PROBLEMS**Problem 1:**

Dlr: South ♠ 98765
 Vul: E/W ♥ A54
 ♦ A1095
 ♣ J

♠ AQJ4
 ♥ Q6
 ♦ QJ8732
 ♣ 6

	N	
W		E
	S	

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

You begin with the club: to ♣J, ♣Q and ♣A. Declarer advances ♣K. Grateful for the trump spottage, you put ♥6 on it. Declarer takes ♥A and plays a spade from dummy to ♠K.

You win and have three options (trump, diamond, ♠Q), but it seems simplest to try ♠Q, which is trumped.

Declarer next plays a low club and you have to decide how to defend.

Problem 2:

Dlr: South ♠ K972
 Vul: nil ♥ Q103
 ♦ J976
 ♣ 64

	N		♠ AQ108
W		E	♥ AJ72
	S		♦ Q10
			♣ Q109

West	North	East	South
			1NT*
Pass	Pass	Pass	

* 14-16 HCP

Partner leads ♣5 and your ♣Q is taken by ♣K. Declarer now cashes four rounds of diamonds, felling your ♦Q. Partner, who started with ♦8x, discards low hearts. (You observe that diamonds were blocked.)

Declarer now plays ♥Q, which you win. What are your remaining cards?

Solutions on page 9.

VALE DON MAREJN



Mr Don Marejn, Bruce Rosengarten (President of Jewish Care) and Sonia Marejn

This month marks the centenary of the birth of Don Marejn. Sadly, Don passed away in March, after a short illness, just two and a half months shy of his 100th birthday.

Don was born in Bialystok, Poland on June 15th 1914 into a traditional Jewish family; the second of four children born to Yaakov and Rochel Marejn. He received a very good education culminating in studies in France at the University of Clermont-Ferrand and the Ecole Française De Tannerie. After graduating in 1934 with three First Prizes in exam results, best factory project, and overall attendance, he returned home to work in his father's Tannery. His working life would be spent mainly in managing and owning tanneries, firstly in Europe and then in Australia.

The German invasion of Poland in 1939 and the subsequent Soviet occupation saw the family separated with Don forced to escape the KGB by fleeing to Lithuania. During the war he worked at various tanneries around Europe while constantly on the run. When he finally returned to Bialystok at the end of the war he found that none of his family had survived. He moved immediately to Lodz where he secured a job to restart a ruined nationalized tannery in Warsaw. It was there that he met his future wife, Sonia, who had miraculously survived the war while in Poland. They were married in early November 1945, and soon after emigrated to Paris.

Don and Sonia migrated to Australia in June 1950 together with Sonia's brother Yudel and his wife Lisa. Don found a job in one of the biggest Melbourne tanneries – J. Kennon & Sons, where he was given the task of

introducing the production methods that he had learned in Europe. He was rewarded with a good wage, which he used to reimburse the costs of their travel to Australia. Don eventually bought a disused tannery in Footscray and through much hard work and determination he and Sonia became quite successful and wealthy.

They contributed generously to many charities and organizations; they supported Montefiore Homes, Jewish Care and Emmy Monash; they established a scholarship fund at Tel Aviv University, and were particularly proud of the scholarship fund which they created for many of Melbourne's Jewish Day Schools, including Yeshiva College, Beth Rivkah, Yavneh, Mount Scopus, King David and Bialik.

They were also supporters of many non-Jewish organizations, including The Salvation Army, The Brotherhood of St Lawrence, Yooralla, Epworth and Alfred Foundations, Caulfield Hospital, Royal District Nursing Service and Peter Mac.

As Sonia's health deteriorated Don became her primary carer, supporting and caring for her until her death in December 2011, after sixty five years of marriage. With his own health failing Don soon moved into Gary Smorgon House in Caulfield where he was a popular and well-loved resident. He was well known for his love of a good joke and his storytelling – once, on returning from a visit to the doctor he said he was advised that his biggest problem was his birth date!

Don rarely played in competitions, preferring duplicates, but bridge was one of his passions. In the early days of my directing at the VBA he played with the late Frank Lobell and the late Richard Immergluck. Most recently he formed a successful partnership with Wayne Chen; and if any of his regular partners were not able to play he could call on his old friends Mischa Granowsky or Eddie Kravets, who were always willing to play with him.

Don was a kind, gentle and humble man, and I miss his smiling face greeting me as he arrived for the regular Monday night duplicate. The world is a richer place that he was here - a poorer place that he has gone.

... *Terry Crawford* (with thanks to Rabbi Nerenberg at Gary Smorgon House)

CONGRESS RESULTS

Victorian Simultaneous Pairs

- 1 G. Ridgway – A. Robbins
- 2 A. Mill – A. Maceady-Bryan
- 3 G. Snowden – G. Carr

Bayside Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 K. Troland – D. Middleton
- 2 C. Senior – G. Mealyea
- 3 K. Muntz – H. Blakeman

Swiss Teams

- 1 S. Collins, M. Callander, C. Chakravorty, H. Snashall
- 2 M. Obenchain, S. White, G. Carter, D. Carter
- 3 K. Frazer, B. Geyer, E. Hynes, G. Lovrecz

Sale Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 P. Schroor – D. Sheather
- 2 S. Klofa – R. Gallus
- 3 C. van Lier – J. Anderson

Swiss Teams

- 1 A. Blakeman, H. Blakeman, B. Kat, K. Kat
- 2 K. Frazer, J. Ebery, N. Grigg, B. Turner
- 3 C. van Lier, J. Anderson, D. Lawrence, T. Brown

Bendigo Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 K. Bailey – G. Bailey
- 2 M. Moryto – A. Jez
- 3 R. Gallus – M. Gurfinkel

Swiss Teams

- 1 C. Lachman, H. Snashall, G. Lovrecz, E. Hynes
- 2 K. Frazer, J. Ebery, N. Grigg, B. Turner
- 3 M. Obenchain, A. Talbot, C. Arul, C. Chakravorty

Western Region Teams

- 1 A. Feiner, A. Gunst, B. O'Dea, B. O'Dea
- 2 R. Macaulay, D. Peacock, R. Vivian, P. Baker
- 3 R. Lawrie, J. Lever, H. Scott, F. Bell

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs

Event 10 (May 18)

- 1 Lesley Jonklaas - Anoma Wijeyaratne (Yarra Valley)
- 2 Trish and Don Stewart-Uden (Phillip Island)

STATE EVENT RESULTS

ANC Women's Team Selection

- 1 K. French – D. Clarke
- 2 C. Lachman – H. Snashall
- 3 F. Halmos – E. Samuel

These three pairs will form the Victorian Women's team for the upcoming Sydney ANC.

UPCOMING CONGRESSES

Theodor Herzl

Sunday 15th June, 10 am: Pairs

Venue: 222 Balaclava Rd
Caulfield North

Enter: <http://www.bridgewebs.com/thsc>

Berwick

Saturday 21st June, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
Sunday 22nd June 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: Balla Balla Centre
65 Berwick – Cranbourne Road
Cranbourne East (Melways 134 B6)
Contact: Bob Westrip, 8786 7878

Enter: <http://www.bridgeunlimited.com>

Geelong

Saturday 28th June, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
Sunday 29th June 10 am: Swiss Teams
Restricted category parallel event, both days

Venue: Highton Bowls Club Rooms
cnr Highton & North Valley Roads
Highton

Contact: Sue Robinson, 5229 0300

Enter: <http://www.bridgeunlimited.com>

Victorian Youth Bridge Club Congress

Not just for youth players! All can enter.

Saturday 5th July, 10 am: Swiss Teams & Restricted Pairs
 Sunday 6th July, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Both Saturday & Sunday: K/O Teams, limited entry

All profits from this inaugural congress go to developing youth bridge in Victoria.

Venue: Waverley Bridge Club
 21B Electra Ave
 Ashwood, 3147
 Contact: Laura Ginnan, 0411 694 248

Visit <http://vicyouthcongress.wordpress.com/> for more details.

YARRA VALLEY SUPER CONGRESS - 2015

Last year, the Yarra Valley Bridge Club was conferred with Super Congress status. This means we're expected to provide a great experience, and the master point awards are much higher. Unfortunately our new status came through too late to change our 2014 venue. And of course we struck another 40°C day on the Saturday, which understandably led to several teams staying away.

It therefore pleases us to announce that we have shifted to a very professional venue with superb air conditioning. The congress will be held on February 13-15, 2015 at The Dorset Gardens on Dorset Road, Croydon. There will be a lot more information in our official brochure, but here are some highlights:

- Air conditioning – yes the real thing
- More rest rooms and smoker amenities
- No steps – everything at ground level
- A plush and professional venue with a huge car park
- Onsite and ground floor accommodation for our country guests
- A fully catered experience – morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea
- A new Walk-in event for the Friday night

- Bars and restaurants galore on site

We are doing everything we can to make this a truly super congress, and with the super venue, air conditioning and facilities, we hope to attract a super field! We are really looking forward to seeing you there at our new Congress home.



THANK-YOU PARTNER Bill Jacobs

Playing in the recent NSW Team Selection trials, you pick up one of your usual hands:

♠ 1083 ♥ 852 ♦ 1042 ♣ 7654

Playing Standard, partner opens 2♣, you respond with a mournful 2♦ and partner bids a natural 3♦.

What's your next call?

Like it or not, 3♦ is a forcing bid ... you are not allowed to pass. So I suppose you must "support" partner's diamonds: bid 4♦, or if you are devotee of Fast Arrival principles, 5♦.

Whichever you choose, partner puts you into 6♦.

This doesn't look good, and the accident of the auction has made you declarer. LHO leads and partner proudly displays:

♠ AK4 ♥ AKQ ♦ AKQ97 ♣ AK

If there were a Guinness Book of Records entry for the strongest dummy ever, that 32-pointer might just win.

Trumps broke normally, and 6♦ made in comfort, as would have 6NT, of course.

One player, holding the weak hand, decided to *pass* 3♦ in the auction above. She is out of Intensive Care, and taking visitors.

And the title of this article? Well, when declarer, it is polite to say "thank-you partner" when dummy is put down, no matter how distasteful it is. But in this instance, you can say it *and* mean it.

BRIDGE FROM HERE AND THERE Ian McCance

Last Gasp

Here's another desperate final segment, from the final of the Spring National in Sydney, 2013: Hans vs Wilkinson. A swing of 10 IMPs on this last board gave Wilkinson victory by 6.

Dir: West	♠ A7						
Vul: N/S	♥ 6						
	♦ K10632						
	♣ K9632						
♠ J9864	N	E	♠ KQ53				
♥ AK1092	W	S	♥ QJ8754				
♦ 7			♦ A9				
♣ 74			♣ 10				
	♠ 102						
	♥ 3						
	♦ QJ854						
	♣ AQJ85						

West	North	East	South
1♠	Pass	4♣	D'ble
4♠	5♣	Pass	Pass
D'ble	Pass	Pass	Pass

Sartaj Hans opened the West hand, and Michael Whibley splintered in response. Warren Lazer took the opportunity to Double, and after some thought Pauline Gumby found the vulnerable sacrifice against the non-vulnerable game. This cost only 200 after ♠K was led.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♦	1♥	2♥
4♦	5♦	5♥	Pass
Pass	D'ble	All Pass	

At the other table Michael Wilkinson passed the West hand and Ishmael Del'Monte opened from North. Griff Ware overcalled in hearts and when 5♦ came to him he took the step to 5♥, making Doubled for 650¹.

Acknowledging that this was a major final, contested by some of Australia's best, I use my vantage point (retirement) to disagree with almost everyone.

¹ It is extraordinary to compare the two auctions: in the first, only black suits were bid; in the second, only red suits! ... BJ

1) Light openings, particularly West's which meant opening such a feeble suit.

North's was marginal, but I note that both were on the losing side of this deal, perhaps because the opening side becomes worried about being pushed about at high level.

2) Gumby's failure to enter with 2NT over 1♠. This would never have done for Sjoert Brink (see April Bulletin)².

North-South were allowed into the auction by:

3) Splinters - don't like them, but two here.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Neville Holmes	Ballarat
Diana Marsland	Macedon Ranges
Helen Nicholson	VBA
Lee Opray	Rye Beach
Elizabeth Soek	Waverley
Peter Wells	Macedon Ranges

*State

Gwyn McCall	Wodonga
Stephen Park	Warrnambool
Janet Rogers	Bendigo

National

Jill Bell	Waverley
Lynette Bradley	Yarra Valley
Alan Sharp	Waverley
Anne Smail	Ballarat

*National

Barbara Boag	Dendy Park
Margaret Porteous	Rye Beach

**National

Anne Den Houting	Traralgon
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Life

Maira Hecker	Traralgon
Terry Johnston	Geelong

Bronze Life

Noel Grigg	Whittlesea
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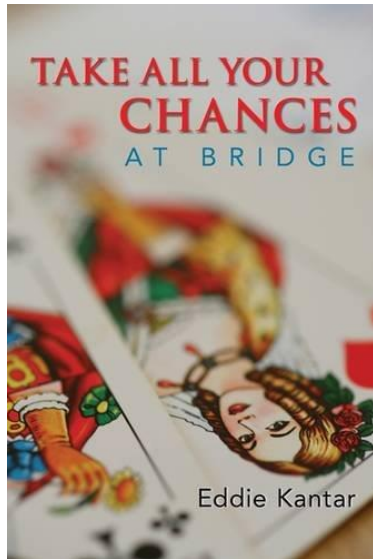
Grand

Shirley Stewart	Phillip Island
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² After 1♦ on his left, 1♠ on his right, Brink overcalled 1NT, vulnerable, on ♠ 1082 ♥ Q9873 ♦ - ♣ J9765

BOOK REVIEW
Take ALL Your Chances at Bridge
By Eddie Kantar
Reviewed by Kim Frazer

I think this is a sensational book about card play, the percentages and how to make your contract. I am a huge fan of Eddie Kantar's books and this one doesn't disappoint. It contains 100 problems broken up into 4 problem blocks with normal and advanced problems intermingled into each set. After considering the 4 problems set out on one double page, one turns over and the solutions are provided with detailed discussion on the next pages.



Newer players may find the advanced problems a bit hard, but regardless of this the suggested lines of play will provide good technique for players at any level.

All the problems show game contracts - quite often 3NT or slam. The discussion shows how to maximise your chances of success, which finesse to try first, how to structure your play and so on. There is discussion on what could go wrong with the play, how suits might divide and how to combine lines of play to increase your percentage chance of success. The solutions also detail the percentage chance of success of each line of play.

I feel that one of the most valuable points made is the discussion is about the "practice finesse". This is where you play a finesse, but it doesn't help you make your contract!

I highly recommend acquiring a copy of this book for your own library.



SETTING TRICK – SOLUTIONS
Ian McCance

Problem 1

Dir: South ♠ 98765
 Vul: Nil ♥ A54
 ♦ A1095
 ♣ J

♠ AQJ4	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 80px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 1032
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ Q6		♥ 873									
♦ QJ8732		♦ K									
♣ 6		♣ Q109842									

♠ K
 ♥ KJ1092
 ♦ 64
 ♣ AK753

You can pop that ♥Q, the defence now up to two tricks, but where are the next two?

It looks as if declarer is preparing a cross-ruff and his playing on spades suggests he may not have ♦K. If he is 5-5 in the blacks he will have a diamond loser, which gives partner only one, which must be ♦K. There is no hurry to win your ♥Q. It turns out that by allowing this club to be ruffed in dummy you can bring partner into the action by using ♥Q on the next low club. Hold off this club.

At the point where you won ♠A both of your other options were winning ones.

Problem 2

Dir: East ♠ K972
 Vul: All ♥ Q103
 ♦ J976
 ♣ 64

♠ J4	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 80px; height: 60px;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ AQ108
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 986		♥ AJ72									
♦ 83		♦ Q10									
♣ A87532		♣ Q109									

♠ 653
 ♥ K54
 ♦ AK542
 ♣ KJ

You discarded a heart (or a spade) and of course one of your clubs. Unblocking from your holding in clubs was essential.



BIDDING, DOUBLING & EXCITEMENT David Morgan

Have you ever played Goulash bridge? It's a form of the game where most deals are highly distributional, so there is lots of bidding, doubling and excitement. Goulash used to be played in many rubber bridge games: when a deal was passed in, the cards would be gathered up, shuffled lightly, if at all, and then dealt three, four or five at a time rather than one by one. Nowadays there is a computer program to do all that, and it allows the deals to be mildly, moderately or very wild.

Try your hand at these problems from the first Goulash Pairs at the VBA.

1. You hold

♠ Q108653 ♥ - ♦ Q982 ♣ A64

No-one is vulnerable. Would you open this hand a weak two?

2. You hold

♠ KJ9432 ♥ - ♦ AKQJ6 ♣ K3

You are vulnerable, the opponents are not. You open 1♠ in third seat (a rare occurrence: usually dealer or second seat has something to say!), your LHO (left-hand opponent) overcalls 2♥, partner supports your spades with a simple raise and RHO (right-hand opponent) bids 3♥.

What do you call and why? How high are you prepared to bid?

3. You hold

♠ AQ10962 ♥ Q4 ♦ AKJ76 ♣ -

You are vulnerable, the opponents are not. Partner opens 3♥ and RHO overcalls 3NT. What is your call?

Notice how every problem hand has a void. Balanced hands do occur in goulash – there were 13 in the 30 deals played – but they're MUCH less common than usual. One pair, having done some thinking about this, played an unusual natural system: one-level

openings in all suits promised at least five cards! 1NT was strong, but with a wider range than usual.

1. Nowadays many (most?) tournament players would treat this hand as a weak two. The purists would highlight the many flaws, including weak spades, a void, such good support for not one but two side suits, and an outside ace. However, getting in first has many advantages, especially with spades, and pre-empting inconveniences two opponents but only one partner.

Those advantages still exist in goulash but now you know the deal is likely to be wild and suits to break badly – there were few 2-2 breaks! If you do play in spades your weak suit is much more likely than normal to be a problem. And bidding 2♠ will make it difficult for partner to bid a minor, for which you have such good support.

2. One thing Goulash helps develop is your experience of highly competitive auctions. It allows you to try out different strategies: bidding what you think you can make or trying a cooperative approach to allow both partners to judge what to do. It's a reminder that bridge is a game of psychology.

Clearly you expect to make 4♠. But if you bid 4♠ will that end the auction? Unlikely when the distribution is likely to be wild. In auctions like this it's often a good idea to tell your partner your second suit and so enlist her cooperation. Here, though, your side suit is solid, so you don't need any help from partner in the suit. Do the advantages of keeping your side suit hidden outweigh the benefits of telling partner (and the opponents) about your shape?

I tried the bid-what-you-can-make approach but that drew the inevitable 5♥ from my LHO. Partner doubled, RHO passed, and I . . . ? I was lured by the vulnerability and some uncertainty about our defensive prospects. Would we get enough from doubling 5♥? Would we even defeat 5♥ if one opponent was short in spades and the other in diamonds? I bid 5♠. LHO doubled.

Now try the play. LHO leads the ♥K and you see:

Dlr: North ♠ 1075
 Vul: N/S ♥ J854
 IMPs ♦ 9
 ♣ AJ984

N
S

♠ KJ9432
 ♥ -
 ♦ AKQJ6
 ♣ K3

The double tells you trumps are breaking badly, and that they're offside. (Doubling on general high cards below the six level is much less likely to be a winner when the deals are wild.) How do you play the hand?

If trumps are 3-1 then you have reasonable chances: play trumps, losing just the trump ace and queen – providing you can avoid a ruff en route. But if trumps are 4-0 the play is more tricky. You can work out what will happen if you play trumps: LHO will win and lead another heart. Now, having ruffed twice, you have the same number of trumps as LHO. Under the threat of losing control, you'll struggle to avoid down two. So, if trumps are 4-0, you need to avoid leading any trumps. Instead, aim to lead your diamonds through your LHO's trumps, intending to overruff if he ruffs in with the missing eight or six. Note that, like any crossruff line, you need to cash your side suit tricks early to avoid LHO pitching clubs and ruffing one of your winners.

Alas, I failed to think carefully enough at the table about why my opponent doubled. Partner and I had all the high cards except in hearts, and it's goulash, so the odds of a 4-0 break increased greatly. I hoped for the 3-1 split and led a trump, but when they were 4-0 and my ♦A was ruffed on the first round (yes, the diamonds were 5-0-1-7 around the table – see what I mean about goulash!) I was down two for a bottom. Even correct play would have been down one. Maybe if I'd bid 4♦ I'd have been more willing to pass partner's double . . .

3. What does your RHO have for his 3NT bid? With all your high cards and your club void, you know he has long clubs. If he has eight he only needs one trick elsewhere; if seven, just two. How will your hand fit partner's hearts? Well! Partner will make her long hearts and your high cards and club ruffs. So

should you just bid 4♥? Maybe. But maybe you should double 3NT first to let partner know that you are bidding 4♥ to make. And that might also stop the opponents bidding further.

But say you pass 3NT. What would you lead?

It's normal to lead an honour in partner's suit, but remember how declarer is planning to make nine tricks: seven or eight clubs and a trick or two on the side, including one in hearts. Much better to try a high diamond to look at dummy to see what to continue. The danger of leading a heart became apparent when the deal was:

Dlr: West ♠ J84
 Vul: N/S ♥ J1098763
 ♦ Q102
 ♣ -

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 73 ♠ K5
 ♥ K2 ♥ A5
 ♦ 953 ♦ 84
 ♣ Q96543 ♣ AKJ10872

♠ AQ10962
 ♥ Q4
 ♦ AKJ76
 ♣ -

Yes, partner was a bit light for her bid (and notice again the dangers of bidding a weak suit) so declarer made nine tricks when dummy had six-card support for his seven-card suit! A diamond lead followed by a spade switch from partner* would have meant eleven tricks for the defence! This was the only board played in a notrump contract in the event!

*The spade switch is difficult to find but not double-dummy: if the partnership plays attitude signals then the play could go: ♦K, ♦A, then ♦J to partner's queen, clearly a suit preference card asking for a spade return.



Cute bridge terms

- Kingleton: singleton king
- Quiff: singleton queen
- Nonedleton: void
- Vagrant: a trump void in dummy (no visible means of support)

GETTING TO KNOW THE LAWS

Bill Jacobs

Bidding Box Accidents

Playing in a duplicate with bidding boxes, you pick up:

♠ KJ5 ♥ K62 ♦ 94 ♣ J8764

Partner deals and opens 1♠, next hand overcalls 2♦ and you raise to 2♠.

LHO passes, and you look down in front of you and see that you've accidentally pulled the 2NT bidding card from the bidding box and put it on the table.

"Oh, sorry," you say. "I didn't mean to bid that."

"It's too late now," says the player on your left. "I've condoned your bid by my pass."

Your LHO is an experienced player, so he probably knows his stuff. You accept this, everyone passes, and they run off the first 6 diamond tricks against you, and take two more tricks later. A miserable 3 down, when 2♠ would have made easily.

"Sorry partner," you apologise. "I pulled the wrong card from the bidding box – they are so fiddly to use!"

This sort of horror story plays out in bridge clubs far too often.

Your LHO was wrong, 100% wrong, but so in a way were you, when you failed to call the director. Something has gone awry – you should have called the director. And yes, you could have avoided the silly 2NT contract, because the director would have let you take your bid back. An unintended call can be changed, until such time that partner makes a call, if it is done without pause for thought.

There was no pause *for thought* here: there was a pause, but not a pause for thought. It simply took some time for you to discover that the wrong bidding card had landed on the table. The director will know, by looking at your hand, that you could not possibly have intended to bid 2NT. This was clearly a bidding box malfunction, and it can be corrected.

Incidentally, when you replace 2NT with 2♠, your LHO may replace his pass with a different bid, for example a raise to 3♦.

This sort of accident is less likely with written bidding, but it can happen. The homegrown rule used at one not-to-be-named club is that once the pen has left the paper, the call cannot be changed. That is incorrect. Pathways from the brain to the hand can become unreliable, particularly as we age, and a director is duty bound to allow a change of call if he decides it is done without pause for thought.

One further point about bidding boxes. Do not reach for the box until you have finalised your call. Half pulling out the 2♠ card, and then replacing it with a Pass, is really poor etiquette, transmitting a bucket-load of unauthorised information to your partner.

Hesitate by all means, but don't telegraph so obviously the choices you are hesitating between. To quote the relevant ABF regulation:

Players must decide their call before commencing to write or to touch the bidding box. Any vacillation among calls may convey unauthorised information and restrict partner's actions according to Laws 16B1 and 73C.

ROTHFIELD TEAMS

at the

VICTORIAN BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The VBA invites all players to enter the Rothfield Teams, a 4 week event commencing on Wednesday, 18thth June, 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

Victorian State Representatives at the forthcoming ANC play in this event for practice. Come along and play against your State Teams – Open, Seniors, Womens and Youth



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