

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

November 2021

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**VBA PRESIDENT
CHRISTOPHER LEACH**



As I write this column it is mid-October and I have just read an article citing several leading infectious diseases physicians, all marvelling at the pace of the vaccination rollout in South-Eastern Australia. From being the laggard of the western world, Australia appears to be heading for ultimate inclusion in the world's top 5 vaccinated countries, given that the astonishing number of first vaccinated (now approaching 90% in Victoria) is surely going to translate to that order of magnitude of people fully-vaccinated, in just a few short weeks from now.

The VBA has just announced that, bearing in mind this extraordinary situation, we will re-open for face-to-face (F2F) bridge from the tenth of November and we have also issued suggestions to all our affiliated clubs in this regard. We are following the

ABF's view that "live" bridge is just for the fully vaccinated (except with the very rare exemptions, where a COVID negative test result would be required) and, of course, at least initially, there will be all the other measures we have become so familiar with: masks, QR codes, sanitizer and density limits. The difference may well be that we can look forward with real hope that the lockdown we have just endured is the last one and that a pathway to normality is rapidly being established for 2022. Such optimism is being reinforced by the emergence of anti-viral treatments which can be taken at home (as distinct from just in hospital) and the likelihood that all Australian over-65's will soon be eligible for third doses that may confer very long immunity... we will see, but all potentially good news.

Many of you will have seen the entertaining and intriguing recent article in The Age (most of which emanated from Sydney bridge circles) whose essential point was that bridge (in this case online) has been a life-saver in the pandemic. I am sure we would all say "amen" to that. Which leads me to the wider theme that, when we return to F2F (hopefully permanently) we should do so with a real feeling of gratitude and joy that we have the privilege of playing this great game, one of the noblest pastimes of humanity. Let us look forward to 2022 with a real spirit of optimism, be it with regard to resuming bridge at our club, getting back to F2F congresses, state events, or whatever else is our favoured interaction with bridge and with our friends and partners. I am particularly excited by the likely return of our great cycle of national events, beginning, we hope, with the incredible Gold Coast Congress in late February. It will be with a profound sense of relief and contentment that one would again view that giant playing area, overflowing with keen players from beginners to Emerald Grand Masters, all miraculously playing the same boards at their various levels. An amazing sight!

This is my last column before the end of the year and I wish you a grand return to bridge and a very happy and prosperous festive season. I look forward to seeing many of you at the table in the many events we have to look forward to.

Christopher Leach.

UPCOMING CONGRESSES

Congresses that were scheduled to be played over the coming few weeks, but have subsequently been cancelled:

CANCELLED:

South Gippsland	Nov 6-7
RACV	Nov 13
Tivoli	Nov 20
VBA	Dec 4-5

Congresses that will still be held over the coming few weeks:

Still On:

Club	Style	Dates
Waverley	online(RealBridge)	Oct 30-31
KooyongLTC	(Face-to-Face)	Nov 27
Dendy Park	(Face-to-Face)	Nov 28
VCC	online(RealBridge)	Dec 2-5

BRIDGE HUMOUR

- The difference between genius and stupidity at the bridge table is that genius has its limits.
- A married couple are not speaking to each other after a horrible game and are driving home from a distant bridge tournament. They pass by a field full of donkeys. The husband breaks the silence by asking the wife: "Relations of yours"? "Yes" she says, "In-laws".

(both of the above were taken from [Eddie Kantar's website](#))

DOUBLE DUMMY PROBLEM

TP sent me this nasty double dummy problem which cropped up during a friendly online game. If you have half an hour or so to spare you may wish to give it a try. (My half an hour is a total guess so if you wish you can let me know how long it took you.)

You must make 4♠ (by South) on the lead of the ♥K (hands have been rotated for convenience)

Dlr: West ♠ AJ53
 Vul: Both ♥ -
 ♦ AJ10854
 ♣ A95

♠ -	N W E S	♠ K10862
♥ KQJ8754		♥ 963
♦ -		♦ K97
♣ KJ10642		♣ 87

♠ Q974
 ♥ A102
 ♦ Q632
 ♣ Q3

I don't intend to publish the solution to this problem, so if you really need to know you may email me to ask for the solution. 😊

VCC

This year, the VCC will be held on Real Bridge during December (2nd to 5th). Your entries will be accepted from the [MyABF website](#)

SYDNEY SPRING NATIONALS

In the non-Covid years last month we would have been jetting off to Sydney for the Spring Nationals...Covid has wreaked so many changes to our lives, and accordingly this year we played in the Spring Nationals whilst sitting at home using Real Bridge. Victorian, James Coutts playing along with Liam Milne won the Dick Cummings Pairs, as well as the Jacaranda Teams with team mates Jessica Brake and Susan Humphries. Well done James!

LONG LIVE THE REDOUBLE!

I agreed to play with Neil Ewart in the Dick Cummings Pairs (Sydney Nationals) as a last-minute arrangement, so we had very little in the way of system agreements.

The following hand came up which led me to muse on how infrequently we use the blue card (the redouble). Do we know what it means when it is used? and do you know how to counter it if your opponents use it?

These hands have been rotated for convenience

Pairs:

Dir: East ♠ AJ94
 Vul: E/W ♥ K52
 ♦ 109
 ♣ 10754

♠ 75	N W E S	♠ KQ10632
♥ A876		♥ QJ10
♦ 8652		♦ AQJ4
♣ J82		♣ -
		♠ 8

♥ 943
 ♦ K73
 ♣ AKQ963

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
		1♠	2♣
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Rdbl
All Pass			

East has a decent 1♠ opening and sitting South I had no hesitation in making a 2♣ overcall. West passed and Neil in the North seat made a cue raise – showing a good hand with club support. East passed.

Whilst my overcall is sound, I do not have many extra values, so I rebid 3♣ which Neil, who has shown his hand, and has nothing extra to say passed back to East, who now emerged from his shell with a takeout double. At this point I have shown a minimum overcall in clubs, but since partner has shown support, I thought that my club suit would run so I

threw in a redouble. We had no agreement as to what it meant, but then the opponents were unsure how to handle it. West looked at his collection and probably reasoned that he didn't need to bid since his partner would have another chance... Neil Passed and East now wondered whether his partner was sitting with a club stack, so he passed also. With the red Aces both being well placed for North-South we emerged with 10 tricks for a 100% score.

I am inclined to start a campaign to popularise the use of the redouble!

You should discuss with your partner! Having the wrong understanding can lead to very expensive mistakes!

Circumstances I am aware of where redouble is useful:

Support redouble: to show 3 card support for your partner's Major at the one level. (you open a minor, partner responds a Major and your RHO doubles. Your XX shows 3 card support)

Strength showing: looking to penalise (Partner opens a Major, RHO doubles and your XX shows no great fit for partner, but interest in penalising them)

S.O.S redouble: Your partner has been doubled. You have a void and are happy to play in any other suit.

First round control: during a cue-bidding sequence (you have agreed a major, partner cue bids a minor (1st or 2nd round control) which is doubled, You can xx to promise 1st round control, or you can pass and let partner have the chance to redouble if he has 1st round control.

To Play: that you would like to play there (as in the redouble I used in the diagram).

Redouble in doubt – have a look at this [web page](#) to see examples of how it can work.

ANC – STARTING 8TH NOVEMBER

RealBridge kibitzing will be available for all matches. In accordance with RealBridge security measures, it will be delayed by 30 minutes. TheRealBridge kibitz link is <https://kibitz.realbridge.online/> The event will be listed there a couple of days before the start.

GOOD LUCK TO ALL OUR ANC TEAMS

BIDDING: COPING WITH 2-SUITED OVERCALLS

You should discuss in detail with your partner whatever methods you wish to adopt in defence to two-suited overcalls.

There are three scenarios which are covered:

1. They bid your suit with 2 known suits
2. They bid your suit with 1 known suit
3. They bid other with 2 known suits

1. They bid your suit with 2 known suits:

You double to show you would have made that bid.

You bid the higher of their 2 suits to show a cue raise (or better)

You bid the lower of their 2 suits to show a forcing holding in the fourth suit

You bid the 4th suit which is natural and non-forcing.

Examples: Partner opens 1♥. Your right hand opponent (RHO) bids 2♥ (showing Spades and Clubs)

With ♠Jx ♥QJx ♦xxxx ♣Axxx you double (you would have raised 1♥ to 2♥ without the intervention)

With ♠Jx ♥J ♦KQJ10xx ♣J10xx you bid 3♦ - natural but non-forcing. You hope to play there.

With ♠Ax ♥Jx ♦AKQJxx ♣Kxx you bid 2♠ (the lower of their suits) showing a forcing hand with diamonds. Note that whilst Spades ranks higher Clubs, we are comparing the levels of the available bids, so that 2♠ is LOWER than 3♣.

With ♠Ax ♥QJxx ♦KJxx ♣Kxx you can make a cue raise by bidding 3♣ (the higher of their suits)

2. They bid your suit with 1 known suit:

You double to show you would have made that bid.

You bid either of the unknown suits to be natural and forcing.

You bid their suit to show the cue raise.

There is no way to show other suits (non-forcing)

Examples: Partner opens 1♥ your RHO bids 2♥ showing Spades and an unknown minor

With ♠Jx ♥QJx ♦xxxx ♣Axxx you double (you would have raised 1♥ to 2♥ without the intervention)

With ♠Jx ♥J ♦KQJ10xx ♣J10xx you pass, if the opponents come to rest in 2♠ or 3♣ you can now bid 3♦ non-forcing.

With ♠Ax ♥Jx ♦AKQJxx ♣Kxx you bid 3♦ natural and forcing

With ♠Ax ♥QJxx ♦KJxx ♣Kxx you can make a cue raise by bidding 2♠ (their known suit)

3. They bid something showing 2 known suits e.g. 2NT showing minors

Double states that you are interested in penalising the opponents (you can penalty double at least one of their known suits)

We bid the higher of their suits to show a cue raise (or better)

We bid the lower of their suits to show the 4th suit (forcing)

We bid the 4th suit (Natural non-forcing)

We bid their suit to show the cue raise.

I'm sure you can provide your own examples for this. Bear in mind that, having allocated bids for the cue raise of partners suit, then bids of 3 or 4 of partner's suit are pre-emptive.

PLAY PROBLEM #23 SOLUTION

Last month you had to make 6 ♠.

Dlr: South ♠ KJ764

Vul: All ♥ AQ64

♦ K

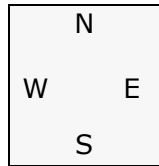
♣ Q102

♠ ?

♥ ?

♦ 10?

♣ ?



♠ A1095

♥ K102

♦ AJ32

♣ AJ

♠ ?

♥ ?

♦ ?

♣ ?

Contract 6 ♠

Lead: ♦ 10

Once the ♦ K holds you are pretty happy! Chances are good.

Cash the ♠ K, if both defenders follow suit, then your contract is guaranteed! You lead the ♠ 4 towards your hand. If East now shows out then you win the ♠ A and lead another spade forcing West to take his ♠ Q and be endplayed - whichever suit he plays hands you a 12th trick! Your contract is safe!

If instead, East follows with the ♠ Q then you have at least 12 tricks, and if he follows suit low, you play the ♠ 10 and smile (inwardly) whether it wins or loses, since, if it loses, he is endplayed again, but if your finesse wins you can draw trumps and start looking for an overtrick!

So what happens if spades break 4-0? if West failed to follow to the first trump trick you can pick up the spade suit without loss take the club finesse for your 12th trick (whether it wins or loses).

If East failed to follow to the first trump, play a low spade from dummy to the ♠ 9 which West must win and return a trump. Win with the ♠ 10, ruff a ♦, heart to ♥ K and ruff another ♦. Now play to the ♣ A and then play your other Aces - ♠ A then ♦ A discarding clubs from dummy. If hearts break 3-3 you get 12

tricks. If not, you have to hope the opponent with 4 hearts also has the ♣ K, so that will have been squeezed to provide your 12th trick.

PLAY PROBLEM #24

How will you go about this 5 ♣ contract?

Dlr: South ♠ AQ7

Vul: None ♥ K6543

♠ AQ7

♥ K6543

♦ J543

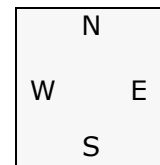
♣ J

♠ ?

♥ J?

♦ ?

♣ ?



♠ J104

♥ -

♦ AKQ2

♣ KQ10987

♠ ?

♥ ?

♦ ?

♣ ?

Contract 5 ♣ Lead: ♥ J

Bidding:

	W	N	E	S
				1 ♣
Pass		1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
Pass		2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦
Pass		3NT	Pass	4 ♣
Pass		4 ♥	Pass	5 ♣
All Pass				

SUIT COMBINATION

This month you hold A10842 opposite your partner's Q753

How would you play this suit for 4 tricks?

And what if you needed 5 tricks?

Assume you have plenty of entries to both hands.

Decide how you would play before peeking at the [Solution](#) on [P6](#)

Send me the best line please:
dee_harley@hotmail.com

♣♣♣ **KNAVE OF CLUBS** ♣♣♣
REVERSING

There are two aspects of reverses that cause difficulty for the club player. The first is the matter of how much you need to make a reverse. An auction like the one shown, 1♦-1♠-2♥, needs to promise about 17 hcp. The reason is simple: to make 2NT or 3 of a suit requires 22-23 points and the responder has only promised 5. Thus, the minimum promised by a reverse has to be 17. You can't decide to not play reverses without your auctions being unsound when you end up at the 3 level with twelve opposite five. The other aspect is that a reverse after a 1 level response is a one round force. Responder's rebid bid needs to tell partner whether you are minimum and would like to stop quickly or you have a good hand where we will play in game or even investigate slam. Some play that a rebid of 2♠, 3♦ and 3♥ are non-forcing here and that you bid the 4th suit with better hands.

Teams

Dlr: North

♠ 976

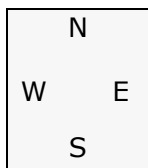
Vul: All

♥ AK98

♦ AKQJ6

♣ K

♠ J832



♠ K

♥ J106

♥ 752

♦ 84

♦ 109753

♣ AQ87

♣ J632

♠ AQ1054

♥ Q43

♦ 2

♣ 10954

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣
Pass	5♠	All Pass	

Others use the opposite structure and make the lower of 4th suit and 2NT show a weak hand and all the rest are game forcing or

better. This is called 'Blackout' and is a useful method when the auction becomes slam going because you can agree a suit at the 3 level and leave room for cue bids. Here South showed a non-minimum hand and then agreed spades. Despite the bad trumps, North made a last effort but had to subside at the 5 level. The ♣A was led followed by a heart switch. Declarer led a small spade and was pleased to see the king pop up. Next, he played the ♠Q and started to run diamonds but was beaten when West ruffed in early. Instead of the QS, declarer should have led a small one towards the nine. This keeps a trump on table to deal with a club continuation. If West wins the JS, it is very easy and if he ducks, just run the diamonds until he ruffs then enter hand with the ♥Q and draw the last trump.

Can you see how the defence can beat the contract? Yes, just play another club at trick 2!

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

This month you hold A10853 opposite your partner's Q742

Needing 4 tricks: This one is easy really, missing the 9 you just cash the Ace and lead up to the Queen, hoping that KJX did not start offside.

Needing 5 tricks: This is cute! Normally with this type of problem you have to decide whether to play for the singleton J in one hand or the singleton King in the other, but notice that here, if you drop a singleton King in either hand you will be unable to pick up the rest of the suit without loss, so you are forced into the only playable line... lead the Queen and run it if not covered, hoping for the singleton Knave on your right - when the miracle happens and it drops under the Queen, you will now be able to finesse the 9 for all the tricks!