

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

June 2004

Editors: Ian McCance & Bill Jacobs

JOIN US AT THE ANC CHAMPIONSHIPS

The VBA is hosting the Australian Bridge Championships at Melbourne's Dallas Brooks hall from July 23rd to August 7th. This is a wonderful opportunity for Victorian players to meet, mingle with, or play against Australia's best bridge players. This opportunity only comes around every eight years, so we urge you to pencil in the championships as a 'must attend'. A great variety of events, some serious and some fun, are planned. You are sure to find an event that you would enjoy competing in.

During the first week, the Australian Butler Pairs Championships, consisting of Open, Women's and Seniors sections, will take place. These events are open to all players. The Interstate Teams Championships will be held during the second week. The teams contesting these events will have come through grueling selection competitions in their own states. You are welcome to come along to kibitz, and to cheer on our own Victorian Open, Womens, Seniors and Junior teams.

The ANC Congress will run alongside the Championship events over the full two weeks of the championships. Most Congress events are scheduled for two or more sessions, but there will always be Walk-in Pairs events for those who wish to play a single or occasional session. Details about the Congress program can be found on the ANC website: <http://www.vba.asn.au/Anc2004/anc2004Main.html>.

Some of the highlights of the Congress are:

- new Regional Pairs and Teams events on July 31-August 1. The gold point Regional events are restricted to members of non-metropolitan clubs and carry attractive prizes as well as rare, difficult-to-obtain gold points for regional and country players. Unrestricted Open Pairs and Teams competitions will also be held at the same time for all other players. Both the Saturday Regional and Open Pairs

competitions offer overseas or interstate holiday packages as the major prizes.

- a new 5 session gold pointed ANC Swiss Pairs championship will be held on July 28-30. This takes the place of the Consolation Butler which was formerly restricted to players who had contested earlier rounds of the ANC Butler competition, and is now open to all players.
- a two session gold pointed Restricted Butler on July 28th for players with less than 300 master points.
- a fun speedball pairs event on the evening of Sunday July 25th.
- eclectic pairs events in which players' best 3 session results form their final score, meaning that they do not need to attend all of the 5 sessions scheduled, or they can drop their worst session results if they have played more than 3 sessions.
- a Directors course on the morning of Saturday July 28th for those who wish to obtain training in directing.

We expect to have some reasonable parking options for you to use. There should be ample on-street parking or nearby parking stations available in the evenings and weekends. The best options at present for all-day parking on weekdays seem to be park-and-ride (e.g. the Museum) or early bird options. Keep checking the website for updates on our parking arrangements. Remember too that the venue is very close to trams and trains, so public transport may be a good alternative.

We are excited about the opportunities our venue provides, in addition to keen bridging. Of course we hope that you will play all the time, but you may also enjoy combining bridge with activities such as fine dining, shopping, movie going, or visiting the Casino, all of which are relatively close. Please come along and help to make this the best ANC ever held!



SETTING TRICK - PROBLEMS

Problem 1:

Dealer: W ♠ 92
 Vul: N/S ♥ K95
 ♦ KQ8632
 ♣ Q6

♠ AQ6
 ♥ Q108
 ♦ 1095
 ♣ 8542

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All pass	

South's 1NT showed 12-14 points. Partner leads a fourth-best ♠3 and you have a problem, whether to play the ♠A or ♠Q. You correctly select ♠Q. Declarer wins ♠K and plays ♦J, on which partner follows with ♦4. It looks as if partner may hold ♦A, in which case it is likely to appear on the next trick. You have to decide at trick TWO how you can try to tell partner to continue spades. Naturally you have been careful to give no information through tempo at trick 1.

Problem 2:

Dealer: N ♠ KJ103
 Vul: Both ♥ 1082
 ♦ KQ63
 ♣ J9

♠ 976
 ♥ AQ6
 ♦ A109
 ♣ Q1074

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♥(!)	All Pass	

You lead ♣4 to partner's ♣A, which falls ♣K. Partner continues clubs, declarer ruffing. You duck the next lead, a diamond, and declarer plays dummy's ♥10 and runs it. Your play.

Solutions on page 6.



SENIOR MOMENTS QUIZ

Problem 1:

Dealer East, Vul East-West.
 South holds:
 ♠ AQJ65
 ♥ 1062
 ♦ A102
 ♣ A5

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
2♦	D'ble*	Pass	?

* Double is negative, promises 4+ hearts and suggests at least a doubleton diamond. Your call?

Problem 2:

Dealer East, Vul North-South.
 South holds:
 ♠ AKJ2
 ♥ 6
 ♦ Q8543
 ♣ Q74

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
1♠	D'ble*	Pass	?

* Double is negative, promises 4+ hearts and suggests at least a doubleton spade. Your call?

For outcomes, read on.



A MAN AND HIS THEORIES
David Smith

Bob Gallus is a man with many theories. One of his recent theories was that I should play with him in the Victorian Seniors' Team selection. Despite my counter that I was not old enough (turning 55 before the ANC, but after the selection event), Bob was optimistic that I would be able to write to the tournament committee and plead my case. This bit was easy. I did nothing, confident that the problem would go away. Bob probably saw this coming, and made his own enquiries, whereupon I was deemed eligible, due to precedents in NSW.

My next ploy involved playing poorly in the preliminary qualifier, finishing fifth when a top three finish was needed to guarantee progression. My gloomy prediction that fifth would qualify proved right, so it was to be 132 boards facing Bob in the finals, with the threat of a further 64 boards if we finished between second and fifth. (As an aside, I would like to express my opinion that the schedule for the weekend was overly demanding. There were 72 boards on Saturday (10am to 10pm) and 60 on Sunday (10am to 6:30pm), all with screens. I found it tiring, and I was the "baby" of the field.)

Anyway, back to Bob's theories. Bob is of course renowned for the inventiveness of his weak two bids. Luckily for us, he only managed to open three of these in the finals, with an average suit length of 4¾, and an average IMP result of minus five. None of them looked remotely like a traditional weak two. Firstly,

♠ QJ2 ♥ AKJ10 ♦ 73 ♣ 9853

appealed to Bob as a weak 2♥ in third position, where he slid off a trick, despite the friendly 4-4 break in the enemy trumps. We could have made 1NT, but that would have been dull. Slightly sportier was

♠ 94 ♥ KJ10 ♦ AJ1084 ♣ J97

opened 2♦, again in third position, red against white. Deep Finesse claims the opposition can make ten tricks with diamonds as trumps. I guess that means we should have been minus 1400. Luckily the opponents had too many diamonds to engineer a penalty sequence, and instead wandered off a trick in 3NT. Bob's final effort was another weak 2♦ on

♠ 6 ♥ AKJ2 ♦ J10832 ♣ 1076

This found me passing with

♠ AK432 ♥ Q7653 ♦ 97 ♣ J

and missing the cold 4♥, amid audible sniggers from the opponents.

Bob does of course have some good theories. One of his favourites is that negative doubles should always contain at least two cards in the overcalled suit. This then allows Bob, as opener, to choose the moment to pass for penalties. Not convinced? Read on.

Dealer E ♠ 3
 Vul E-W ♥ K984
 ♦ 76
 ♣ KQ9763

♠ K74 ♠ 10982
 ♥ AQJ ♥ 753
 ♦ QJ985 ♦ K43
 ♣ 82 ♣ J104

♠ AQJ65
 ♥ 1062
 ♦ A102
 ♣ A5

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
2♦	D'ble	Pass	Pass
Pass			

With clubs splitting 3-2, North-South can make +400 in 3NT or 5♣. Neither is completely straightforward to play. In 3NT, declarer must pick West's shape so that, after running the club suit, he can be sure whether West has retained ♠K singleton or doubleton, dropping the king or end-playing West as appropriate. In 5♣, with the ♦A entry attacked at trick one, declarer must play West for the ♠K, ruff-finessing for a diamond pitch, and then rely on hearts breaking 3-3 with the ace onside.

Bob found the penalty pass, and collected an easy 500 without any guesswork. If the clubs hadn't broken Bob would still have been +200, with the field going -50 or more. And yet very few players would have found the penalty conversion.

A much more dramatic example came from our last board in the tournament:

Dealer E ♠ 1086
 Vul N-S ♥ AJ10842
 ♦ -
 ♣ KJ93

♠ Q9543 ♠ 7
 ♥ 93 ♥ KQ75
 ♦ AK10 ♦ J9762
 ♣ A52 ♣ 1086

♠ AKJ2
 ♥ 6
 ♦ Q8543
 ♣ Q74

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♦
1♠	D'ble	Pass	Pass!
Pass			

This time Bob found the remarkable action of converting the negative double of 1♠ to penalties, red against white, on his poor 12 count. Was he ever right! After the lead of the ♥A, and a club switch, declarer could come to no more than 4 tricks, for 500 to North-South. As the field generally went down in 4♥ by North, Bob's theory brought in 11 IMPs against the NS average of -90.

Not all of Bob's theories produce good results, but this time they were good enough overall for us to win. This saved me the stress of watching the theories at work for an additional 64-board playoff. Thanks Bob.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

MEET TRAIAN CHIRA AND DAN HOHOR



Traian (left) and Dan (right)

Traian and Dan have been achieving high placings in a variety of events of recent times, culminating in Dan's win last month in the Thwaites Mixed Pairs, with Meredith Woods. Amongst other excellent results were runners up in the Victorian Open Teams (Pennant) this year, a win in the January Ramsden Handicap (Did they get under the handicapper's guard? Unlikely - their unadjusted average score over the three sessions was a whopping 60.8%) and a win in the 2003 VBA Open Pairs.

Both Traian and Dan came to Australia from Romania in the 90s, under the independent migration scheme. Dan talks about bridge in Romania: "I lived under Ceausescu's draconian regime for 28 years. Bridge was a semi-forbidden game. There were some

bridge clubs, but we were not allowed to have a Federation as any other sport had. For a couple of years the bridge clubs were tolerated, but in 1982, bridge was totally banned. In 1990, after Ceausescu was shot, bridge again became legal. During all this time I didn't have any opportunity to play competitive bridge."

Traian started playing the game after he moved to Australia in 1993. When asked the secret of the perpetual smile that he wears, he replied: "I consider bridge to be a great entertainer. Probably the smile is a derivative of the fact that I am not a theoretician, so I am trying to discover something new every deal (this is not necessarily a good thing, but it is the way I see things)." Dan on the other hand has a different philosophy: "I like to read bridge books, and very much enjoy the theoretical aspects of this game".

When not playing bridge, Dan works as a Industrial Automation Engineer for the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories. He also likes to read math books, and sometimes go fishing.

Traian is in the IT business, working as a Network Administrator. His non-bridge hobbies mainly centre around designing different types of software applications for a variety of platforms.

Dan started playing bridge in Australia with George Topfner. When George took a break from the game, Dan and Traian formed a partnership, playing Precision, which has flourished in the past several years.

Their partnership harmony is well demonstrated by the following auction from the Fred Altman Swiss Pairs:

♠ AKQ2	♠ J10954
♥ J954	♥ -
♦ 6	♦ KQJ75
♣ AK76	♣ Q43

Dan as West opened a Precision 1♣, vulnerable versus not. North intervened 2♥, Traian bid 2♠, and South raised to 3♥. Now Dan applied the old Black, and despite discovering that two aces were missing, pushed on to the cold 6♠. Even though the opponents' bidding suggested that Traian

was probably void in hearts, it took strong partnership trust for Dan to realise that Traian would need a heart void and some minor suit fillers to justify his 2♠ bid on an aceless hand with weak spades.

The following hand from the Thwaites Mixed Pairs shows Dan at the helm in an optimistic 6NT as South, on an uncontested auction:

Dealer: W	♠ Q9	
Vul: Nil	♥ A985	
	♦ K1064	
	♣ AK10	
♠ J10		♠ K8763
♥ -		♥ QJ6432
♦ 9873		♦ 5
♣ Q975432		♣ 8
	♠ A542	
	♥ K107	
	♦ AQJ2	
	♣ J6	

West led a club, and Dan ran the minors, including a club finesse, discovering that East held 11 cards in the majors. This was the position as the last minor suit trick was played:

	♠ Q9	
	♥ A985	
	♦ -	
	♣ K	
♠ J10		♠ K87
♥ -		♥ QJ64
♦ -		♦ -
♣ Q9743		♣ -
	♠ A542	
	♥ K107	
	♦ -	
	♣ -	

East was squeezed. If he pitched another spade, Dan could throw a heart from hand, lead the spade queen and duck East's king, setting up all his spades.

When East actually let go a heart, Dan read the position accurately, and followed with three rounds of hearts, simultaneously setting up the long heart and end-playing East to give him access to it via the spade queen.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

UPDATE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

We are very fortunate to have such comfortable and modern clubrooms and, as we approach the anniversary of the move from Prahran, it is an opportune time to reflect on and acknowledge the proud history of the club. There is probably a great deal of old memorabilia and photographs (perhaps, paintings) of our old clubrooms, famous and not-so-famous players, newspaper and magazine articles, trophies and other items which are stored away gathering dust in many locations. I would like to form a sub-committee to look at gathering such items, held by the club and by present and past members, with the aim of creating an attractive and informative display for everyone's enjoyment. Please let me know if you can help.

With the ANC less than two months away, we are urgently seeking more sponsors for all events. If you are in a position to personally help by promoting your own business or if you know of other businesses or organisations that would find a neat commercial fit with the ANC, please talk to me as soon as possible. We are also looking at driving long-term relationships with sponsors and, to this end, have already commenced one with Toorak Travel. Sponsorship offers a valuable new form of revenue for your club so I would ask everyone to get behind this and please feel free to pass on all leads to me.

We will be introducing a credit/debit card payment facility in time for the ANC which will then become available for all VBA events. We are aiming to develop more streamlined methods of paying entry and table fees which benefit you and the club. Further details will follow soon.

Just a small item but one which is important to the viability of the café business. We welcome all members to bring alcoholic drinks, under our BYO licence, and store them in the fridge provided at the back, but please refrain from bringing soft drinks when they are available from the café. Also, please take home any unused drinks as the question of ownership tends to surface after a short period of time.

We farewelled Nikki Christidis on 19 May after 2 years in her role and we all wish her well in the future. We very much appreciate her contribution over this period. Cathie Lachman is taking on the multi-faceted roles of administration, bookkeeping, directing and teaching and, I am sure, you will all give Cathie your full support. We warmly welcome her to the management team.

I welcome your input on any of the above or other subjects. You can reach me during the day on 9530 9006 or by email at david@vba.asn.au.

Kind regards, David Costelloe



Parking Woes

Over the last few weeks a certain laxness has crept into our parking habits. Residents from Stewart Street have complained on a number of occasions which does no good for our credibility with the council. The VBA Council has taken this matter seriously and as already indicated, if disciplinary action is necessary, then the Council will not shy away from its responsibility. If we don't nip this in the bud, our permit is in jeopardy. One of our members has already been fined \$100.

Two other cars, PVE084 and OCC272, are also offending our permit. This must stop!

For those who arrive late and park in the middle of the parking area, please be courteous to those you block in. If you do block cars in, please leave as early as you can so those blocked don't have to wait an unreasonable time. Move your car into an empty spot if you wish to stay to see the results. We do want a club that is a place where members are treated with some thought from other members!



Victor Champion Cup & McCance Seniors

Lacking a partner or teammates for the Victor Champion Cup or McCance Senior teams?

Then call Diana Jacobs on 0413 003 633, and she will set up a team for you!

THE SETTING TRICK - SOLUTIONS

Ian McCance

Problem 1:

Dealer: W	♠ 92	
Vul: N/S	♥ K95	
	♦ KQ8632	
	♣ Q6	
♠ J873		♠ AQ6
♥ 7642		♥ Q108
♦ A4		♦ 1095
♣ AJ7		♣ 8542
	♠ K1054	
	♥ AJ3	
	♦ J7	
	♣ K1093	

This is an extremely hard problem, and at first I thought it had no solution. The bit about tempo is critical – it was hard to avoid any suggestion that you had an option at trick 1. When you had surmounted that obstacle, what remains, legitimately, is your choice of carding in diamonds.

If you use natural count, my suggestion is that you should play ♦9 then ♦10, as the strongest possible suit preference signal for spades consistent with giving the count. If you had wanted hearts, you would play ♦5 then ♦10, if clubs ♦5 then ♦9.

Of course, partner doesn't know you have three diamonds, but playing upwards suggests three, and what else can you try?

Playing reverse signals, you would play similarly, but reversing the order: so ♦10 then ♦9 would show an odd number and suit preference for spades.

Problem 2

Dealer: N	♠ KJ103	
Vul: Both	♥ 1082	
	♦ KQ63	
	♣ J9	
♠ 976		♠ Q2
♥ AQ6		♥ 74
♦ A109		♦ 542
♣ Q1074		♣ A86532
	♠ A854	
	♥ KJ953	
	♦ J87	
	♣ K	

Against 3♥, partner's shrewd return of a club has weakened South's trumps, and if he has only five, he is in trouble if you can draw them. The killing play is to duck smoothly. When hearts are continued you can take a third round and force declarer in clubs. You still have the ♦A for an entry for more club tricks.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

SECOND HAND HIGH
Bill Jacobs

They say that those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it. Those who sat West in the following two deals from the final night of the Thwaites Mixed Pairs may have had a great opportunity to learn from history:

Board 18 ♠ 43
Dealer: S ♥ 10765
Vul: E/W ♦ 74
♣ AJ1098

♠ J2		♠ KQ10976
♥ A43		♥ -
♦ K10862		♦ QJ93
♣ K74		♣ Q62
	♠ A85	
	♥ KQJ982	
	♦ A5	
	♣ 53	

West	North	East	South
			1♥
Pass	2♥	2♠	4♥
D'ble	Pass	Pass	Pass

East-West lost the bidding war (4♠ is cold), but could still salvage something from 4♥ doubled. West led the spade jack to South's ace, and a club was played at trick two.

The winning play is "second hand high" – go in with the king! This play forces South to win the club ace, and now there is no fast entry to enjoy the third round of clubs for a diamond discard. Indeed, if West does find the king play, South will likely duck it, and take a finesse on the second round – down two!

West actually followed with a low club, East won the queen and played a diamond, but declarer got it right, winning the diamond,

taking a second club finesse and pitching the diamond loser on the club ace. Making four.

Interestingly, if East declares 4♠ and South happens to lead a club, then declarer must make the same "second hand high" play – the king to separate the defence from their second club winner.

Well, West can perhaps be excused for missing this play, but only nine deals later:

Board 27 ♠ 853
Dealer: W ♥ Q63
Vul: None ♦ 763
♣ AJ106

♠ Q1074		♠ A62
♥ J		♥ 10542
♦ KQJ109		♦ 854
♣ Q43		♣ K92
	♠ KJ9	
	♥ AK987	
	♦ A2	
	♣ 875	

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦	2♥
Pass	Pass	3♦	Pass
Pass	3♥	All pass	

Against 3♥, West led the diamond king, South won ace, and played a club ...

West must learn from history (and the bridge gods have been kind, making the key suit clubs again as an aide memoir) and go in with the queen. South has to guess well to make 3♥ now, and could easily go down.

When West actually played a low club – the play was simple. The 10 forced the king, declarer ruffed the third diamond, drew trumps with a finesse, ran the clubs with a finesse (pitching a spade on the long club) and then played a spade to the king – making 10 tricks!

Note that in both examples, going in with the club honour is relatively safe. On the first hand, South would obviously be finessing anyway if he owns the queen; and similarly on the second hand, one would expect South to finesse the opening bidder for the queen should he have started with ♣Kxx.

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**WARM WINTER DELIGHTS AT THE
BRIDGE CAFE**

**HAVE A SOUP
(ALWAYS FROM FRESH INGREDIENTS)
OR**

TAKE AWAY



Cafe Corner

RECENT RESULTS

Victorian Womens' Team

Preliminary Butler:

- 1 C. Lachman, C. Mill
- 2 M. Yuill, E. Linton
- 3 T. Kay, K. Muntz
- 4 J. Collins, J. Thompson
- 5 D. Jacobs, L. Szabo

Under the rules of engagement, Lachman – Mill automatically qualified for the team. Yuill – Linton then chose Collins – Thompson as their teammates for a 64 board playoff against Kay – Muntz and Jacobs – Szabo. The first named team won this match by a narrow 11 imps, resulting in a Womens' Team of:

Cathie Lachman – Cathy Mill
Margaret Yuill – Erica Linton
Jeanette Collins – Jenny Thompson

Victorian Masters Teams

"A" Section

- 1 C. Rothfield, J. Rothfield, G. Gaspar, B. Tencer
- 2 S. Klofa, J. Collins, V. Muntz, K. Muntz
- 3 R. Lel, P. Kucfir, R. Gallus, J. Stark

"B" Section - Championship

- 1 K. Lee, D. Kahan, B. Gesundheit, G. Wikinski
- 2 F. Kovacs, J. Eddie, L. Szabo, G. Hall

- 3 A. Samuel, E. Samuel, G. Fleiszig, J. Fleiszig

"B" Section - Plate

- 1 H. Wilk, R. Ellery, E. Hardy, P. Kalina
- 2 M. Yuill, G. Hill, P. Corrigan, L. Hickman
- 3 D. Flynn, J. Percil, G. Kaye, S. Silberer

Thwaites Mixed Pairs

Championship

- 1 M. Woods – D. Hohor
- 2 S. Gerdan – J. Dunstan
- 3 C. Chua – S. Hinge

Plate

- 1 J. Collins – S. Klofa
- 2 S. Collins – J. Selwyn
- 3 J. Gaspar - A. Mill

Consolation

- 1 E. Linton – A. Blecher
- 2 P. Moritz – L. Meyer
- 3 V. Daly – P. Hood

April Duplicate Champions

Mon afternoon: Christina Macquarie, Dan Phelan

Mon evening: Don Marejn

Tue evening: Traian Chira, Lilian Rose

Thu afternoon: Lilli Allgood, Peter Havlicek

Thu evening: Alan Gory, Doug Mitchell

Sat afternoon: John Bennett, Maurice Brumer