

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

May 2020

Editor: Dee Harley

DR. SAMANTHA PUNCH BRIDGE: A MINDSPORT FOR ALL

I hope you might consider participating in a new bridge research project as part of the *Bridge: A Mind Sport for All* project.

Whilst we recognise that currently the health consequences of Covid-19 are by far the most important and distressing, there are also significant economic and social impacts. Government guidance to stay at home and engage in social distancing means that our everyday lives have been massively disrupted.

Covid-19 is impacting the bridge community in a range of ways, and these changes regarding bridge may be, to differing degrees, positive or negative. As sociological researchers, we would like to understand the diverse issues that the bridge community is currently facing and how it is responding (or not) to these.

We would be delighted if you would share your experiences of bridge in the time of Covid-19.

If you are interested in participating in this project, please read the guidance notes and send your diary entries by email to: bamsa@stir.ac.uk

Anyone involved in bridge is welcome to share their views. In due course, the findings will be freely available and the final report will be sent to all participants (unless you ask us not to).

The Guidance Notes can be found via this link: <https://keepbridgealive.bridgecloud.com/about/bridge-in-the-time-of-covid-19>

VBA BULLETIN CUP/PLATE

In these dark, dark days of bridge when there is no face-to-face bridge happening whatsoever, we were delighted to have thirty teams entering the VBA Bulletin Cup.

There is also a subsidiary competition for all the teams which lose their first match in the CUP competition. It is called The Plate.

Laurie seeded the teams in order 1 to 30, and we had 28 of these teams playing in the preliminary round to enable us to reduce the Cup and the Plate to 16 teams.

Well not quite. Since two teams were given a bye – straight into the Round of the 16 of the Cup, we have two teams who would not be playing their first match of the competition until the next round started. Should they lose their first match in the Cup then they would be first match losers, and therefore would qualify to play in the plate.

I asked for these two special matches to be played as soon as possible, so we can determine the draw for the Plate.

There have been a couple of issues with matches set up so that team mates played each other, and one or two where 32 boards were selected (warning – check the boards to be played before the final submission), other than that I have had good feedback from people enjoying playing team matches. Now that you have done it you will be able to set team matches yourself.

Bridge is the only winner!

You can see the current state of both competitions on the VBA website:

<http://vba.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CupResultsDRaw.pdf>

Please remember to send your results to dee_harley@hotmail.com as soon as you can.

PLAY PROBLEM #6 - SOLUTION

Last month you were in 4♠ on the lead of the ♣J.

Dlr: East ♠ KQ86
 Vul: All ♥ 42
 ♦ KJ10
 ♣ 7543

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 2? ♠ ?
 ♥ ? ♥ ?
 ♦ ? ♦ ?
 ♣ AJ? ♣ K6?

♠ AJ1097
 ♥ AJ105
 ♦ A5
 ♣ Q2

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West somehow finds the lead of the ♣J, East wins the King and returns a club back to West's Ace, West now switches to the ♠2. What is the best line of play to try to make this contract?

Simon Henbest responded first, and I liked his solution. He put it thus: Win the spade in either hand A♦, then K♦, lead toward A♥, then a small ♥, then high cross-ruff. This works whenever diamonds are no worse than 6-2 and hearts are no worse than 6-1.

If you duck a ♥ first the Ace may be ruffed, or if you play A♥ and another heart the opponents may get a diamond discard and ruff the 2nd diamond.

I think he nailed it. Other correct responses were from Phill, Catherine, and Kitty, and I had a few incorrect responses where people ruffed clubs prematurely, or didn't cash the diamonds early, allowing for potential ruffs to creep in. Thanks for all the responses.

PLAY PROBLEM #7

Dlr: East ♠ 92
 Vul: All ♥ 97
 ♦ KJ52
 ♣ AKJ32

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ ? ♠ ?
 ♥ K? ♥ ?
 ♦ ? ♦ ?
 ♣ ? ♣ ?

♠ AQ74
 ♥ A8
 ♦ AQ76
 ♣ 765

Lead: ♥K
 Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

This month you are in 3NT from the South seat on the lead of the ♥K.

Send me your solution please:
dee_harley@hotmail.com

SUIT COMBINATION

This one caused us some discussion...

1.You: 109xxx Partner: AQxx
 x stands for any card below the 8 here

You should ask how many tricks are required?
 How do you play for:

- a) 4 tricks
- b) 5 tricks

[Solution](#) on P7.

MASTER POINT PROMOTIONS

As at end of April 2020

Silver Grand	
David Happell	Waverley
Gold Life	
Jan Clyne	Bayside
Silver Life	
Greg Nunn	Moonee Valley
Pam Dingwall	Lakes Entrance
Bronze Life	
Ming Zhang	VBA
Life	
Ron Huntley	Mornington
Margaret Glover	Geelong
Kay Leeton	Waverley
Andrew Slutzkin	Moonee Valley
**National	
Michael Francis	Sunbury
Rob Graham	Traralgon
*National	
Maryanne Bird	Gardenvale
David Stubbings	Yarra Valley
Douglas Harrah	Kooyong
Louis Cukierman	Bridge Fanatics Club
Les Ajzner	VBA
Narelle Szuveges	Williamstown
National	
Sandra Coomes	Dendy Park
Maria Campbell	Kooyong
*State	
Ron Watkinson	Macedon Ranges
Patricia Adams	Peninsula
Trevor Tonkin	Ballarat
John Moore	Shepparton
Shelley Shergold	Rye Beach
Diana Saul	Kooyong
Bob House	RACV
State	
Fiona Trescowthick	Kooyong
Peter Jaffe	Gardenvale
Diane Dunlop	Bendigo
Mario Prochelle	Patterson Lakes
Kenneth Biddick	Rye Beach
Philip Young	Moonee Valley
Lynda Young	Moonee Valley

Regional	
Mary King	Kooyong
Bill Cornwall	Lakes Entrance
Ethel Davids	Knox
Anne Morris	Whittlesea
Elizabeth Lewis	Whittlesea
Janet Oates	Ballarat
Peter Nicholls	Moonee Valley
Maria Mactaggart	Warrnambool
Mary Weston	Moonee Valley
Louise Taylor	Deniliquin
Deborah Cox	Ballarat
Sharley Fyfe	Ocean Grove

How we managed to get Master Point promotions in April is beyond me.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Not everything goes smoothly when organising a tournament. What is helpful is when people cooperate and are friendly and helpful.

In setting up the competition, I somehow missed the fact that Gavin, Kirstin, Lindy and Ken had somehow managed to get an entry onto the VBA website (despite the fact that it was closed for entries).

Gavin had not read the instruction to contact me about it, so their team (Dornoch4) did not make the qualifying round.

By the time I found out about it, the qualifying was complete, and I also found out we were one team short in the plate anyway, I offered Rebecca O'Reilly (Jamie's Angels) the opportunity to play Gavin's team (Dornoch4) on this basis:

If they win you can decide to be eliminated, OR you can offer them another 8 board challenge (starting at 0-0 again) to decide who goes through to the round of 8. You can also elect not to play them and just qualify for the round of eight.

I was delighted when Jamie's Angels accepted the challenge and agreed to allow the Dornoch4 to enter the Plate. Whoever wins it is a plus for bridge in Victoria.

Well done Jamie's Angels.

BIDDING: DOPI/ROPI DEE HARLEY

How often do opponents interfere when you use blackwood (or Keycard)? Not very often I'll wager, but do you know what actions to take when they do?

The traditional defence against this goes way back in time – so far back that the defence was used against Blackwood ace ask (not Roman Keycard Blackwood). Maybe I should say this defence goes back to pre-Roman times! So, in the olden days the responses to 4NT (Blackwood) were:

5♣ - 0 or 4 Aces 5♦ - 1 5♥ - 2 5♠ - 3

The defence to interference was: if the opponents have bid something then Double takes the first step (0 or 4) and Pass becomes the next step (showing 1). This can be shortened to D 0 P 1 and became the DOPI part of the convention name.

If the opponents had the temerity to Double, then Redouble shows 0 or 4 and Pass shows 1 (shortened to R 0 P 1 – hence the ROPI part of the convention name).

To give an example: Let us say the cheeky opponents intervene with a 5♣ bid over your 4NT: The DOPI/ROPI responses are:

Double - 0 or 4 Pass - 1 5♦ - 2 5♥ - 3

Notice that, despite their bid, we have gained some bidding space. That happens because they may have stolen 1 bid (5♣ is one bid above 4NT) but they have presented us with TWO extra bids (pass and double).

So that is all very well for old Blackwood with its simple responses. We need to translate this to the modern era where some people have the first response as 0 or 3, and the next as 1 or 4. You can imagine that's easy - you still play DOPI/ROPI with the normal responses, (Double = 0 or 3, Pass = 1 or 4, Next Suit = 2 without...etc).

What about if you play 14-30 Roman Keycard, In this case you may wish to play D1P0 (becoming DIPO and its accompanying RIPO). (Double = 1 or 4 Pass = 0 or 3 etc...0

However, we can expand on this theme a little. Anna and I play Variable keycard – sometimes we are using 03-14 (when it is opener bidding the Keycard query AND opener has shown Extras (a non-minimum opener or better). In all other situations we play 14-30. How on earth do we agree a defence to that?

Well we have taken it away from the old style and adopted a new approach. It can be called D1P2 (or DIP2/RIP2): so when the query is intervened against, we play Double would have been the first (or lowest) step, Pass would have been the next one, and then the next available bid continues the sequence.

Similarly, if opponents double then Redouble would be the lowest step response, Pass would be the next step, and the lowest bid available would be the third step in our response and so on.

Finally, this system need not be restricted to Keycard, but can be applied to any artificial enquiry where there is a step response.

As an example, we have a 2♠ response to our 2♥ opener is a specific step query asking exactly how many Spades are held in the openers hand (there is a maximum of three for our 2♥ opener). The responses are:
2NT- 0 3♣- 1 3♦- 2 3♥- 3.

If opponents interfere with (let us say 3♦) then we play D1P2 here, so Double shows 0 Spades, Pass shows 1 Spade, 3♥ shows 2 Spades, and 3♠ shows 3 Spades.

We have agreed that if opponents bid higher so our response may get above game (or Slam if over 4NT), then we try to bid naturally, so say this opponent bid 4♦, over our 2♠ enquiry then D1P2 is off, but with very good Hearts we could bid 4♥ and with 2 good spades or three spades we can bid 4♠.

Like all conventions they are totally useless unless your partner knows exactly what your bid means, so it is something you must discuss with your partner before you try to use it.

As usual I will not accept any blame when it all goes belly-up. 😊

♣♣♣ **KNAVE OF CLUBS** ♣♣♣
It's not as free as it seems

NS had a simple auction to 3NT on the hand shown. Since there was no use of Stayman, West inferred that a major suit lead would be best and led the ♥10 from his longer major. Declarer was happy to take what he saw as a free finesse in hearts and played the jack from dummy. When East covered with the ♥Q, the contract could no longer be made, no matter what declarer did next.

Teams:

Dir: South		♠ K64					
Vul: E/W		♥ AJ4					
		♦ Q107					
		♣ Q1085					
♠ Q92			♠ 10873				
♥ 109872			♥ Q6				
♦ A94			♦ 8532				
♣ A3			♣ 764				
		♠ AJ5					
		♥ K53					
		♦ KJ6					
		♣ KJ92					



Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	-	1NT
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Let's see how the play went. Declarer ducked the ♥Q, won the next heart and knocked out the ♣A. After West won that, he knocked out declarer's last heart stopper. All would have been well if East had held the ♦A. However, as West had started with both minor-suit aces, declarer lost three hearts and two aces for one down.

So, what should declarer have done? It is clear to plan for three club tricks, two diamond tricks and two in each major to provide nine tricks. The key is to avoid losing three hearts and two aces while setting up the minor suit winners.

Declarer should have played low from dummy at trick one and won the king of hearts in hand. Following the plan for nine tricks, declarer should attack clubs. If East holds the

♣A, he will not be able to continue hearts profitably, since he would be leading into dummy's ace-jack tenace giving declarer three stoppers and only two losers even if the hearts are 5-2.

As the cards lie, West will win with the A♣ and lead another heart. Only now should declarer finesse the ♥J which loses to the queen. This does not matter now because East began with only two hearts and cannot continue the suit. If East began with three hearts, the suit would be 4-3 and there would not be a third heart loser. The best East can do is to shift to a spade. Declarer wins and now attacks the diamonds to gain two tricks in that suit. As declarer still has a heart stopper at that point, the contract cannot be defeated.

The only time this plan fails is when West has chosen to lead a doubleton heart and East began with five hearts to the queen and the ♦A.

REGISTER WITH THE ABF

Potential online players should **Ensure they have registered their BBO username details with ABF**

- Go to the [ABF Home Page](#)
- Click on Events (in red) at the top of the page
- Scroll to the bottom of the page
- Click on "Get Email Updates" and complete the form

HAND DIAGRAMS AND LINKS DEE HARLEY

I have just learned how to create a tinyurl from a long, long link. It happened when I tried to post a hand on bridgewinners, and the link was so long that I took some ridicule. Luckily, David Burn helped out by pointing out that I could use tinyurl to make a very small link out of a big one. This facility is offered free of charge at TinyUrl.com

It can be very useful to provide links to BBO bridge hands, here is a link to an article on how to display hands

<http://www.bridgebase.com/tools/hvdoc.html>

and here is what a hand link looks like

[//www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?s=sakqhakqdaqcakqj&n=s432h432d432c5432](http://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?s=sakqhakqdaqcakqj&n=s432h432d432c5432)

That links (if you click it) to a display of the North and South hands where South has

♠ AKQ ♥ AKQ ♦ AKQ ♣ AKQJ and North has all the small cards. If you change some cards in the above link then they will display the cards you have entered.

The article goes on to show how you can get a full hand from BBO in one link, along with the bidding, the alert information and the play of the cards all defined by one (very very long) link.

For example, here is a hand Niggle38 and I played in a recent VBA competition:

<https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&lin=pn|JumpinDee.allred.niggle38.ngaamotekulst%7C%7Cmd%7C2STQH679TKD9JC26JA%2CSH3QD238QC3579TQK%2CS348JKAH25AD45AC8%2C%7Crh%7C%7Cah%7CBoard%2012%7Csv%7Cn%7Cmb%7C3C%7Cmb%7C4S%7Cmb%7Cp%7Cmb%7Cp%7Cmb%7Cp%7Cpc%7CC4%7Cpc%7CCA%7Cpc%7CC3%7Cpc%7CC8%7Cpc%7CSQ%7Cpc%7CC5%7Cpc%7CS3%7Cpc%7CS2%7Cpc%7CST%7Cpc%7CC7%7Cpc%7CS4%7Cpc%7CS5%7Cpc%7CH6%7Cpc%7CH3%7Cpc%7CHA%7Cpc%7CH4%7Cpc%7CSA%7Cpc%7CS6%7Cpc%7CD9%7Cpc%7CC9%7Cpc%7C>

[SK%7Cpc%7CS7%7Cpc%7CC2%7Cpc%7CC6%7Cpc%7CSJ%7Cpc%7CS9%7Cpc%7CC6%7Cpc%7CCQ%7Cpc%7CH2%7Cpc%7CH8%7Cpc%7CH9%7Cpc%7CHQ%7Cmc%7C12%7C](https://www.bridgebase.com/tools/handviewer.html?bbo=y&lin=pn|JumpinDee.allred.niggle38.ngaamotekulst%7C%7Cmd%7C2STQH679TKD9JC26JA%2CSH3QD238QC3579TQK%2CS348JKAH25AD45AC8%2C%7Crh%7C%7Cah%7CBoard%2012%7Csv%7Cn%7Cmb%7C3C%7Cmb%7C4S%7Cmb%7Cp%7Cmb%7Cp%7Cmb%7Cp%7Cpc%7CC4%7Cpc%7CCA%7Cpc%7CC3%7Cpc%7CC8%7Cpc%7CSQ%7Cpc%7CC5%7Cpc%7CS3%7Cpc%7CS2%7Cpc%7CST%7Cpc%7CC7%7Cpc%7CS4%7Cpc%7CS5%7Cpc%7CH6%7Cpc%7CH3%7Cpc%7CHA%7Cpc%7CH4%7Cpc%7CSA%7Cpc%7CS6%7Cpc%7CD9%7Cpc%7CC9%7Cpc%7C)

That link is so long because it is detailing every feature of the bidding and play. (if you have clicked on the link, you will be able to step through the play by clicking the "Next" button.

This is where the tinyurl facility comes into its own. You copy and paste the above link into the tinyurl website and it comes back with a tiny url for you to use to display the same hand. Like this:

<https://tinyurl.com/y6u2pdf5>

MASTER-POINTED BBO GAMES

Join us for our VBA paid BBO inaugural game: May 4th at 1pm.

Starting next Monday, the VBA will offer online sessions for which master-points will be awarded. At this stage, this will only be green points, but we anticipate that the ABF will shortly make available regional and National events which will carry red points.

There is a cost of entry to these events of BB\$3, which covers the master-pointing and the running of the events.

You will find the tournaments in the Competitive/All Tournaments section of BBO, under the host name of vABF3301. Enter the sessions as you would normally. You can pay for yourself, or you can pay for both you and your partner.

We welcome all Victorian players to participate in these games. The VBA games generally have quite a high standard. Here is your chance to mix it with the best Victorian players in a competitive environment.

Note: Our host Vic Bridge will still be running Free Sessions which will still be found under the Competitive/Free Tournaments section, but will also appear in the 'All Tournaments' page.

Please check the VBA home page for our updated schedule of games.

About BB\$

Purchasing BB\$ is done through the BBO Website via credit card. One BB\$ is equal to US\$1.00. When you purchase, there is an exchange rate to consider and transactions fee.

Warning: Purchasing BB\$ via a mobile phone or tablet attracts a significant Apple/Android surcharge. At the present time, BB\$ 1.00 will cost about AU\$1.60; however, if purchased on a mobile phone or tablet, the cost of BB\$1.00 rises to somewhere between AU\$2.40-2.50. In other words, if you can use a laptop instead of a mobile phone or tablet, you should save money.

Entering the events:

This is done in the same way you would enter a free tournament:

- Find the tournament in the Competitive/All Tournaments section. This must be within 2 hours of the advertised starting time for the event.
- Click on the title of the tournament
- Enter your partner's BBO name and click on Invite
- If your partner is online, they will receive the invitation and hopefully accept.
- If they are offline, they may not get the invitation at all. We recommend phone your partner to make sure you are both online when you register.
- When it is time for the event to start, the BBO software will take you to your table. Remember that both you and your partner must be logged in to BBO when this happens. If you are not, you will miss the tournament.

Why play in a master pointed event when you can play in a free event?

The ABF offer to play master pointed tournaments is open to all clubs in Australia, should they wish to do so. Many clubs are taking up the offer to provide their members with not only the chance to play some bridge, but to help support the club. Please be aware that your club will receive a large portion of your entry fee to any event you play in.

Despite being closed and having no source of income, all bridge clubs still have expenses.

Your contribution to paid games will provide funds for your club. For some clubs, this may mean the difference between survival and extinction!

Please give some thought to supporting clubs running these events, but note that the VBA will continue to run its free tournaments in accordance with demand.

Solution to Suit Combination ([page 3](#))

It is a long answer this week! You need to play this suit well!

1.You: 109xxx Partner: AQxx

For 4 tricks Lead a small card and if your Left-Hand Opponent (LHO) plays small you play the Ace. This will guarantee to four tricks whenever it is possible. Sadly, if RHO has KJX or KJXX then you cannot make four tricks by playing this suit. Playing the Ace however takes away the guess about what to finesse for on the second round of the suit, the problem being that suppose instead you played the Queen on the first round and it lost to the King, you return to hand and play the ten. Now if LHO follows with a small card you do not know whether to run it or to try to drop the Knave. Your safety play of the Ace first removes this guess but does give up some chances of making all 5 tricks. That's what a safety play is!

For 5 tricks. If you could see all the cards this would be easier! If your RHO has a singleton King, then you would need to play the Ace and then run the ten. If he has a singleton Knave, then you need to lead low to the Queen and then run the 10. But you can't see his hand, so you play the percentages. You lead a Low card from hand and if LHO plays an honour, then you cover it. If he plays a small card, then your best chance is to play the Queen. If this drops the Knave, then you return to hand and run the 10.

Otherwise, you hope for a 2-2 break and so just cash the Ace.

For both Solutions: notice the importance of leading a small card from hand not the ten.

EDITORIAL DEE HARLEY

We have been busy playing the VBA Bulletin Cup. I have received much positive feedback from many of the combatants.

Thanks for that. Some incidents have entertained. The best one for me was when setting up the match for our team Half-Baked against White, I made a typographic error. The letter "N" is right beside the letter "B" on the Keyboard, so when I hit the wrong key in typing in Half-Baked, I had a bit of a chuckle to myself.

We have also been competing in the Down-Under challenge as set up by Peter Gill. The tournaments are held every Monday evening, some are on Vu-Graph and the other matches are open to Kibitzers.

By the time next month's bulletin comes out we will know the winners of the VBA Bulletin Cup. I hope you will be looking on the website to find the date and time of the final which will allow Kibitzers, so I would encourage all to come along and see how the event plays out.

Since the format of the VBA Bulletin Cup was inspired by the Scottish Cup, I can provide a link to the Scottish News magazine which was recently made freely available in honour of the Scottish Ladies team. Here is the link:

<https://tinyurl.com/y74peu67>

That might entertain you with more quizzes and articles.

Finally, a thought about playing online bridge in the same house as your partner. We do it a lot.

We are careful to be out of sight and sound of each other, as well as we both have earphones belting out music (we each have our own favourite song selections).

Between rounds we occasionally cast the earphones aside and meet in the middle to resolve a disaster or two. Then its back to the music.

IT'S THAT COW AGAIN DEE HARLEY

Playing in the VBA Online tournament on a Thursday night during Covid Lockdown. I was North in the following setup.

MatchPoints:

Dlr: South

♠ K86

Vul: None

♥ Q9654

♦ K

♣ Q1052

♠ AQ10975

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 32

♥ 103

♥ J2

♦ A

♦ QJ975

♣ K974

♣ J863

♠ J4

♥ AK87

♦ 1086432

♣ A

Bidding:

W	N	E	S
-	-	-	1♦
4♠	x	All Pass	

My Partner opened one diamond which in our system shows at least 5 diamonds. West bid a sporting four Spades and I found the double which was passed out.

Of course I led the ♦K which declarer gobbled up and he threw the ♥10 on the table (funny how I wrote that when there is no table for him to throw cards onto!). Anyway, I ducked and partner won the ♥K, cashed the ♣A and then played the 8♥ to my Queen.

Defense going well. We have 2 hearts, and a club trick in the bag. There is a Spade to come. It looks like partner wants me to return a club. I selected the ♣10 upon which declarer played the knave and partner ruffed it. At this point partner could return a diamond, and I may well be able to ruff and give another club ruff. However, the cow which flew past our house disrupted all thought processes, and I allowed declarer to end up only 2 down. I cannot go into detail but perhaps the solution lies in the extra tonic consumed to ward off the Corona virus.