Melbourne Bridge Club

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Directors: Ian Mansell Sandra Mansell

Newsletter for week ending 19 Jan 2020

**North - South** **East - West**

Monday Day Janet Reynolds & Peter Cork\*\* Jane Morris & Jan Hocking

Night Helen Gammon & Ros Nichol Sue Powell & Maria Murphy

Tuesday Day Jill Tremonti & Anne Hoy Fiona Hodges & Birte Don

Night Janet Reynolds & Peter Cork\*\* Rita Cally & Oliver Goodman

Wed Night Matthew Addis & David Hill\*\* Bernadette Garvey & Cindi Damian

Friday Ralph Lurie & Richard Gilbert Suzy Narita & diva Hatfield\*\*

Saturday Suzy Narita & Angela George\*\* Sally Marshall & Mary Church\*\*

Hand of the week Saturday 18 Jan Board 17 nil vul Dealer N

**The Principle of Vacant Spaces**

♠ 872

♥ AK92

♦ KJ

♣ A953

♠ AKQ654 ♠ J9

♥ J ♥ 108763

♦ Q7654 ♦ 983

♣ Q ♣ J62

♠ 103

♥ Q54

♦ A102

♣ K10874

N E S W

1♣ - 1NT 2♠

- - 3♣ 3♠

4♣ - - 4♠

5♣ =

Bridge is a game of probabilities. If you hold the AQ of a suit and play and finesse the Queen the probability of it wining is 50 %. If you play the Ace, then the probability of the Queen winning drops to 0%. hand that overcalled should guide your play.

The usual application of probability is that if you and your partner hold 25 HCP between the two hands the probability that you can make game is about 98%.

Another probability to know s to do with the missing cards. When there are 4 cards missing the probability of a 2 – 2 break is 40%, a 3 – 1 break is 50% and a 4 – 0 break is 10%.

North opens 1♣. East passes and South bids 1NT. West overcalls 2♠. After North passes South bids 3♣ and West bids 3♠. North now bids 4♣ and over West’s 4♠ North bids 5♣.

What can we learn from the bidding? A) West has most of the missing points. B) trumps are likely to split 3 – 1. C) One other probability we can use is known as the **Principle of Vacant Places** and is a simple method for estimating the probable location of any particular card in the four hands. On the third round of spades we know that West has 6 spades – therefore the number of unknown cards in the West hand is 7. East has followed twice therefore the number of unknown cards in the East hand is 11. Using the Principle of Vacant spaces it is therefore 7 : 11 or approximately 40% : 60% that the length in Clubs is in the East Hand. Therefore, trump the third spade in Dummy and play a small club back to the A♣ (dropping the Q♣) and now finesse East for the J♣. Contract made!

**Sandra and Ian**