

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

September 2015

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



Bridge is an amazing game and some amazing people play bridge. Bill Gates and Warren Buffett for example. Warren Buffett once said he wouldn't mind going to jail so long as 3 bridge players joined him. He even hosts a duplicate game at the Berkshire Hathaway AGM (you can watch it on youtube).

The late movie star Omar Sharif was also an expert bridge player. He visited Australia in the mid 1970s not to film a movie but to tour with the greatest bridge team of all, the Italian Blue Team.

Closer to home, violinist Mary Allison is described as a bridge aficionado in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's 2016 season brochure, and plays cards with the Associate Concertmaster in a feature spread. In the bridge world, where Mary is a regular (and successful) player on the congress circuit and has been on the Victorian Women's team, we would describe her as an excellent bridge player (and a violin aficionado).

Bridge attracts amazing people with amazing skills from all walks of life. Yet we often don't know about it as we focus on the cards and hurry to change tables for the next round. Next session, try asking your opponents (and your partner!) what their secret skill is. I bet you'll be amazed!

VALE IGNACY TYRMAND 1911 - 2014

Ignacy Tyrmand was born in Warsaw and he lived to the ripe old age of 103.5 after arriving in Australia after WW2. After the death of his wife he cooked and mainly looked after himself until his death in 2014.



Ignacy was a classical music lover and for many years regularly attended concerts of the MSO. His real love though was playing bridge and he could not wait to get to the VBA whenever possible.

In the earlier years he was an avid rubber bridge player who played with well-known Victorian players including Olec Goldstein, George Selby, Elkon Schaiowitz, Harry Silver, Walter Lowen, Lily Watkins and Alan and John Selwyn.

Even after his centenary Ignacy still managed to play to a very high standard.

Up to his passing he continued to take the tram to the "Hole in the Wall" on a daily basis for his coffee and over many years got to know many of the regulars frequenting the place.

In summary, Ignacy was a rare person of integrity and honour, in other words, a true Mensch.

... Henri de Jong

*The VBA will be organising an event on October 11 to celebrate the life and times of Ignacy - called the **Ignacy Pairs**, including a buffet lunch and prize-money. More details to come next month.*

FOR STARTERS

In a matchpoint duplicate, you pick up

♠ 75 ♥ KJ93 ♦ J82 ♣ AKJ5

Everyone is vulnerable, and RHO deals and opens 1♠. Your call.

To overcall in a suit, you need 5 cards, so scratch that idea. You can however make a *takeout double*. There are three conditions for this (learn them off by heart!):

1. Opening strength
2. Shortage in the opened suit (at most a doubleton)
3. At least 3 cards in every other suit

This hand qualifies, so a takeout double it is.

The bidding proceeds:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1♠	D'ble
Pass	2♥	2♠	?

What is partner showing you? What do you bid now?

The answer to the first question is crucial. Partner is showing you nothing at all, apart from at least 4 hearts. In terms of points, he might have none. He might have a hand that would happily call *Misère* in 500. The thing is: you forced him to bid, with your takeout double.

Partner's strength range is 0-7 HCP, with the emphasis on the possible 0. With 8+ HCP, he should jump the bidding, to show some values.

If partner might have 0 points, it would be foolhardy to compete in hearts at the 3-level. You could go many down, possibly doubled. The important point is that you showed your opening strength (and approximate distribution) with your takeout double: with nothing extra, it is up to partner to fly the flag further, if he wants to.

You pass 2♠ and the auction continues:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1♠	D'ble
Pass	2♥	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	All pass

So it's your lead to 4♠

They say that the Good Lord gave you an ace-king suit to tell you what to lead. You lead ♣A, and this is what you see:

♠ 75	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S	
		N								
W			E							
		S								
♥ KJ93										
♦ J82										
♣ AKJ5										
	♠ Q6									
	♥ A1087									
	♦ 7653									
	♣ 876									

Partner plays the ♣9 and declarer the ♣3. What now?

It depends on a discussion that I hope you have had with your partner before the start of the game. In order to determine your next move, you need to know whether partner likes your club lead or not. If he does like them, you will want to continue the suit: perhaps partner has the queen, or perhaps he has a shortage and can get a ruff. But if he doesn't like them, you don't want to continue with the suit, for fear of setting up declarer's ♣Q.

You need a signal, and the pre-game discussion determines the coding of the signal. There are two approaches: "standard" and "reverse". Playing standard signals, an unnecessarily high card shows encouragement in that suit. Playing reverse, a low card indicates encouragement.

You can go either way: there's not much theoretical difference between the two methods. Reverse signals does have the advantage of a simple aide-de-memoire: "Low = Like; High = Hate". Let's say you have agreed on reverse signals with your partner. The ♣9 is clearly a high card – partner hates it. So you should switch to another suit. Any one will probably do, although if you decide to play a heart, it should be to the king, just in case declarer has the singleton queen

(remember: your partner has at least 4 hearts, so declarer has at most a singleton). Here is the full deal:

♠ 75	♠ Q6	♠ 932			
♥ KJ93	♥ A1087	♥ 6542			
♦ J82	♦ 7653	♦ Q109			
♣ AKJ5	♣ 876	♣ 942			
<table style="border: 1px solid black; border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>			N	W E	S
N					
W E					
S					
	♠ AKJ1084				
	♥ Q				
	♦ AK4				
	♣ Q103				

As long as you play it safe, declarer has to lose 3 clubs and a diamond.

Points to remember:

- The requirements for a takeout double ... can you recite them?
- When you force partner to respond to your takeout double, he might have *nothing*. Make sure you cater for that possibility.

Suppose however that North had bid, say, 1NT over your takeout double, and now partner bids 2♥. In this scenario, the 2♥ bid shows some values, because partner didn't have to bid once North had bid 1NT. Same bid, but slightly different auction; and it pays to recognise the subtle difference.

- Agree on a basic signalling method with your partner: standard (high encourages) or reverse (low encourages). You can't consistently win without it.
- Partner's 9, from 942, was a good play. Sometimes the spot cards you have don't fit your desires well. If partner had played the 4 instead, thinking to discourage, that wouldn't have been so effective, because the 4 is a relatively low card. Try to make your signals **loud**. Hit partner over the head with them. Of course if he had started with 432, then that would have been the best he could do. As partner of the signaller, you have to look at the spot card *in context*.

TEST YOUR OPENING LEAD

Notrump Leads

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
3NT	Pass	1NT	Pass
	Pass	Pass	Pass

The basic strategy for the opening lead to notrump contracts is to play a suit in which you and your partner have the greatest combined length. You may not win immediate tricks, but you start the process of promoting your low cards in the suit into winners.

Since you can't see your partner's hand, the default is to play *your* longest suit. Hence the maxim: "fourth highest of your longest and strongest". You don't need to win immediate tricks, so leading a low card even from the ace is perfectly acceptable. This concept does *not* apply to suit contracts!

If you have an honour sequence (or broken sequence) including three top cards, lead top of the sequence; but with weaker honour holdings, lead 4th best. For example, from KQxxx, lead low, not the king; however from KQJxx (sequence of 3 cards), lead the king.

In this auction, LHO has shown no interest in the major suits (he didn't bid 2♣, Stayman) so all things being equal, prefer leading a major suit to a minor suit. It doesn't always work – after all, the opening bidder might have the majors – but it's a clue.

Finally, if you have a weak hand with an unappetizing long suit, a reasonable strategy is to try leading a short suit, hoping to hit partner with length and strength in that suit.

What's your opening lead with these hands?

- (a) ♠ Q5 ♥ AK753 ♦ 10984 ♣ 82
- (b) ♠ Q874 ♥ 643 ♦ K965 ♣ J2
- (c) ♠ J1096 ♥ AQ83 ♦ K4 ♣ 872
- (d) ♠ 874 ♥ A43 ♦ KJ1072 ♣ 82
- (e) ♠ 63 ♥ 109 ♦ 87532 ♣ K872
- (f) ♠ J109 ♥ 643 ♦ K8753 ♣ Q2

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR OPENING LEAD - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

(a) ♠ Q5 ♥ AK753 ♦ 10984 ♣ 82

♥5. Fourth highest of your longest and strongest. The ace and king will keep. Visualize partner with a doubleton heart and an entry, and both opponents having three hearts. Partner gets in, and you now take the next four heart tricks. But if you lead a high heart, it won't work out.

(b) ♠ Q874 ♥ 643 ♦ K965 ♣ J2

♠4. The diamonds are a tad stronger, but LHO's failure to look for a major suit fit tips the balance in favour of spades.

(c) ♠ J1096 ♥ AQ83 ♦ K4 ♣ 872

♠J. Here we have a choice between the majors. The hearts are stronger, but the powerful sequence in spades makes that suit more attractive. Safety is also a factor in opening leads, and you know that the ♠J will not give declarer any trick that he doesn't deserve.

(d) ♠ 874 ♥ A43 ♦ KJ1072 ♣ 82

♦J. This is a broken, or internal, sequence involving three honours. Lead the top card of the sequence, in this case the jack. If partner has the ace or queen, you will safely develop tricks in diamonds. If partner has no high diamonds, you will lose tricks to the ace and queen, but eventually your diamonds will come good. And you have an entry with ♥A.

(e) ♠ 63 ♥ 109 ♦ 87532 ♣ K872

♥10. The diamonds are pathetic ... it will take a massive slice of luck to develop that suit. This is a hand to try to find partner's length and strength, so lead your stronger major.

(f) ♠ J109 ♥ 643 ♦ K8753 ♣ Q2

♠J. Or ♦5. It's a toss-up: either could work. This hand has been put in to demonstrate the value of finding a sympathetic partner who won't crucify you when you guess wrong on opening lead.

CONGRESS RESULTS**Knox Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 J. Howard – K. Anderson
- 2 G. Johnson – D. Scott
- 3 D. Clarke – K. French

Swiss Teams

- 1 N. Ewart, D. Beckett, B. Kingham, L. Henbest
- 2 C. Ding, D. Wei, J. Yang, K. Zhang
- 3 E. Matheson, F. Halmos, D. Clarke, K. French

Melbourne Bridge Club Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 C. Arul – R. Ellery
- 2 G. Lovrecz – G. Pick
- 3 A. Gooding – A. Roberts

Swiss Teams

- 1 J. Hoff, K. Leeton, K. Yang, S. Narita
- 2 D. Newland, D. Happell, G. Bailey, K. Bailey
- 3 G. Lovrecz, N. McManamny, L. Robinson, P. Ditchfield

Yarrawonga Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 P. Schroor – D. Sheather
- 2 C. Arul – K. French
- 3 M. Brown – J. Nankervis

Swiss Teams

- 1 M. Ross, P. Williams, A. Thompson, V. Evans
- 2 R. Harman, V. Sanderson, H. Mitlehner, J. Friesen
- 3 D. Carter, G. Carter, C. Arul, K. French

Traralgon Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 S. Klofa – D. Harley
- 2 C. Arul – D. Sharman
- 3 G. Johnson – G. Schaller

Swiss Teams

- 1 B. Mill, T. Gariepy, D. Middleton, C. Chakravorty
- 2 A. Drury, J. Kuiper, J. Sutton, M. Stiles
- 3 G. Hill, L. McKenna, T. Cowie, J. Tunks

Western Swiss Pairs

- 1 P. Jain – G. Ridgway
- 2 D. Newland – P. Blinman
- 3 G. Nicholson – J. Barbour

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs

Event 16 (August 16)

- 1 L. Everington – A. Fennell (Ballarat)
- 2 M. Wilson – G. Branton (Frankston)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES**Bairnsdale**

Saturday 5th September, 12 pm: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 6th September, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: St Mary's Parish Centre
 Bairnsdale

Contact: John Brazier, (03) 5152 3494
 Email johnbrazier4@gmail.com

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Ballarat

Saturday 12th September, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 13th September, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: Corner Ripon & Eyre St
 Ballarat

Contact: Tim Woodley, (03) 5342 4847

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Mornington Peninsula

Saturday 19th September, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 20th September, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: St Francis Xavier Church Hall
 60 Davey St, Frankston

Contact: Lindsay Young, (03) 9787 2235
 Email lindsayhy@westnet.com.au

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Macedon Ranges

Sunday 27th September, 10 am: MP Pairs

Venue: St Mary's Norma Richardson Hall
 14 Buckland Street Woodend

Contact: Ron Watkinson, 0422 622 658,

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

RACV

Sunday 4th October, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue: RACV City Club
 Bourke Room Level 2
 501 Bourke St, Melbourne

Contact: Email memberevents@racv.com.au

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

STATE EVENT RESULTS**Victorian Master Teams****Section A**

- 1 B. Thompson, W. Jacobs, P. Hollands,
 J. Howard, L. Gold, J. Ebery
- 2 S. Ozenir, M. Yuill, M. Allison, G. Gaspar,
 B. Tencer
- 3 D. Harley, S. Weisz, P. Schroor, D. Sheather

Section B

- 1 M. Tildesley, E. Windmiller, V. Daly,
 M. Adams
- 2 R. Berlinski, H. Snashall, T. Cowie,
 N. McManamny
- 3 E. Samuel. G. Lovrecz, R. Livingston, P. Hill

Welcome to Victoria's newest Affiliated Club:

Tahbilk Nagambie Bridge Club

254 O'Neils Road, Tabilk Victoria 3608

Located at the Tahbilk Winery: all players are welcome if in the area, where the manager Michael Goh would be delighted to look after you. Perhaps you might enjoy a glass of wine after play.

TIP OF THE MONTH

On Promoting Trumps

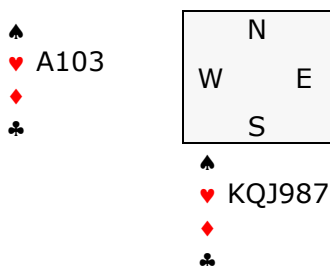
Suppose you are a defender and have a trump holding of something like:

Qxx, or
Kxx, or
Axx

and you are sitting over declarer's trumps. Partner leads a side suit in which both you and declarer are void, and declarer ruffs with a middling card, which you could overruff with your honour. The tip is:

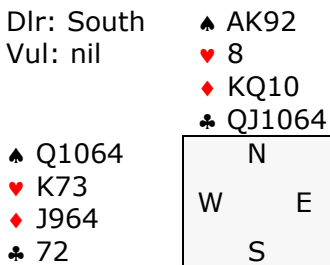
Don't over-ruff with a sure trump trick

Discard instead. Why? Here's an example to illustrate the concept:



Hearts are trumps, East leads a suit in which both you (West) and declarer (South) are void. South ruffs with ♥J. If you overruff with the ace, that will be your only trick in trumps. But if you discard, your ♥A10x is now worth two tricks.

That ♥10 made it fairly easy to visualise the scenario. But it can also occur when you have much lower spots. You are West here:



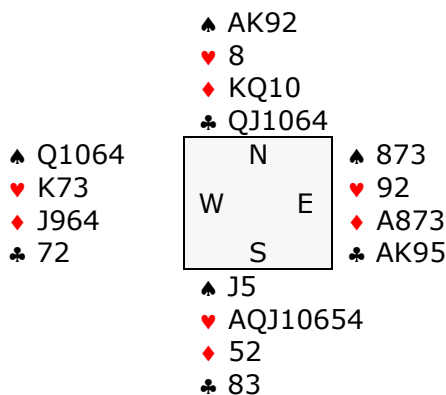
West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	3♥

You decide to lead your ♣7 and lo and behold, partner wins the ♣K and ♣A, as declarer

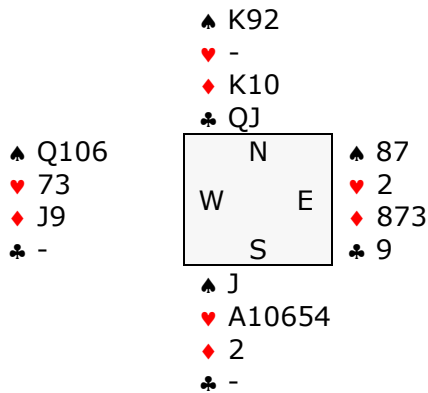
follows. Now partner leads a third club, and declarer ruffs with the ♥Q.

Your ♥7 is the setting trick, but you have to protect it. By discarding now, rather than overruffing, you keep your trump holding intact, whilst declarer's has been weakened. Let's see what happens next.

The full deal:



After declarer's ♥Q wins, he will cross over to dummy's ♠A and play a heart to the jack. This you pounce on with the king. It looks like partner has the ♦A, so you play a diamond, partner wins, and plays a deadly fourth round of clubs in this position:



If declarer ruffs low, you overruff. If declarer ruffs with the A or 10, then your 7 has been promoted. Either way, your ♥7 will take a trick, not what you were expecting when you first started out on this hand.

Follow through the play if you instead overruff on the third round of clubs. Even if you play a diamond to partner's ace, declarer can ruff the fourth round of clubs with the ♥A, and draw all the remaining trumps with the jack and 10.

BLACK MAGIC
Bill Jacobs

Dlr: North ♠ AKJ4
 Vul: N/S ♥ J63
 ♦ 72
 ♣ AKQ5

N
S

♠ 93
 ♥ AKQ108
 ♦ QJ1094
 ♣ 7

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	2♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♥	All pass	

Oh dear. West has led the ♠10 to your slam and dummy is a severe disappointment. Surely even Harry Potter couldn't summon enough magic to bring this one home.

But he can. How would Harry play it?

♠ AKJ4
 ♥ J63
 ♦ 72
 ♣ AKQ5

N
S

♠ 93
 ♥ AKQ108
 ♦ QJ1094
 ♣ 7

♠ 106
 ♥ 9742
 ♦ 863
 ♣ 10864

♠ Q8752
 ♥ 5
 ♦ AK5
 ♣ J932

The wizard play is to lead a low spade off the table at trick 2. What is a poor muggle East to think? It seems to him that West started with ♠109x and declarer with a singleton, in which case it would be madness to go in with the queen.

Once the ♠9 holds, it's all plain sailing. Declarer rattles off 5 hearts (throwing a club and a diamond from dummy) and then 3 clubs to leave this position as the last top club is played:

♠ KJ
 ♥ -
 ♦ 7
 ♣ Q

N
S

♠ Q8
 ♥ -
 ♦ AK
 ♣ -

♠ -
 ♥ -
 ♦ QJ109
 ♣ -

East is finished. If he discards a spade, then dummy's spades are good. But if he throws a diamond, then a diamond will put him on lead to play up to the ♠KJ.

Victorian Seniors Festival

The VBA, in conjunction with the Victorian State Government, is pleased to be participating in the Seniors Festival in October. The catch phrase this year is "It's Your Time".

The VBA is hosting a one day crash course for beginners on Tuesday 6th October, 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Seniors price is \$20 including lunch. Tell your friends and family.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dlr: West ♠ AK875
 Vul: nil ♥ AQ93
 IMPs ♦ -
 ♣ AJ103

N
S

♠ QJ942
 ♥ J4
 ♦ A
 ♣ K9852

West	North	East	South
3♦	D'ble	4♦	4♠
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

Lead ♦Q. Plan the play. Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

	♠ AK875		
	♥ AQ93		
	♦ -		
	♣ AJ103		
♠ 3	N	♠ 106	
♥ 102	W E	♥ K8765	
♦ QJ107654	S	♦ K9832	
♣ Q76		♣ 4	
	♠ QJ942		
	♥ J4		
	♦ A		
	♣ K9852		

With some clear thinking you can just about guarantee this contract on the assumption that West has at least two black cards.

Win the ♦A (discarding a heart from dummy) and draw trumps. Then ...

If West has 0 or 1 spade, play him for at least 1 club. Make the anti-intuitive play of the ♣K from your hand. When all follow, play another club and if West follows to this as well, then finesse dummy's jack. If East wins the ♣Q, he is endplayed. If West discards on the second club, go up with the ace and endplay East with a third round of clubs.

If West has 2 or 3 spades, then play the ♣A from dummy. If West discards, take marked club finesses against East. If West follows, then play another club from dummy to your king. If East turns up with three clubs to the queen, then endplay him with a third round.

If East surprisingly discards on the second round of clubs, win the ♣K, play the heart ace (extracting any heart that West might have), and endplay West with a third round of clubs.

(Actually, if West happened to start with precisely 2-0-7-4 shape, then this line of play fails spectacularly. But perhaps East would have doubled 6♠, calling for an unusual lead, with 1-7-5-0 shape, or bid more than 4♦.)

Grandma is teaching her 7-year-old granddaughter bridge. 7-year-old asks indignantly: "Why is it that kings beat queens?"

Fair question!

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Eric Adelman	Dendy Park
Peter Buchan	VBA
Brian Tempest	Wodonga

*State

Colin Cameron	South Gippsland
Lynn Moodie	Dromana
Narelle Szuveges	Moonee Valley

National

Kumara Nainanayake	Waverley
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** National

Dan Delcourt	Bendigo
Diana Wilson	Kooyong

Life

Anne Den Houting	Traralgon
Nathan Luft	VBA
Cecile Senior	Kooyong

Silver Life

Bertha Dembo	VBA
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Gold Life

Richard Greenfield	VBA
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Grand

Joan Kent	Waverley
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Youth Bridge Week

October 19 - 25, 2015

The VBA is inviting all clubs across the state to get involved with a fund-raising activity for youth bridge. To facilitate this activity, the VBA has declared one week in October as Youth Bridge Week.

To help, simply make a gold coin donation at any session at your club held during Youth Bridge Week and your donation will help support youth bridge.

Clubs may choose to run a special red point event(s) in conjunction, or simply use their regular duplicate session(s) and ask players to make a contribution.

Participation is completely voluntary and all funds raised will go towards supporting the growth and development of youth bridge in Victoria.