

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

December 2015

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



For the last few months I've been applying my professional skills as a corporate strategist to help the ABF chart its course for the next 4-5 years. Domestically, the ABF will be putting more resources into teacher and director development, marketing, and club support. These are certainly areas that the VBA endorses; for example we have been bringing Joan Butts to Victoria on an annual basis to run her acclaimed teacher training workshops, and we will continue to support teacher development.

Of course the challenge for any sport/recreation body is that, except for a few very high-profile sports, we all operate on very limited budgets. We can never come close to doing everything we want to do; prioritisation is critically important. The best application of our resources, because of the leverage available, is often to support the fantastic volunteers and "semi-volunteers" who sustain, improve and expand our beautiful game.

Heading into 2016, I'd like to thank everyone who makes bridge happen and to wish every bridge player a happy festive season.

I look forward to seeing you at the table in 2016. Good bridging!

NEWS FROM THE VBA COUNCIL

The VBA council for 2016 was elected at the AGM held on November 16th.

President	Ben Thompson
Vice President	Jenny Thompson
Treasurer	Neil Ewart
Secretary	Kim Frazer
Ordinary Councillor	Dale Sheather
Ordinary Councillor	David Morgan
Special Councillor (Metro near VBA)	Rob Quirk
Special Councillor (Eastern)	Helen McAdam
Special Councillor (Western)	Richard Giles

Vacancies remain for one Special Councillor (Metro Arc), two Ordinary Councillors and one Vice President. Members interested in giving something back to bridge by serving on the council are invited to contact the secretary, Kim Frazer, secretary@vba.asn.au for further information.

VICTORIAN PENNANT FIRSTS

The Victorian Open Teams (Pennant) Championship concluded recently, with two notable outcomes.

For some years, the semi-final round has been contested by five metro teams and one country team. For the first time, the country team, a strong unit from Geelong (Gary Ridgway, Arthur Robbins, Doug Newlands, Denise Newland and Justin Stark), qualified for the final; indeed they qualified in first place.

But they couldn't win the final. It was won by a metropolitan team that included Jamie Thompson, who is just 19. That makes him, we believe, the youngest ever winner of the Pennant. And Jamie is a country boy at heart anyway, having grown up in Echuca.

See later in this bulletin for the full results.

FOR STARTERS

Today you pick up this handsome hand:

♠ A10842 ♥ AQ765 ♦ 3 ♣ A2

You are the dealer – how do you start?

When you have the choice of two 5-card suits to bid, it is almost invariably correct to first bid the *higher* one. What you anticipate is that the auction will continue in some way, and at your next turn to bid, you can bid the lower one. Then partner can choose between your suits, and not have to raise the level if he prefers the suit you bid first.

For example, if you open your stronger suit here, 1♥, and partner responds 1NT, then if you rebid 2♠, then partner has to go to the three-level if he prefers hearts to spades.

But if you open 1♠ and partner responds 1NT, then your 2♥ rebid will leave him with the choice of your suits at the two-level.

An excellent rule of thumb for choosing which suit to bid when you have equal length in two suits is:

"4 card suits up the line – 5 card suits down the line."

You open 1♠ and partner gives you a raise:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
Pass	2♠	Pass	1♠ ?

Now what?

Having found a fit, you can now include your distribution points in evaluating your hand. You have 14 HCP and 4 distributional points (3 for the singleton, 1 for the doubleton) giving you 18 Total Points.

Opposite partner's 6-9 TP for the raise, this gives you a combined total-point range of 24-27. You have at least enough to invite game, and some would go the whole way and simply bid 4♠. We'll assume you do bid 4♠.

LHO leads ♦K, and this is what you see:

4♠ South	♠ 763
	♥ K3
	♦ 10765
	♣ K984
♦K	N S
	♠ A10842
	♥ AQ765
	♦ 3
	♣ A2

The defence starts with two rounds of diamonds, and you trump the second one.

Plan the play.

Counting your losers, you see that there is one in diamonds, and probably two in spades (assuming the suit divides 3-2). Clubs is fine – no losers there. So 3 losers so far.

Hearts is the interesting suit. You have 7 hearts between you, so the opponents have 6. If they divide 3-3, then there are no losers, as your ace, king and queen will draw them.

But more likely they divide 4-2, and then there is a loser there. You can overcome that problem by trumping the third round of hearts in dummy. The problem with that plan is that if hearts do divide 4-2, the opponent with a doubleton will have a higher trump than dummy's.

So you conclude that you want to get rid of the opponents' trumps first. But not in a way that also gets rid of dummy's trumps?

So what do you do?

You need to play *two* rounds of trumps precisely. That will leave one opponent with the master trump, and dummy with one trump. You can then trump a heart in the dummy, not caring if an opponent plays his higher trump, because that was a winner for the defenders anyway.

You can achieve this by playing a *low* trump from your hand at trick 3. Regain the lead and play the ♠A, the second round of trumps. Then play on hearts.

The full deal:

♠ 763		♠ Q9			
♥ K3		♥ 108			
♦ 10765		♦ A9842			
♣ K984		♣ QJ75			
♠ KJ5	<table style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ A10842
N					
W E					
S					
♥ J942		♥ AQ765			
♦ KQJ		♦ 3			
♣ 1063		♣ A2			

Your careful play was necessary. If you don't get two rounds of trumps played, then East will be able to overruff the third round of hearts, and West will still get two trump tricks.

Points to remember:

- When holding two 5-card suits, bid the higher one first. Your master plan is to later bid the lower one, thus enabling partner to choose between the two suits without raising the level.
- Once you've found a fit, you can count distributional points (not before). Your hand on this deal was particularly nice: not only did it have 18 Total Points, but it also had three aces. The 4-3-2-1 point count method undervalues aces.
- When you are playing in a suit contract, an early question you should ask yourself is: "should I draw trumps?"

On this deal, the answer to that question was a bit complicated. You did need to draw trumps, to reduce the enemy's ability to ruff in your heart side suit. But you couldn't draw all the trumps, because you needed a trump in dummy to ruff hearts yourself.

Holding the trump ace was a huge advantage, because it allowed you to control the number of rounds of trumps being played. This is why the trump ace is truly the most valuable card in the deck!

TEST YOUR BIDDING

Opener's Rebid after a 1NT Response

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
Pass	1NT	Pass	1♥
			?

Partner's 1NT response to your 1♥ opening bid gives you very explicit information:

- 6-9 HCP
- No heart support (fewer than 3 hearts)
- Fewer than 4 spades

1NT does *not* promise a balanced hand.

In choosing a rebid, the first thing to do is calculate the combined partnership point range. This will give you an idea of whether you are in the part-score or game range. Add partner's 6-9 HCP range to your HCP.

If your combined assets are at most 24 HCP (i.e. you have 15 or fewer points), make a minimum rebid. Rebidding your suit (with 6 hearts) or bidding a minor at the 2-level is nothing more than an attempt to reach the best part-score contract. Remember also that you are entitled to pass 1NT.

A stronger hand merits stronger action. A jump rebid in your suit shows about 16-18 HCP and a 6-card suit. It is invitational, but not forcing. A jump rebid in a new suit is 100% forcing.

With these guidelines in mind, choose your rebid with each of the following hands.

- (a) ♠ K43 ♥ AQJ54 ♦ A82 ♣ 42
- (b) ♠ AK ♥ QJ9543 ♦ AK2 ♣ 42
- (c) ♠ K43 ♥ AQJ54 ♦ AKQ2 ♣ 2
- (d) ♠ K43 ♥ A10854 ♦ KQ82 ♣ 2
- (e) ♠ K543 ♥ A9543 ♦ AQ2 ♣ 2
- (f) ♠ KQ103 ♥ AQJ54 ♦ K2 ♣ Q2

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♥
Pass	1NT	Pass	?

(a) ♠ K43 ♥ AQJ54 ♦ A82 ♣ 42

Pass. 14 HCP + partner's 6-9 gives you a combined range of 20-23 HCP. So you are in partscore territory. You don't have a second suit to bid, and just the 5 hearts you promised in the first place. 1NT is the place to be.

(b) ♠ AK ♥ QJ9543 ♦ AK2 ♣ 42

3♥. 17 HCP + partner's 6-9 gives you 23-26 HCP total. There might be a game if partner is in the upper range. A jump to 3♥ invites a game, and shows your 6-card suit. Partner will either pass (minimum), bid 4♥ (with a couple of hearts) or try 3NT.

(c) ♠ K43 ♥ AQJ54 ♦ AKQ2 ♣ 2

3♦. 19 HCP, so there is probably a game somewhere. Jump rebid in diamonds, and see how partner reacts. If partner meekly returns to 3♥, you can try 3NT.

(d) ♠ K43 ♥ A10854 ♦ KQ82 ♣ 2

2♦. Only 12 HCP, so you are looking for the best partscore. Perhaps you have a diamond fit ... after all, partner has denied hearts and spades, so must be long in some way in the minors.

(e) ♠ K543 ♥ A9543 ♦ AQ2 ♣ 2

Pass. There's no point bidding the spades, as partner has denied them. So there's nowhere to go. In all likelihood, partner has length in clubs, so don't start panicking about the club singleton.

(f) ♠ KQ103 ♥ AQJ54 ♦ K2 ♣ Q2

2NT. 17 HCP + partner's 6-9 totals 23-26 HCP. There may well be a game, but you have no suit fit. A natural and invitational 2NT rebid fits the bill. With a maximum, partner will proceed to 3NT. With a minimum, partner will pass, or perhaps run to a 6-card minor, which you can pass.

STATE EVENT RESULTS**Victorian Open Teams (Pennant)**

- 1 W. Jacobs, B. Thompson, J. Howard, J. Thompson
- 2 G. Ridgway, A. Robbins, D. Newland, D. Newlands, J. Stark
- 3 N. Ewart, D. Beckett, F. Beale, R. van Riel, D. Smart, A. Maccready-Bryan

CONGRESS RESULTS**Waverley Congress***Swiss Pairs**North/South**East/West*

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 P. Hollands – C. Leach | 1 S. Hawkins – J. Howard |
| 2 Mill – A. Hegedus | 2 G. Ghali – N. Cohen |
| 3 White – F. Kovacs | 3 K. Zhang – J. Yang |

Restricted

- 1 P. Clifford – C. Hosking
- 2 E. Bermingham – M. Toner
- 3 M. Munro – L. Gorham

Swiss Teams

- 1 M. Gurfinkiel, A. Krolikowski, M. Willcox, K. Chan
- 2 C. Ding, V. Zhang, T. Strong, J. Magee
- 3 M. Darling, J. Howard, A. Maluish, A. Mill

South Gippsland Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 R. Stewart – P. Fent
- 2 S. Klofa – D. Harley
- 3 M. Clarke – D. Clarke

Swiss Teams

- 1 D. Middleton, M. Tildesley, F. Vearing, J. Heywood
- 2 R. Stewart, P. Fent, K. Bailey, G. Bailey
- 3 C. Senior, G. Mealyea, S. Hall, M. Lambert

Kooyong Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 C. Arul – R. Ellery
- 2 I. Muir – R. Muir
- 3 S. Hawkins – J. Howard

Tivoli Congress*Matchpoint Swiss Pairs*

- 1 M. Zhang – Y. Lu
- 2 M. Darling – H. Snashall
- 3 S. Hawkins – J. Howard

IMP Swiss Pairs

- 1 C. Ding – D. Nie
- 2 J. Howard – A. Maluish
- 3 C. Lachman – H. Snashall

UPCOMING CONGRESSES

VBA Summer Congress

Saturday 5th December, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 6th December, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue: VBA Clubrooms
 131 Poath Rd
 Murrumbeena

Contact: Cathie Lachman, 9530 9006

Enter: <http://vba.asn.au>

Gardenvale Congress

Saturday 26th December – Sunday 3rd January
 9 consecutive days of red-point bridge!

Venue: 20 Spinks St
 Brighton, 3186

Contact: Jeff Fust, 9530 6622

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Judith Anderson	Mornington
Elizabeth Jonson	Rye Beach
Joan O'Shea	Bendigo
Linda Picone	Warrnambool
Felicia Ross	Warrnambool

***State**

Barbara Callan	Geelong
Alice Green	Rye Beach

National

Peter Cork	Melbourne
Lucienne Newton-Tabrett	Warrnambool
Rosemary Polya	Northern
Bob Weaver	Phillip Island
Shirley Weaver	Phillip Island

*** National**

Dell Macneil	Waverley
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Silver Life

Jennifer Goddard	Bendigo
Peter Goddard	Bendigo
David Yoffa	Berwick

Gold Life

Laura Ginnan	Waverley
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**HELP NEEDED:
2016 SCHOOLS BRIDGE**

The VBA will be using the funds raised in 2015 Youth Week to support the promotion and development of schools bridge programs. We need:

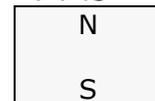
- A Victorian Youth Co-ordinator, who will be responsible for co-ordinating youth activity generally and supporting the schools program specifically. The Co-ordinator will also be the Victorian representative on the ABF Youth Committee

- Professional School Teachers – current or retired – who can assist with introducing the VBA to schools (particularly principals) and explaining the educational benefits of bridge. An introduction to even one school is helpful!

If you are interested in the co-ordinator role please email Kim Frazer (secretary@vba.asn.au) by December 31st. If you can help as a professional teacher, please email Kim ... any time! In either case, please provide a background paragraph or two on yourself

THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dlr: South ♠ 98
 Vul: all ♥ K63
 ♦ AJ765
 ♣ 743



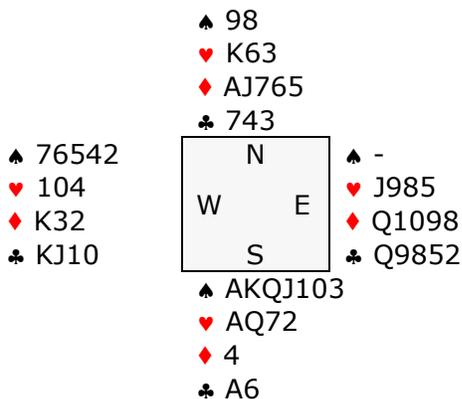
♠ AKQJ103
 ♥ AQ72
 ♦ 4
 ♣ A6

West	North	East	South
			2♣
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads a trump to your 6♠ contract. and East discards a club.

What now? Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK



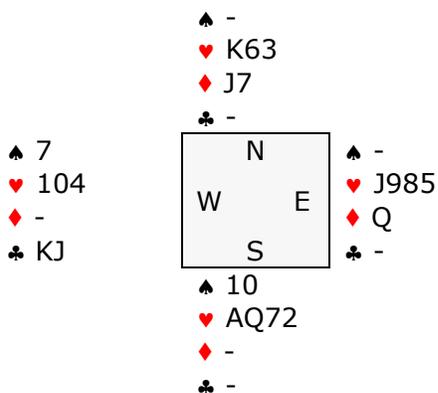
You could play on hearts now. That will work if they divide 3-3, or if West has 4 of them: you can trump your heart loser in dummy.

Given the 5-0 spade break, finding West with 4 hearts is unlikely. A better chance is to play for a squeeze on East: if East has long hearts and long diamonds, he can be brought under pressure.

Win the spade lead in your hand, play a diamond to the ace and another diamond from dummy, *discarding a club*.

Suppose the defenders win the diamond and play a club. Win this, play a spade to dummy's 9 and trump a diamond. You hope that the defender who has the remaining winning diamond also has long hearts.

Now draw all the remaining trumps leaving this position when the last trump is played:



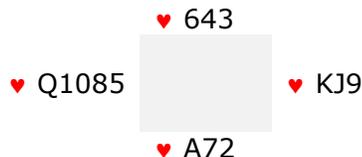
East has no good discard.



TIP OF THE MONTH

The Holdup Extended

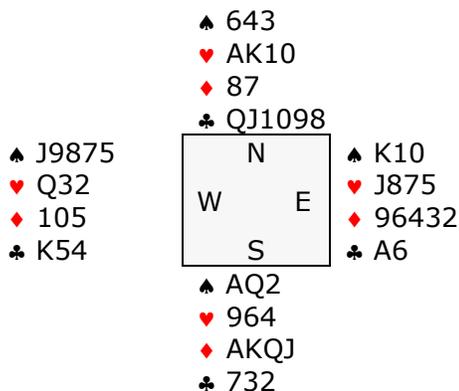
The holdup play is one of the best known and useful tactics in bridge. Here it is in pure form:



West leads the ♥5 to your notrump contract. If you withhold your ace until the third round, East is exhausted of hearts. If you subsequently lose a trick to East, the defence won't be able to take their good hearts.

But this is not the only scenario for a holdup play: it can also be valuable when you have *two stoppers* in a suit.

Take a look at this deal:



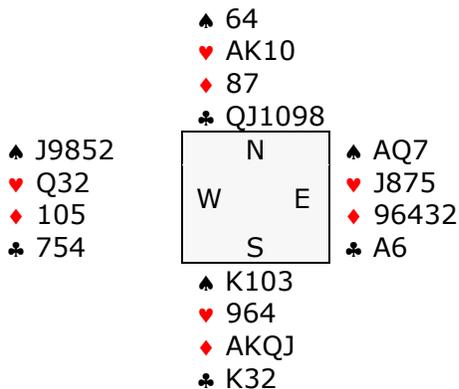
West leads a spade and East plays the king. An instinctive reaction would be to take the king with the ace, but this will cost you the contract. You have no alternative but to play on clubs. East will win the first club and play a spade: West will win the second club and cash his good spades.

You should execute a holdup play, letting East win the first trick. Win the *second* spade, and play on clubs. When East wins the ♣A, he doesn't have a third spade to play, and the defenders' spades wither on the vine.

Holdup plays constitute a little corner of bridge that can have unexpected beauty. For

example, if East had somehow divined to play the ♠10 on the first trick, that would stop your holdup play: you would need to win that trick with the queen. But it would not have helped the defence, because when East gets the lead and plays the ♠K, you can duck *that* trick.

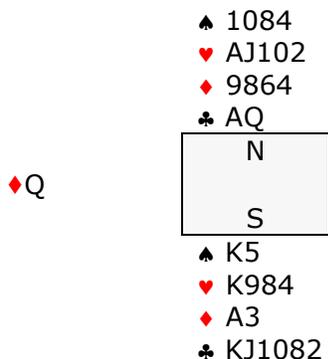
But ...



Again, West leads a spade, and East should play smoothly the *queen*. From his perspective, if partner has the ♠K, it's all good, and the defence will take all their spade tricks. But if declarer has it, playing the queen will force him to win with the king, otherwise he risks losing his stopper.

Declarer is reduced to hoping that spades break 4-4, but when East wins the club, he plays ace and another spade, allowing West to run the suit.

Finally, try this one:



West	North	East	South
1♠	D'ble	Pass	1♣
Pass	3♥	Pass	2♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♥

Holdup plays aren't just for notrumps. West leads the ♦Q to your 4♥ contract.

You really don't want East to ever get the lead on this deal, because he will fire a spade through your king. So if East plays low on the diamond opening lead, hold the suit up, letting West win the trick.

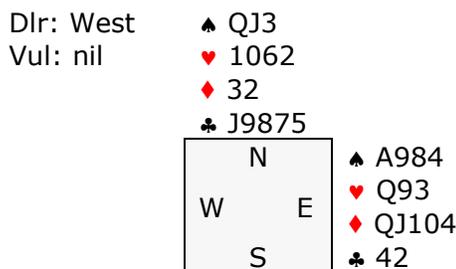
And to complete the avoidance, when drawing trumps, finesse through East. If West wins ♥Q, he cannot damage you with a spade play.



TEST YOUR DEFENCE

This defensive dilemma cropped up in the final of the Spring Nationals Seniors and Women's teams. It occurred at all four tables, and all four Easts got it wrong.

See if you can do better!



West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT*	Pass	3♣	Pass
3NT**	Pass	Pass	Pass

* 22-23 HCP, balanced

** No four or five card major

Playing fourth-highest leads and standard signals, your partner leads ♥5.

Dummy plays low, you try the ♥9, and declarer wins with the ♥K.

Declarer now plays ♣K, ♣A, ♣Q, and your partner follows with the 3, 6 and 10. You discard a spade on the third round.

Next comes ♠2, ♠5, ♠J and you win the ace. It's decision time – do you play back a heart or try the diamonds? Decide for yourself, and then turn the page.

All four Easts played the ♦Q, and all four declarers promptly claimed an overtrick. All four Wests were left fuming, as this was the full deal:

♠ 765	♠ QJ3	♠ A984									
♥ AJ754	♥ 1062	♥ Q93									
♦ 85	♦ 32	♦ QJ104									
♣ 1063	♣ J9875	♣ 42									
<table style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <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										
	♠ K102										
	♥ K8										
	♦ AK976										
	♣ AKQ										

West was poised with four winning hearts – no wonder he fumed! Why did all the Easts fail to return their partner’s suit?

Perhaps they were swayed by partner playing clubs up the line, a possible suit-preference signal for a low suit (probably, the Wests were instead giving count in the clubs). Or they were seduced by the lovely sequence of honours in diamonds.

The solution lies in the bidding. Declarer had denied a 4-card major and shown up with three clubs. So he must have at least four diamonds, leaving partner with at most three diamonds. Even if partner has the ♦A, it will do no good ... any competent declarer would play low on the ♦Q switch, withholding the king until a later round. The defence simply cannot unravel four diamond tricks.

But if partner has the ♥A, then you certainly can take four heart tricks.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

ERBA TURNS 21!

In 1995 Martin Willcox and Quentin Van Abbe from the VBA held a meeting with representatives of Gippsland Bridge Clubs with a view to forming a common association; Liz Steedman from Bairnsdale Bridge Club was appointed Interim President and ERBA (Eastern Region Bridge Association) was born.

All seven Gippsland Bridge Clubs (Lakes Entrance, Bairnsdale, Paynesville, Sale, Traralgon, South Gippsland and Phillip Island) have played a pivotal role over the last 21 years in ensuring that the ERBA has fostered interest in and promoted the game of bridge through local, VBA and ABF events, teaching tours, interclub and regional competitions and the ERBA Regional Congress.

On February 13 and 14, 2016 the ERBA will be holding their ERBA congress in Sale.

This annual ERBA Congress is normally restricted to current Gippsland Bridge Club members who reside and play most of their Bridge within the region.

However for 2016, in order to celebrate and acknowledge the contribution made by all members both past and present to the ongoing success and longevity of ERBA, all past members of Lakes Entrance, Bairnsdale, Paynesville, Sale, Traralgon, South Gippsland and Phillip Island Bridge clubs are cordially invited back to play in the 2016 ERBA Congress.

As well as a well-run congress hosted by Traralgon Bridge Club at the Sale racecourse, Sale, ERBA will conduct a special dinner on the Saturday evening at the same venue providing the opportunity to have a “back-to” for past club members to catch-up and enjoy some local entertainment and hospitality.

If you have been a member of any of the above clubs please feel free to enter the annual ERBA Congress through www.bridgeunlimited.com or contact the Congress Convenor Don Tylee on 0478-076-082 or don.tylee@bigpond.com for further information. A partner may be arranged for you if required.

A separate booking for the dinner is necessary. If you would like to come for the “back to” dinner only, you would be most welcome, please contact Terry Nadebaum tnadebaum47@gmail.com or 0429-146-756. The cost of the dinner is \$25 pp with nibbles, dinner and dessert, drinks at bar prices with plenty of home grown memories and entertainment.