

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

October 2016

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



I'm writing this month's Soapbox on the train from Budapest to Vienna. Bill Jacobs and I were playing bridge in Poland in early September, and my wife Jenny was captaining the Australian women's team, so Jenny and I decided to grab the opportunity and extend our trip.

International bridge can be a strange thing. What you and I consider standard and normal can be completely obscure to people from other countries. Something as simple as the weak 1NT, for example. For me, seeing the many different ways people approach bridge is part of the fun. You do have to be a little careful though; factor in language differences and you can have some spectacular misunderstandings!

Overall though, it all works out remarkably well because we speak a common language – bridge! You can share bridge stories, and even enjoy bridge jokes, with almost no language in common (except bridge).

Next time you're overseas and at a loose end, have a game at the local bridge club. Go in with an open mind and I'm sure you'll have a great time and make a bunch of new friends. Likewise when you host a visitor from far afield at your club, with a little bit of patience and understanding, I'm sure everyone will have great fun.

VBA MARKETING DAY Kim Frazer

On September 24, the ABF National Marketing Officer, Sandra Mulcahy, conducted an extremely informative seminar for Victorian Club committee members on several key areas including:

- how to grow your club membership,
- establishing education programs at your club,
- ideas for getting your club members more involved in your club,
- transitioning players from supervised to regular club sessions, and
- ideas for helping your intermediate player improve.

Participants on the day benefitted both from the detailed discussion on how to attract new members, how to ensure your existing members are happy and enjoying their bridge, and a myriad of general tips and ideas. Naturally, one of the best aspects was the interaction between different clubs who picked up ideas from each other.

Sandra also showed participants the range of marketing posters and material the ABF has available for use by clubs. For more information, email the ABF National Marketing Officer at marketing@abf.com.au.



FOR STARTERS

The following deal is based on a hand held at the recent World Bridge Games by Sydney star Sartaj Hans. See how you go.

It is a teams match (IMP scoring), and you pick up in third seat:

♠ K62 ♥ AQ97 ♦ Q103 ♣ 762

No one is vulnerable. Partner passes, RHO passes, and you face a common third seat dilemma.

Should you open the bidding, and if so, with what? Decide for yourself.

Opening light in third seat is a common strategy. It can work because you are not called on to make a rebid when partner responds. But Pass is not a four-letter word, despite being a four-letter word, and this 11 count is hardly an appetising collection.

You could open in 1 of a minor, depending on taste. Or you could do what Sartaj did, which was to open 1♥, despite it promising 5-cards. His plan was to pass, whatever partner did, and meanwhile, he has pointed out what might be the best opening lead against an opponent's eventual contract.

The auction then proceeds:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	Pass	Pass	1♥
D'ble	Pass	2♦	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All pass

The lead-directing 1♥ opening has come to naught, as you find yourself with the lead. What's it to be?

Let's rule out some suits.

Leading a diamond from that holding, up to the suit that RHO has bid, cannot be right. Scratch a diamond.

A heart lead is also wrong. Partner didn't support the hearts (and you must assume he has some points, otherwise you're not going to defeat 3NT). RHO likely has the ♥K, and you want to hold your ♥AQ over it.

So it comes down to the black suits. A spade lead is possible, but partner didn't bid 1♠ when he had the chance, so is unlikely to have a good holding there.

So Sartaj decided to lead a club, one of the less dynamic opening leads in the annals of the game. It is a passive shot, essentially aiming to avoid giving away a cheap trick.

Passive leads, to both suit and notrump contracts, are underrated things. On the ♣6 lead, this is what he saw:

3NT by	♠ AQ9									
South	♥ 532									
	♦ A4									
	♣ AQJ109									
♠ K62	<table style="width: 100%; height: 100%; 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								
♥ AQ97										
♦ Q103										
♣ 762										

Dummy is pretty much as expected. A strong hand with clubs, and you see that bad things might be happening on the lead of any other suit.

Declarer calls for the ♣Q, partner wins the ♣K and returns the ♥10, ♥J by declarer and you win the ♥Q.

Now what?

The same reasoning applies as to the opening lead. All the suits are dangerous, except for clubs. Declarer probably has the ♦K for the 3NT bid, but the whereabouts of the ♠J and ♦J are mysteries.

So you continue the passivity and play another club. Dummy wins, and a third club is played: partner follows and declarer discards a low diamond. You follow with your last club.

Another club from dummy: partner discards the ♠J, declarer a low heart, and you ...?

Thank you partner! Clearly he has the spades bottled up, starting with ♠J108x(x), and informing you that you can throw one. You can safely discard a spade and a heart

on the two long clubs. Declarer has nowhere to find a 9th trick, the full deal being:

♠ AQ9			
♥ 532			
♦ A4			
♣ AQJ109			
♠ K62	N	♠ J10873	
♥ AQ97	W E	♥ 106	
♦ Q103	S	♦ J92	
♣ 762		♣ K84	
		♠ 54	
		♥ KJ84	
		♦ K8765	
		♣ 53	

Declarer could only take two spades, two diamonds and four club tricks – down one.



Points to remember:

- After two passes to you, you can open without the necessary HCP, because you have the option of passing partner's response, which is no longer forcing.

In such circumstances, consider making a *lead-directing* bid, even if it lies about your shape. Here is another example from the world championships:

♠ Q2 ♥ 108753 ♦ AK872 ♣ J

Norwegian star Geir Helgemo opened 1♦ in third seat. Sure enough, against the eventual 5♣ contract by his LHO, only a diamond lead would lead to defeat.

- Passive opening leads, and passive defence in general, is often an effective strategy. First do no harm. On this deal, the non-club suits all had a problem:

- ♦: declarer has bid that suit
- ♥: you hold ♥AQ over declarer's assumed ♥K
- ♠: partner hasn't bid the suit when he easily could have.

- Watch for partner's signals – they can save your life!



TEST YOUR BIDDING

Three-card raises

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
Pass	1♠	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	?

In this bread-and-butter auction, partner has promised at least 6 HCP and at least 4 spades. One searches for an 8-card major suit fit here, so if partner only promises 4 spades, then you should normally have 4 spades yourself in order to support the suit.

Could there be situations where it's best to give support with only 3 spades?

Yes indeed. Here are two circumstances where you should at least consider giving a raise with 3 cards:

- You have side suit shortage (singleton or void). That rules out a rebid in notrumps. Rather than rebid your own suit, or bid a new suit, maybe you should give a direct raise. Your shortage means that your hand has some ruffing power.
- Your spades are strong (and you have at least some distribution). Even if partner has only 4 spades, a spade contract can play very well when you have the top trumps. 4-3 fits can be challenging to declare, but they can also be a lot of fun.

There's no substitute for showing judgment in these situations, so let's practise our judgment on each of the following hands:

(a) ♠ Q98 ♥ KQJ3 ♦ Q1032 ♣ K8

(b) ♠ Q98 ♥ 3 ♦ AK1032 ♣ AQJ7

(c) ♠ Q98 ♥ 3 ♦ AK932 ♣ K875

(d) ♠ Q98 ♥ A3 ♦ Q87632 ♣ A8

(e) ♠ 986 ♥ Q3 ♦ AKJ632 ♣ K8

(f) ♠ KJ9 ♥ A643 ♦ A1032 ♣ 87

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♦
Pass	1♠	Pass	?

(a) ♠ Q98 ♥ KQJ3 ♦ Q1032 ♣ K8

1NT. This hand is too balanced to give a raise. 1NT describes it well: around 12-14 HCP, with balanced distribution.

Do not under any circumstances rebid 2♥! That is a *reverse* bid, showing 16+ HCP. There is no need to bid hearts now: if partner has 4 of them, then he also has at least 5 spades (with 4-4 in the majors, he would respond 1♥). In that scenario, partner will bid hearts next, after your 1NT rebid.

(b) ♠ Q98 ♥ 3 ♦ AK1032 ♣ AQJ7

2♣. With 16 HCP plus distribution, this hand is too strong for a raise to 2♠. And you should never *jump* raise with only 3-card support. The solution is to bid 2♣, and assuming partner now makes a bid, then support the spades. That depicts a good hand with 3-card spade support.

(c) ♠ Q98 ♥ 3 ♦ AK932 ♣ K875

2♠. A classic 3-card raise. A minimum opener but with distribution. Bidding clubs first and then spades would promise more strength (see hand (b)).

(d) ♠ Q98 ♥ A3 ♦ Q87632 ♣ A8

2♠. There's no genuine shortage but you do have two doubletons. And the alternative, 2♦, has the drawback of rebidding a rubbishy suit.

(e) ♠ 986 ♥ Q3 ♦ AKJ632 ♣ K8

2♦. Conversely here, the spades are weak and the diamonds are strong. This tips the balance in favour of rebidding the strong suit.

(f) ♠ KJ9 ♥ A643 ♦ A1032 ♣ 87

2♠. Not much distribution, but the spades are nice, as are the aces. 1NT is unappealing with the low doubleton club. As you can see, this quiz involves a lot of bidding judgment.

CLUB EVENT RESULTS

MCC vs Melbourne BC Interclub teams

- 1 P. Blankfield, J. Friend, A. Godfrey
L. Pitman (MCC)
- 2 R. Begg, M. Howell, R. Lurie, B. Ray (MBC)
- 3 J. Banks, P. Glenning, H. Frolich,
K. Graham (MCC)



Winners of the MCC-MBC Interclub teams:
Penny Blankfield, Jill Friend, Lorraine Pitman,
Alan Godfrey

Bairnsdale Bridge Club Triathlon

Paynesville Bridge Club ran a "Triathlon" again this year. The first event was the Betty Dawson Teams, a one day red point event played in March, followed by the Bill Hughes Simultaneous Pairs in June and culminating on 7th September with the Paynesville Birthday Individual. Players in all three events received 20 points each for coming first, 18 for second, 16 for third down to 2 for the 10th placed Team Player/Pair Player/Individual – with points totalled at the conclusion to produce a winner.

Club President, John Haylock, officiated at a "Brownlow Medal" type count at the completion of play. Overall winner was Robyn Couch from Traralgon Bridge Club with 50 points, 2nd Ken Tierney also from Traralgon with 38 points and Bob Moorhouse (Paynesville) 3rd on 35. We don't usually play Individual movements so the day was enjoyable for the players but stressful for the scorer! The club was celebrating its 27th birthday on the day so a birthday cake was produced for afternoon tea and the day finished with nibbles and drinks.

... Christine Heesom



Paynesville Club President, John Haylock, with Triathlon winner Robyn Couch and runner up Ken Tierney, both from Traralgon Bridge Club

CONGRESS RESULTS

Ballarat Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 G. Ridgway – A. Robbins
- 2 L. Griffiths – M. Clarke
- 3 D. Newlands – D. Newland

Swiss Teams

- 1 S. Klofa, D. Harley, R. Stewart, A. Czapnik
- 2 G. Ridgway, A. Robbins, D. Newlands, D. Newland
- 3 M. Zhang, V. Zhang, C. Ding, J. Yang

Mornington Peninsula Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 P. Hollands – C. Leach
- 2 E. Windmiller – T. Cowie
- 3 L. Gold – L. Gold

Swiss Teams

- 1 J. Ranson, A. St Clair, D. Harley, J. Ebery
- 2 S. Klofa, M. Gurfinkiel, J. Magee, T. Strong
- 3 N. McManamny, C. Chakravorty, T. Gariepy, K. French

Macedon Ranges Congress

Matchpoint Pairs

- 1 M. Zhang – M. Willcox
- 2 S. Klofa – M. Gurfinkiel
- 3 L. Griffiths – M. Clarke

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs

Event 17 (September 3)

- 1 B. Romeijn – J. Day (Berwick)
- 2 A. Smith – D. Newland (Ballarat)
- 3 C. Bailey – V. Whitby (Yarra Valley)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS

Albury Congress

Saturday 8th October, 11 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 9th October, 9:30 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Commercial Club
 Deane Street, Albury

Contact: Richard Harman, 0413 010 478

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Warrnambool Congress

Saturday 15th October, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 16th September, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue South Rovers Football Netball Club
 Coulstock St, Warrnambool

Contact: Janet Attrill, 0439 350 551

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Bairnsdale Congress

Saturday 22nd October, 12 noon: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 23rd October, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue St Mary's Parish Church
 Bairnsdale

Contact: John Brazier, 5152 3494

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Waverley Congress

Friday 28th October, 10 am: Graded MP Pairs
 Saturday 29th October, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 30th October, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue 21a Electra Ave
 Ashwood

Contact: Mary Elson, 9807 6502

Enter: <http://waverleybridgeclub.com.au>

South Gippsland Congress

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

Venue Dakers Centre
 Smith Street
 Leongatha

Contact: Neville Chapman, 0427 392 979

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

ABF Newsletter Editor

The Australian Bridge Federation is seeking expressions of interest for the position of editor of the bi-monthly ABF Newsletter.

The Editor is responsible for the production, printing and distribution of the Newsletter and may secure paid articles from bridge journalists.

More information is available from <http://www.abf.com.au>. If you are interested, email secretary@abf.com.au by October 31st.

WORLD OPEN PAIRS Ben Thompson

Bill Jacobs and I recently played in the World Open Pairs in Wroclaw, Poland.

On the first board of the final, our opponents bid two flat hands with a combined 33 count to 7♣. In almost any matchpointed game that would be a bad start for us. Not in this event. Our opponents claimed on the opening lead and started discussing (not arguing!) where they had gone wrong, missing two higher-scoring grannies (7♠ in a 5-2 fit and 7NT). That was a 70% board for us.

I enjoyed this simple looking hand from the 2nd session of the final:

♠ A532 ♥ AQ53 ♦ 865 ♣ 65

Vulnerable against not, Bill opened 1NT, 12-14. In a field full of pairs playing strong 1NT, the field will find a major suit fit if there is one. Holding both of them, it's worth the risk

of trying Stayman to match the field. Bill said 2♥ showing 4 or 5 hearts and an invitational hand. "Invitational" was the risky part, but sometimes you bid a tight game and make it. Bill passed and ...

♠ J1096	N W E S	♠ Q74
♥ 986		♥ 742
♦ KQ4		♦ AJ
♣ K98		♣ Q10732
		♠ A532
		♥ AQ53
		♦ 865
		♣ 65

On the ♠J lead, I could force a nice cross-ruff for 9 tricks (I won the ♠K and gave the opposition a club trick; even playing a trump they couldn't stop me from ruffing 2 spades high in dummy and 1 club low in my hand). That was a 96% score when the field played 1NT on auctions like 1♦ - 1♥ - 1NT.

We actually won the 5th session of the final, which was a both a surprise and a thrill. In the end we wound up 8th from a starting field of around 200 pairs, with which we were very happy.

Unfortunately there was a huge controversy over scoring. Both the Open and Women's pairs events were decided by "impossible" scoring errors - the declarer was entered incorrectly and in favour of the listed winners on a (different) board in each event.

All serious scoring programs pick that sort of error up automatically, and the WBF should have picked these up both automatically and with manual checking. Even worse, the listed winners in the Women's pairs found the error in their favour at the end of day one and notified the directors the next morning. The technical but morally unsound ruling was that the correction was out of time so a manifestly incorrect score stood.

It is a serious indictment of the WBF that the gold medals awarded in two of the four pairs events don't reflect the bridge played at the table.

REMEMBERING FELICITY Diana Smart



The following is the text of a speech given at Felicity Beale's funeral by long-time partner Diana Smart.

We're here today to say goodbye to Felicity and to celebrate a life very well lived. I have been asked to talk about Felicity's bridge career, which was a large part of her life.

Felicity represented Australia 27 times in every continent of the world. In all, she was a member of the Australian Women's team at 6 Olympiads, 7 World championships, and 14 Asia Pacific championships between 1973 and 2014. She won the Asia Pacific women's team championship 4 times and came 2nd another 4 times. She won numerous top-level open and women's championships around Australia. There are few players who have such an amazing record.

Felicity and I had a 41-year bridge partnership that started in 1975 when we won a major competition at our first outing together. This was the start of a very successful partnership that was also a lot of fun. Recently, I was waiting at a travel centre and looked around at the posters of wonderful places around the world. Felicity and I had been to all but one or two of them in our bridge career together. How lucky we were!

Felicity was a wonderful partner and player – a gutsy bidder, excellent defender and a very thoughtful declarer. The longer the time she took to play a hand, the more confident I was that she would bring it home. She loved to

puzzle through a bridge problem and learn from it – a very admirable trait. She was playing as well as ever right to the end, which gives hope to us all. She had two other long-standing partnerships with Ian McCance and Robbie van Riel with whom she loved playing and from whom she learnt much.

Felicity always liked to have fun as well as play her heart out. For example, when we played in Shanghai in 1987 she arranged a visit to the circus with world famous acrobats and white tigers. It was truly spectacular, and also a little frightening. Another time, she arranged for the Australian bridge teams to be welcomed at the Australian embassy when we played in Bangkok in 1982. She was a very loyal team mate - for example, she played with the same nucleus of open and women team-mates for many years, through good times and not so good ones. It's great to see many of them here today. She was a very popular member of the bridge community, and many people have been in touch to say how sad they are and how much they will miss her.

Felicity always had a good joke to tell at the bridge table, and was friendly to her opponents. I recall one very memorable incident that typified her. I hope non-bridge players will pardon me if I tell a bridge story here. After a highly contested auction in which both sides had shown two-suited hands, our opponents bid to a small slam. I doubled as I had two aces and other high cards in my suits. Felicity had unexpected length in one of my suits so saved this (rightly, as it was going to make). When this came back to the opening bidder he now went one higher and bid a grand slam. (As he hadn't bid it straight away, it was highly likely that he had a loser somewhere). I doubled this to show that I had both Aces and hoped that Felicity would find the right lead. As she was thinking and thinking about what to lead, declarer (who was a friend) commented that this was a "showdown at the OK Corral". Eventually Felicity decided that her opponent had made a fake cue-bid and led that suit. It was the right lead and the slam went down - if she hadn't, it would have made.

After the hand, Felicity dived into her handbag and emerged with a postcard of the

OK Corral, saying "I always have it on hand". She had been there only a few weeks previously! It brought the house down.

Felicity will be greatly missed by us all and will always be in our hearts. She is now with the great shuffler in the sky and I am sure that all her finesses are working.

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Leonie Henry	Melton
Maureen Stiles	South Gippsland

*State

Elizabeth Byrnes	Waverley
Sena Hasthanayake	Waverley
Elwyn Hendy	Ballarat

National

Marilyn Hunter	RACV
Heather Smith	RACV
Ken Tenner	Waverley

Life

Evelyn Stephenson	Moonee Valley
Don Tylee	Traralgon

Bronze Life

Jacqueline Morrison	Dendy Park
Patti Neerhut	Ballarat
Michael Phillips	VBA
Heather Scott	Geelong
Jeffrey Shapiro	VBA

YOUTH BRIDGE WEEK OCTOBER 17 - 23, 2016

The VBA is inviting all clubs across the state to get involved with our annual 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.

Magdalena Gwózdź Bridge Memorial

A bridge memorial event will be held as a duplicate competition on the 26th November 2016 at the Polish Club Albion; 19 Carrington Dr, Albion VIC 3020.

Polish bridge players are welcome to participate.

There are prizes for the first place and runner-up competitors.

Registration is essential and further information may be obtained from Jacek Gwózdź; mobile 0478 614 040 or 9461 2595 after 7 pm.