

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

November 2016

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



One of our plans at the VBA for this year was to build on the success of the Gippsland schools bridge program started by the late Frank Power and to work on building a network of bridge-playing schools in Melbourne. You'll remember that we earmarked the funds generously donated by bridge players and bridge clubs around Victoria during youth week last year for this purpose.

Unfortunately we've stalled at the "teach bridge" stage. We've had a variety of positive conversations with schools, and although I'm confident we'll get a bridge teacher in the room sometime, it hasn't happened yet.

This is potentially a good time of year to try to run a short program at a school. At the end of the school year, with all the exams and assessment out of the way, many schools run enrichment or just plain fun programs. We can all help with that!

If you work at a school, or know a school principal / teacher well enough to introduce the great idea of a bridge course, please contact me (president@vba.asn.au) and we'll do our best to help. We can help with pitching the idea; we have a variety of

helpful materials; we can put you in touch with people who have taught school kids; and we can provide ongoing learning and playing support (for you, the school, and the kids).

VBA 2016 AGM COUNCIL ELECTIONS SPECIAL COUNCILLOR NOMINATIONS

At the close of the nomination period for Special Councillors to the 2015/16 VBA Council, the following nominations were received:

Rob Quirk representing Metro near VBA

Helen McAdam representing Eastern Zone

Richard Giles representing Western Zone

No other nominations for Special Councillors were received. These nominees will be formally appointed to the VBA Council at the upcoming Annual General Meeting.

As there was no nomination received for Metro Arc, this position will remain vacant. Interested members from the clubs in the Metro Arc region are invited to contact the secretary, Kim Frazer (email: secretary@vba.asn.au) for further details regarding nominating for this vacant position.

Eligible clubs in this zone are: Moonee Valley, Melbourne, Ravens, Yarra Valley, Berwick, Frankston, MCC, Rye Beach, RACV, Mornington, Williamstown, Eastern Contract Bridge Centre, Peninsula, Dromana, Whittlesea, Upwey, Northern, Knox, Mount Martha, U3A Knox, Melton.

VBA Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Monday November 21st, starting at 6:30 pm. All members of the VBA are welcome to attend.

FOR STARTERS

Playing in your regular matchpoint duplicate, you pick up your normal hand:

♠ AJ3 ♥ 764 ♦ 932 ♣ 10762

With no one vulnerable, the auction proceeds as follows:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♣	1♠	Pass
Pass	D'ble	Pass	?

Partner's double is for takeout, showing shortish spades and support for the other suits. There are two options open to you: 1NT and 2♣. Which is it to be?

Both choices are reasonable. Partner is almost certain to have at least 4 clubs, so you have an 8+ card fit there.

But your hand is very flat, and you probably have two spade stoppers. Notrumps is likely to play quite well with those stoppers, with partner providing tricks in the other suits.

You decide to bid 1NT, and the auction continues:

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

Partner is inviting you to bid 3NT. Do you?

This decision is all about *context*.

You have a rotten 5-point hand with little to recommend it. On that basis, you might decide to pass 2NT, wanting no part of a higher contract.

But *in context*, you have a monster! When your partner invites you to bid game, he is asking you to bid game if you have a hand at the top of the range that have already shown.

What you have already shown here is practically nothing. Your original pass suggested fewer than 6 HCP. Your 1NT

indicated nothing other than some sort of stopper in spades.

What you actually have is the absolute top of your range (5 HCP on a 0-5 range) and probably *two* spade stoppers. You should bid 3NT.

Against 3NT, LHO leads the ♠8:

♠ 8 led	♠ 652 ♥ QJ109 ♦ AKQ ♣ AK8 <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60px; height: 40px; margin: 5px auto; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> N S </div> ♠ AJ3 ♥ 764 ♦ 932 ♣ 10764
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So much for "partner is almost certain to have at least 4 clubs"! In fact you were well out of a club contract. Come to think of it, what else could partner do than open 1♣, and then double 1♠ for takeout? He was too strong to open 1NT in the first place, and could hardly bid 1NT over 1♠ with three little spades.

His 2NT bid was more doubtful. Let's say it showed great faith in your declarer play. Can you repay that faith?

You call small from dummy and East plays ♠Q.

Your move.

Start by counting your tricks. East must have ♠KQxxx(x), so your ♠AJx represents two tricks. There are also three diamonds and two clubs, taking you up to 7.

You are looking for two more tricks, and hearts is the place to get them (playing on clubs will only ever deliver you one more trick). You can certainly get two heart tricks, but the danger is that you have to lose the lead twice, and this might allow the defenders to defeat you in spades.

It's still your move.

You must let East win the first spade. When he plays another one, insert the jack, winning the trick. This will exhaust West of spades. Now play on hearts. If East has both the ♥A and ♥K, you will go down, but if West has one of them, then he won't be able to play a spade when he wins his heart trick, and your hearts will become good before their spades do.

The full deal:

♠ 84	♠ 652	♠ KQ1097			
♥ K832	♥ QJ109	♥ A5			
♦ 10875	♦ AKQ	♦ J64			
♣ Q93	♣ AK8	♣ J52			
<table border="1" style="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					
♠ AJ3	♠ AJ3	♠ KQ1097			
♥ 764	♥ 764	♥ A5			
♦ 932	♦ 932	♦ J64			
♣ 10764	♣ 10764	♣ J52			

Points to remember:

- Bid your hand in context. If you have a weak hand, but are at the top of the range you have already shown, you are *maximum*. Conversely, if you have a strong hand, but are at the bottom of the range you have already shown, you are *minimum*.
- Always count your tricks at the start of the play in a notrump contract. Then play on the suit that will generate the extra tricks you need.
- A well-judged hold-up play can play havoc with the defenders' communications. If you had won the first spade, then West could grab the first heart and play his remaining spade.

Did you notice that this contract could have been defeated? East had to play the ♠9 (or ♠10 or low) on the first trick. This would have forced you to take the first of your two spade stoppers at once.

That would have been quite a play by East, but it was possible to work it out. Most definitely, it is not a play For Starters.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

They overcall 1NT

Nil vulnerable

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♥	1NT	?

An opposition 1NT overcall is a game-changer. It shows about 16-18 HCP with a stopper in the opened suit. Your objectives have shifted from a possible game investigation to just trying to obtain a plus score.

Here are the rules of engagement when your RHO overcalls 1NT:

- Double is for penalties, and shows about 10+ HCP. If you do have such a hand, then your LHO must be very weak, and such hands are a nightmare for the 1NT bidder, who must play the contract out of his own hand.
- The corollary is that if you choose any other bid, you are denying 10+ HCP! In particular, a bid of a new suit does not show strength but a weakish hand with a long suit.
- Be aware that the 1Nter's heart stopper is sitting over your partner's hearts. This argues for caution if you have heart support but weak hearts. Indeed, if your hand is weak, then your side's finesses are going to be mainly losing!

With these guidelines in mind, choose your bid with:

- (a) ♠ Q8643 ♥ 53 ♦ A92 ♣ 864
- (b) ♠ Q864 ♥ 53 ♦ A92 ♣ KJ104
- (c) ♠ J864 ♥ 643 ♦ A972 ♣ Q4
- (d) ♠ J843 ♥ Q106 ♦ A972 ♣ 64
- (e) ♠ KQ3 ♥ 3 ♦ J109732 ♣ 864
- (f) ♠ 64 ♥ 3 ♦ KJ932 ♣ QJ864

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

Nil vulnerable

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♥	1NT	?

(a) ♠ Q8643 ♥ 53 ♦ A92 ♣ 864

Pass. You would have responded 1♠ to partner's 1♥, but that option has disappeared. Your best bet is simply to try to defeat 1NT. (Your choice of an opening lead is a real puzzler!)

(b) ♠ Q864 ♥ 53 ♦ A92 ♣ KJ104

D'ble. They're in heap big trouble. You have the majority of the points and cover in all the suits. Plan to lead a heart to eventually set up winners for partner in that suit.

(c) ♠ J864 ♥ 643 ♦ A972 ♣ Q4

Pass. Without the intervention, you would have raised partner to 2♥. But that is unwise now because 2♥ is unlikely to play well with any heart finesse losing. By passing here you are saying that you have a better chance of taking 7 tricks against 1NT than taking 8 tricks in a 2♥ contract.

(d) ♠ J843 ♥ Q106 ♦ A972 ♣ 64

2♥. Conversely on this hand, your ♥Q10x are well placed, sitting over RHO's heart stopper. 2♥ should have good chances, and if it makes, will earn a better score than defending 1NT.

(e) ♠ KQ3 ♥ 3 ♦ J109732 ♣ 864

2♦. Shows a weakish hand with long diamonds. Partner should pass this 9 times out of 10, and on the 10th time, he should probably pass as well.

(f) ♠ 64 ♥ 3 ♦ KJ932 ♣ QJ864

2NT. A curve ball. A 2NT bid here cannot logically be natural: with 10-12 HCP, you would double 1NT instead. So what else could it be but "unusual" for the minors?

CONGRESS RESULTS**RACV Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 C. Ding – D. Nie
- 2 R. Kingham – A. Rose
- 3 H. Smith – R. Stuart

Albury Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 J. Ebery – K. Frazer
- 2 S. Klofa – R. Gallus
- 3 K. Colbert – A. Hewat

Swiss Teams

- 1 A. St Clair, D. Harley, S. Klofa, R. Gallus
- 2 A. De Livera, G. Kozakos, P. Reynolds, D. Appleton
- 3 K. French, G. Johnson, C. Arul, K. Nainanayake

Warrnambool Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 S. Klofa – R. Gallus
- 2 J. Hackett – K. French
- 3 D. Harley – D. Newlands

Restricted Swiss Pairs

- 1 A. Laslett – M. Vanderhorst
- 2 S. Sherwood – J. Sherwood
- 3 A. Shiels – N. Hill

Swiss Teams

- 1 S. Klofa, R. Gallus, D. Newlands, D. Harley
- 2 J. Barbour, G. Nicholson, F. Vearing, G. Johnson
- 3 T. Haley, L. Chan, D. Macneil, W. Cousins

Bairnsdale Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 K. French – C. Arul
- 2 W. Robin – L. Grant
- 3 S. Collins – C. Chakravorty

Swiss Teams

- 1 B. Mill, T. Gariepy, C. Chakravorty, S. Collins,
- 2 A. Drury, J. Kuiper, C. Manley, L. Seychell
- 3 G. Campbell, S. Varga, J. Banks, A. Kearon

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 19 (October 1)*

1 G. Nicholson – J. Barbour (Phillip Island)

Event 20 (October 16)

1 C. Leach – K. Frazer (Yarra Valley)

3 H. Snashall – C. Lachman (VBA)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS**South Gippsland Congress**Saturday 5th November, 12 pm: Swiss PairsSunday 6th November, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Dakers Centre
Smith Street
Leongatha

Contact: Neville Chapman, 0427 392 979

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>**Tivoli Congress**Saturday 26th November, 10 am: Buttler PairsSunday 27th November, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue VBA
131 Poath Rd
Murrumbeena

Contact: Leeron Branicki, 0412 884 446

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Victorian Bridge Association
invites you to the

2016 Summer Congress

to be held

Saturday & Sunday 11th & 12th December

In conjunction with the

Victorian State Under 200 MP*
Swiss Pairs Championship to be held on

Sunday 12th December**Commencing at 10.00 a.m.****Yarra Valley Mini-Congress**Saturday 17th December, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue Yarra Valley Bridge Club
6 Laurence Grove
Ringwood East

Contact: Christine Parkin, 0411 025 052 or
cparkin-82@hotmail.com

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>**RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS****State**

Larry Allender	Northern
Helen Fitzpatrick	Geelong
Oliver Goodman	Melbourne
Thomas John Herrick	Bendigo
David Hudson	Sale
Karen Klym	Phillip Island
George Mackenzie	Bendigo
Bernard O'Dea	Ocean Grove
Max Richards	Benalla
Corry van Diemen	Berwick

***State**

Jenny Gray	Waverley
Bruce Headey	Moonee Valley
Libby Persson	Waverley
Bernie Rose	Dendy Park

National

Louise McKenna	Dendy Park
Helge Pedersen	Northern
Mary Prowse	Wodonga
Ethne Ramage	Bendigo
Jimmy Zhang	Ballarat

***National**

John Brazier	Bairnsdale
Margaret Castle	Sale
Lanny Chan	Moonee Valley
Jan Rothlisberger	Waverley

Life

Julie Farmer	Lakes Entrance
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Bronze Life

Mike Walden	Waverley
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Silver Life

Wojciech Sieradzinski	Frankston
Alex Smith	Ballarat
Bill Young	Mornington

Gold Life

Faye Rowlands	South Gippsland
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TOWARDS AN IMPROVED CONGRESS EXPERIENCE

What do you like to do on the weekend? Just about every weekend, there will be a Bridge Congress being held somewhere in the state. There are around 56 active affiliated bridge clubs in Victoria, so this matches up well with weekend congresses: each club can apply for one annual congress.

Congresses deliver many benefits to bridge. They are an opportunity for clubs to showcase themselves, and earn some money into the bargain. Players get to travel to new places, meet new people, play bridge for a day in a more serious environment than usual, and earn those valuable red masterpoints.

Meeting new people is a two-edged sword. Almost all bridge players are nice people, but at the table, some are not-so-nice. At a congress, if you encounter a not-so-nice one, you are stuck with him or her for about 8 boards, i.e. an hour. This can be a huge problem and a strong disincentive for players to attend congresses. Not-so-niceness can range from vague unpleasantness up to genuine abusive behaviour to either their partner, or you, the opponents.

There's not much one can do about vague unpleasantness, but outright abuse needs to be stamped out. To this end, the VBA has recently introduced a set of regulations to deal with breaches of the code of conduct. These regulations have been endorsed by all clubs that run congresses. They can be viewed at

<http://vba.asn.au/VBADocuments/Management/Congress%20D&E%20Regulations.pdf>.

If you witness abusive behaviour, or any other breach of the code of conduct, you should report it. This is as easy as sending email to the VBA Secretary, at secretary@vba.asn.au (or write to the VBA at 131 Poath Rd, Murrumbeena, 3163). You must do this within 7 days of the event.

Your complaint will be investigated and if sustained, a mandatory penalty applied. For a first offence, this usually involves a warning; for subsequent offences a period of suspension from all congresses will occur.

You probably won't know whether the abusive behaviour represents a first or a subsequent offence, and that is the point. The regulations will deal firmly and fairly with the miscreant, but they cannot be applied until complaints are lodged.

Please take advantage of these new regulations: they form a genuine attempt by authorities to ensure that congress bridge can be a more enjoyable experience for everyone.

One last thing: this article has been written from the perspective of players who are on the receiving end of abuse. But could you be one of those who are the instigators of abuse? It is very easy to fall into the trap of poor behaviour: bridge is an intensely emotional game that continually tests our demeanour. So at a congress (as with playing anywhere), make a conscious effort to be pleasant to your partner and your opponents, no matter what disaster might befall you on any particular hand.

... Bill Jacobs

Tony Bemrose Insurance Brokers

We are delighted to announce that **TBIB, *The Bridge Insurance Brokers*, sponsors of the Victor Champion Cup have pledged their ongoing sponsorship through to 2018.**

TBIB are the insurance brokers to the ABF, the VBA, many of our member clubs and indeed many in the Bridge community.

Have TBIB check your premiums for;

- Home and contents,
- Motor vehicle,
- Investment property,
- Business, or,
- Travel Insurance.

Contact us 07 3252 5254 and let us do the comparison for you.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Earlier in this bulletin, we took a forensic look at this auction:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♥	1NT	?

and discussed how responder should react to the strong 1NT overcall. Now let's tease things out a step further, and examine two similar situations:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♣	1NT	?

and

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♦	1NT	?

Similar ... but different. Here partner's suit is more suspect, particularly the 1♣ opening. Moreover, RHO has advertised length and strength in that suit, making it even less likely that you want to compete in it. Meanwhile, what would you bid, in either of these two auctions, with:

♠ K10xx ♥ QJxxx ♦ x ♣ xxx

You would like to search for a major suit fit, but it's not obvious how you can safely do so.

Here's a nice gadget, for those who feel capable of adding some artificiality to their methods:

After a 1NT overcall of a 1♣ or 1♦ opening, 2♠ shows the majors.

You would normally have at least 5-4 shape to unleash this bid.

This means 2♣ is not a possible destination for your side, to which I say: big deal! If you really do have a club fit, then the opponents are going to outbid you anyway, in some other suit. Meanwhile, getting to show some length in both major suits could be the key to winning a partscore battle.

There is no question that this tip is not for children, but the sheer logic behind it is compelling.

**IS THIS A RECORD?
Rosemary Hare - Melton BC**

Di Johnson (pictured below) played bridge in South Australia in her younger years and attained the status of Local Master. As can happen, life takes over and she had not played since 1988.

When she approached to join the Melton Bridge Club this year we were agreeably surprised to find out that not only could she retain her old number, but she could be reinstated with her Local Master status.

It just shows that Bridge is a game that one can come back to even after 28 years.



THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dlr: South ♠ Q542
 Vul: all ♥ K65
 ♦ 764
 ♣ K32

N
S

♠ AK
 ♥ AQJ107
 ♦ AKJ53
 ♣ A

West	North	East	South
			2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads ♣10. You win and play the ♥Q and ♥J, but West discards a club on the second round of the suit.

Now what? Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

♠ J9876 ♥ 4 ♦ Q1082 ♣ 1095	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 103 ♥ 9832 ♦ 9 ♣ QJ8764	♠ Q542 ♥ K65 ♦ 764 ♣ K32 ♠ AK ♥ AQJ107 ♦ AKJ53 ♣ A
N						
W E						
S						

You could unblock the spades and play a third round of trumps to dummy's king. Then if the ♣K and ♠Q stand up, you have 12 tricks. Of course the bad break in hearts makes it more likely that there will also be a bad break in one of the black suits, so this approach is not without risk.

And there is a superior play, which depends only on the diamonds not dividing 5-0. Play ♥A and draw East's last trump. Now unblock the ♠A and ♠K.

Finally the pièce de résistance. Play ♦A and then a *low diamond*. The opponent who wins this will either have to play to dummy's winners, or lead a diamond back into your suit.

SYDNEY SPRING NATIONALS

Congratulations to Ben Thompson, who playing with Adelaide's Phillip Markey, performed strongly at the recent Spring Nationals.

First they qualified for the semi-finals, losing a close match to the eventual winners. And then they backed up with second place in the Dick Cummings Open Pairs.

Vu-graph quotes from Edgar Kaplan

"To equal the result in the other room, he needs 16 overtricks."

"His lead was the middle from the top of nothing."

THE HARI KARI COUP Ian Mansell

♠ J65 ♥ 73 ♦ A8763 ♣ Q76	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ Q10942 ♥ K62 ♦ 10 ♣ K852	♠ 73 ♥ Q10854 ♦ 942 ♣ J107 ♠ AK8 ♥ AJ9 ♦ KQJ5 ♣ A43
N						
W E						
S						

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	2NT
Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

South opens 2NT and North bids a natural 3♥. If South had bid 4♥¹ there would be no story; instead South bid 3NT, and now has to make 9 tricks.

West leads a small diamond, ducked by North, and East's ♦10 is won by the ♦J. Declarer now has 8 tricks: 2 spades, 2 hearts, 3 diamonds and a club. Where is the 9th trick to come from?

The potential for the 9th trick must lie in the hearts – indeed there is the possibility of 10 tricks if declarer can persuade a defender to take the ♥K prematurely. South must therefore lead the ♥J and *overtake with the ♥Q*, enticing East to win this trick. You must overtake in dummy so that you can subsequently finesse East for the ♥K. If you don't overtake then, when you play the ♥9, East will win and you will be defeated!

North must duck the ♥K, and also must duck when hearts are played next from dummy. By doing so, declarer is prevented from setting up the hearts for an overtrick!

It is not often that you can persuade a defender to commit hari kari by not taking a trick to which they are entitled!

¹ Indeed, South should elect to play 4♥ for the exact reason demonstrated here: that partner's hearts (in a weak hand) might wither in a notrump contract ... *Ed*