

# Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

December 2016

Editor: Bill Jacobs

## THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson

I quickly glanced at the ABF Masterpoint Centre October newsletter last month and noticed – to my happy surprise – that Victoria has been the fastest growing bridge state over the last year with membership up 3.3%. I was surprised because South Australia has been growing at around 7% a year for the previous 3 or 4 years (but dropped just behind us at 1.9% this year).

It's not just more membership by the way; it's also more playing. Congress numbers, for example, are up 12.7% this year.

As President, I can confidently say that those excellent growth figures have almost nothing to do with me! We work hard at the VBA on providing infrastructure and support but we can't be there on the ground all over Victoria. Across the 60 Victorian clubs, there are a lot of very hard-working volunteers and professionals making that growth happen, sometimes just one new player at a time. To all those people, thank you for keeping our beautiful game not just alive but growing – and congratulations on your well-deserved success.

2016 holds some fantastic bridge memories for me personally, and I hope yours did too. As we head into 2017, I'd like to wish everyone a safe and happy festive season, and a new year full of great bridge memories-to-be!

## 2017 OPEN TEAM PLAYOFF

For the second successive year, a Victorian pair has qualified for the Australian Open Team. Congratulations to Peter Hollands and Justin Howard for winning the Playoff.

They will represent Australia in the 2017 Bermuda Bowl, to be held in August in Lyon, France, and the Asian Pacific Championships in Seoul, South Korea.



Justin Howard, Peter Hollands, David Beauchamp, Matthew Thomson, Andrew Peake, Peter Gill

## NEWS FROM THE VBA COUNCIL

### VBA Council 2017

At the 2016 AGM, the following were elected to the VBA Council for 2017:

President	Ben Thompson
Vice President	Dale Sheather
Treasurer	Neil Ewart
Secretary	Kim Frazer
Councillor	Christopher Leach
Councillor	David Morgan
Councillor	Michael Phillips
Special Councillor	Helen McAdam
Special Councillor	Richard Giles
Special Councillor	Rob Quirk

The VBA thank out-going councillor Jenny Thompson for her many years of service on the VBA Council, and the Interim Committee.

### Match and Tournament Committee

MTC members Paula Schroor, Arthur Robbins and David Morgan have also announced their resignations from the MTC after many years of service. The VBA thanks Paula, Arthur and David for their years of service on the committee. The incoming VBA Council will be reviewing membership of all its committees at its first council meeting with new appointments being announced early in the new year.

## FOR STARTERS

In a matchpoint duplicate, you are the dealer, with no one vulnerable, and hold:

♠ AQ10842   ♥ 4   ♦ A32   ♣ 1076

Immediately, you have a decision to make. It's your call.

There are three possibilities: 1♠, 2♠ and Pass.

Let's rule out the pass. With this nice hand, you should absolutely take the opportunity of striking the first blow and making a bid. It would be a dereliction of responsibility to meekly pass just because you can't make up your mind between 1♠ and 2♠.

In deciding between the two, here are a few tips:

- The rule of 20, a simple and effective guideline for deciding whether to open at the one level. Add the length of your two longest suits to your HCP, and if it is at least 20, then open at the one-level.

*On this hand, 6+3+10 = 19, so it does not conform to the rule of 20.*

- Defensive values. When you open at the one-level, partner will expect you to provide some tricks in defence, should the auction get competitive.

*On this hand, you have two solid defensive tricks, the two aces, entirely suitable for a one-level opening.*

- Vulnerability. If vulnerable, partner will expect solid values when you open a weak two. If non-vulnerable, he will cater for a dodgy hand for a weak two. So with solid values, non-vulnerable, lean towards the one-level opener.

*On this hand, you are non-vulnerable, so partner may not expect such good values if you open with a weak two.*

Two out of three factors suggest a one-level opening with this hand, but you could go either way without being reported to the Bidding Police.

Let's say you open 1♠. The auction continues:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♠
2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Partner's lead is ♠9 and you see this:

4♥ by South	♠ KJ5 ♥ 1093 ♦ KJ9 ♣ KJ42	♠9	♠ AQ10842 ♥ 4 ♦ A32 ♣ 1076
----------------	------------------------------------	----	-------------------------------------

N
W      E
S

The ♠J is played from dummy and you win ♠Q, declarer following ♠3. Now what?

First of all, partner's ♠9 indicates shortage: either a doubleton or singleton spade. With three little spades, partner should lead a smaller one.

It is a total fallacy to lead "top of partner's suit". It will trigger this sort of situation: if partner has three little spades, then it would be an error to try to play another spade here, as declarer would ruff.

So a second spade is cashing. If partner started with a singleton, you can give him a ruff, and take the ♦A to beat the contract.

If partner has a doubleton, you *could* try to get him in to play his second spade through dummy's remaining ♠Kx, but is that necessary? If partner has a trick, you have four tricks anyway, so this wouldn't be necessary.

A better plan is to take the ♠A next, and play a third spade: partner may be able to overruff declarer, potentially taking a trump trick which otherwise would not have won.

You play the ♠A, and both partner and declarer follow. All the spades have gone.

Anything to consider before you play the third spade?

Yes, indeed. Take the precaution of cashing the ♦A now, before the mice get at it.

The full deal shows you why:

♠ 97	♠ KJ5	♠ AQ10842
♥ J75	♥ 1093	♥ 4
♦ Q107654	♦ KJ9	♦ A32
♣ 85	♣ KJ42	♣ 1076
	♠ 63	
	♥ AKQ862	
	♦ 8	
	♣ AQ93	

If you play the third spade immediately, declarer will throw his singleton diamond. Your ♦A disappears in a puff of smoke.

*Points to remember:*

- With a hand that might be too strong for a weak two but not strong enough for a one-level opening, be a man, or woman, and make a decision between the two. Don't wimp it out and pass.
- When leading partner's bid suit at trick one, make the correct "count" lead. In particular, lead a low card (or MUD card) with length. Then partner will know that if you lead a high card, it's going to be from shortage.
- You can develop a trump trick when none is deserved by leading a side suit where both declarer and partner are void.

In this deal, partner's ♥Jxx is not strictly a trick: they will be drawn by declarer's ace, king and queen. But when you lead a spade, that holding is promoted into a trick. Either declarer trumps low and is overruffed, or he trumps high, and the ♥J will now take a trick by force.

- Disaster lurks at every turn. When you're about to make a brilliant play, such as the third round of spades here, take another look at the hand. Then to be safe, one further look.

**TEST YOUR BIDDING**

**New suit at the one-level**

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	?

This auction, although a model of economy, can present some interesting issues for a partnership.

First, how many clubs does opener promise for this sequence? Some say: as few as originally promised: opener is just showing a 4-card heart suit while the showing is good.

Others decide that opener must have at least 4 clubs here. With, say, 3-4-3-3 or 4-4-2-3 shape, he rebids 1NT instead of 1♥, and a checkback mechanism is used to uncover a major suit fit. That's a topic for another day.

There's no right or wrong answer to the 'how many clubs' issue: it just has to be agreed. Both approaches have their pros and cons.

And what about a 1♠ rebid by responder here? Is that a natural bid, or could it be fourth-suit-forcing, showing a game-forcing hand but without clear direction.

A common and sensible agreement on this question is to use 1♠ as a simple natural and forcing bid, and a jump to 2♠ is a fourth suit forcing mechanism.

Having contemplated these questions, and perhaps discussed them with your favourite partner, choose responder's rebid with:

- (a) ♠ K1062 ♥ 853 ♦ A972 ♣ 64
- (b) ♠ 1062 ♥ 853 ♦ A9732 ♣ K6
- (c) ♠ 1062 ♥ Q53 ♦ AK972 ♣ A6
- (d) ♠ AJ2 ♥ Q5 ♦ QJ72 ♣ A643
- (e) ♠ K62 ♥ 1053 ♦ J97532 ♣ 4
- (f) ♠ K1062 ♥ AJ53 ♦ J972 ♣ 4

Solutions over page.

## TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♣	Pass	1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	?

(a) ♠ K1062 ♥ 853 ♦ A972 ♣ 64

1♠. A natural bid, and why not? Partner could be, say, 4414 shape, and you have a perfectly good 2♠ contract. More likely, partner won't have spades and will make a natural bid next, and unless it is a jump bid, you will contentedly pass.

(b) ♠ 1062 ♥ 853 ♦ A9732 ♣ K6

1NT. What are the alternatives? A heart raise on ♥853 is revolting. Rebidding the diamonds on that moth-eaten suit is even worse. 1NT, showing 6-9 HCP and no known fit, is what's left. Don't be put off by the lack of a stopper in the unbid suit, spades. Partner usually provides one, and even if he doesn't, the world does not come to an end if the opponents run off 4 or even 5 spades in a 1NT contract.

(c) ♠ 1062 ♥ Q53 ♦ AK972 ♣ A6

2♠. The perfect fourth-suit-forcing-to-game bid. With 13 HCP, you must go for a game, but where? For 3NT purposes (as distinct from 1NT on hand (b)), it's worth checking out whether you have a spade stopper.

(d) ♠ AJ2 ♥ Q5 ♦ QJ72 ♣ A643

3NT. What are you waiting for? 14 HCP, everything covered: 3NT it is. A club fit? Forget it. 3NT is where the points are: match-, IM- and master-.

(e) ♠ K62 ♥ 1053 ♦ J97532 ♣ 4

Pass. It was a bit naughty (but sensible) to bid over 1♣ with only 4 HCP. Pass partner's forcing bid, on the basis that 1♥ is a better contract than 1♣. On this hand, two wrongs make a right.

(f) ♠ K1062 ♥ AJ53 ♦ J972 ♣ 4

3♥. Reveal the heart fit. 9 HCP, but 12 total points, this is worth an invitational jump raise to 3♥.

## NATIONAL EVENT RESULTS

### GNOT Chris Diment Trophy Best Country Team



The Geelong All-Stars: Arthur Robbins, Denise Newland, Doug Newlands, Gary Ridgway

Congratulations also go to Jill Magee and Terry Strong who won the GNOT Swiss Pairs in a field of 92.

## STATE EVENT RESULTS

### Victorian Pennant (Open Teams)

- 1 J. Ebery, L. Gold, R. Fruewirth, W. Jacobs, B. Wein
- 2 N. Ewart, D. Beckett, A. Macready-Bryan, R. van Riel, D. Smart, D. Morgan,
- 3 J. Yang, V. Zhang, K. Zhang, C. Ding

### Victorian Swiss Pairs

- 1 N. Ewart – D. Beckett
- 2 K. Muntz – L. Gold
- 3 P. Schroor – D. Sheather

## CONGRESS RESULTS

### South Gippsland Congress

#### Swiss Pairs

- 1 C. Senior – G. Mealyea
- 2 C. Arul – S. Selvarajal
- 3 J. Ranson – J. Ebery

#### Swiss Teams

- 1 P. Hill, J. Hill, S. Murray-White, G. Whiting
- 2 C. Senior, G. Mealyea, S. Hall, M. Lambert
- 3 S. Thorne, K. Thorne, C. Arul, R. Ellery

**Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club Congress**

*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 A. Hegedus- A. Mill
- 2 D. Yoffa – D. Happell
- 3 S. Ozenir – B. A’Beckett

**Tivoli Congress**

*Butler Pairs*

- 1 M. Gurfinkiel – S. Klofa
- 2 I. Hamilton – J. Atkinson
- 3 F. Vearing – G. Johnson

*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 A. Hegedus – J. Howard
- 2 R. Ellery – C. Arul
- 3 S. White – R. Berlinski

**UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS**

Victorian Bridge Association  
 invites you to the  
**2016 Summer Congress**  
 to be held  
**Saturday & Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> December**  
**commencing at 10.00 a.m.**  
 in conjunction with the  
**Victorian State Under 200 MP**  
**Swiss Pairs Championship to be held on**  
**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December**  
*(Category winners in the Under 200 MP*  
*Championship will receive free entry into*  
*various Novice events at the Summer*  
*Festival of Bridge in Canberra)*

**Gardenvale Congress**

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> December – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> January  
 Multiple events

Venue Gardenvale Bridge Club  
 20 Spink St  
 Brighton

Contact: Leeron Branicki, 0412 884 446

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

**Victorian Simultaneous Pairs**

It’s on again! The VBA will be running this event in 2017 from April 22 to May 12. The format will be basically the same as in the past but there will be no final.

Prizes will be given to the best pair in each of the three weekly sessions. As well, overall prizes will be awarded for the top three placegetters (combined results over the three weeks).

The pair finishing first overall will be offered free entry into one of the Pairs events at the 2017 Victor Champion Cup in whichever category they qualify for. A great prize and a good reason for clubs to participate.

Further details regarding regulations will be distributed to all clubs by the end of January.



**THE TWELFTH TRICK**

Dir: East ♠ 65  
 Vul: all ♥ AQ4  
 ♦ AK8762  
 ♣ K8

N
S

♠ AK1042  
 ♥ KJ1093  
 ♦ 93  
 ♣ 6

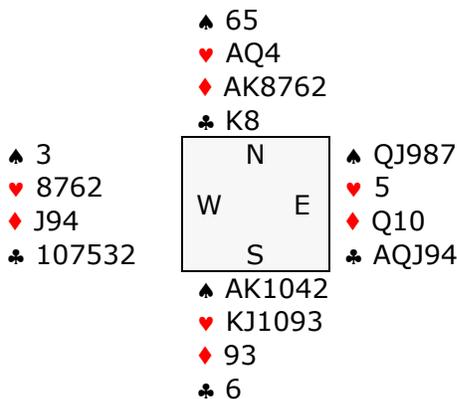
West	North	East	South
		1♠	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♥	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads ♠3, an obvious singleton, to the ♠J and ♠A.

There will be no problem if both red suits divide 3-2 (you can establish the diamonds, and then draw trumps ending in dummy), but what if they don’t?

Solution over page.

**THE TWELFTH TRICK**



There's not much you can do about a bad diamond break, but a bad trump break can be dealt with.

Play three rounds of diamonds, ruffing the third one high. Now play ♥K and ♥A. If hearts divide, draw the last trump and take your overtrick.

If hearts are 4-1, play a winning diamond, discarding your club. It will be ruffed, but you can then regain the lead, probably by trumping a club, and draw the last trump. Two winning diamonds remain in dummy, on which you discard your two low spades, and then you can finesse in spades to claim your contract.



**IT'S THE SYSTEM!  
Bill Jacobs**

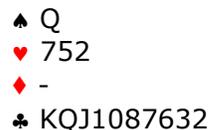
One of the hardest bids for novices to get their heads around is the 1NT response to partner's opening bid. This shows 6-9 HCP, no support for partner's suit, and no 4+ card suit they could show at the one level.

The reason it's hard is that notrump bids usually depict *balanced* hands, but this one says no such thing. It's a negative sort of bid: no support, no one-level suit, no 10+ HCP. This means it must often be bid with an unbalanced hand.

Try this one, from the recent Australian Open Team Playoff final.

Partner	You
1♠	?

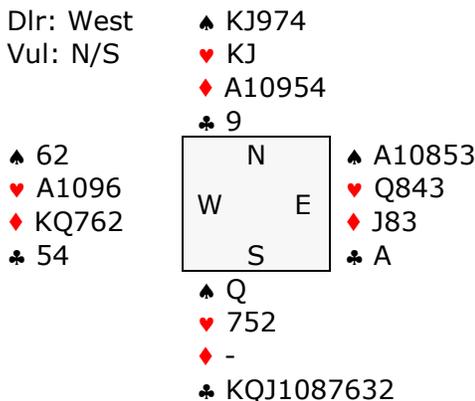
Your hand:



Yes, that's a *nine*-card club suit. Let's see, 6-9 HCP, no support for partner, no suit that can be bid at the one-level. Simon says: bid 1NT.

Could anything be more ridiculous than that?

Well, that is precisely what Peter Hollands did. And here is the entire deal:

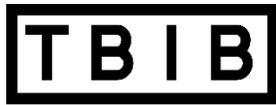


West	North <i>Howard</i>	East	South <i>Hollands</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Peter followed the system to the letter: he responded 1NT, non-forcing, then revealed his long club suit when Justin made another bid. I don't think I have ever seen a more disciplined auction in my life.

3♣ made an overtrick. At the other table, South could not avoid the lure of the long suit and the vulnerable game at IMPs. He responded 2♣ and rebid 5♣, down one.

It would have been wonderful if this result was the difference between winning and losing the match, but "unfortunately" Peter and Justin's team in fact won by 47 imps.



**Tony Bemrose  
Insurance Brokers**

## TBIB Tips for Travellers

1. **CHECK YOUR PASSPORT AND APPLY FOR ANY NECESSARY VISAS.**  
Ensure your Passport is still current and check to see if you require a Visa to enter the country.
2. **GET VACCINATED AND STOCK UP ON MEDICINE.**  
Speak to your Doctor to make sure you obtain any recommended vaccinations and also have enough of your medication for the trip. Check with your Doctor to ensure that your medications are lawful to carry at your intended destination.
3. **CHECK FOR TRAVEL WARNINGS/ADVISORIES AND REGISTER YOUR TRIP.**  
Visit the Smart Traveller website [www.smarttraveller.gov.au](http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au) for up-to-date travel warnings. Also take time to register your trip, as this may assist in locating you in an emergency.
4. **PREPARE YOUR FINANCES.**  
Make sure you sufficient funds available in the currency of the country you visiting. Advise your bank of your travel arrangements so they can keep track of transactions.
5. **MAKE COPIES OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS.**  
Copy your travel documents and keep the copy separate to the originals.
6. **OBTAIN AN INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT.**  
If you intend driving overseas, check to see if you need an international permit.
7. **TRAVEL INSURANCE**  
Make sure your travel insurance offers the cover you need, including cover for the part of the world you are travelling to, unlimited medical cover, the need for pre-existing medical conditions to be covered and that you have cover to refund your money refunded if

your trip has to be cancelled, postponed, or cut short for any number of reasons.

TBIB can assist you with all your travel enquires. Contact us on 07 3252 5242, [www.tbib.com.au](http://www.tbib.com.au) email [steveveil@tbib.com.au](mailto:steveveil@tbib.com.au) or [joshuadejun@tbibn.com.au](mailto:joshuadejun@tbibn.com.au) and enquire about the ABF Travel Insurance Policy, exclusively for ABF members and Family.



### RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

#### State

Barbara Benson	Melbourne
Trudy Broeders	Ballarat
Lorraine Dullard	Bendigo
Deirdre Finemore	Waverley
John Finemore	Waverley
Megan Glenn	Waverley
Rosemary Kinna	Ballarat
Rhonda Lyons	Ballarat
Michael Mandeltort	Berwick
Kenneth McKenzie	South Gippsland
Maryanne Slatter	Mornington
Margaret Spinks	Echuca

#### \*State

Ann Gibbs	Bairnsdale
Peter Lardy	Mornington
Cheryl Ogilvy	Waverley

#### National

Warren Cousins	Waverley
David Hawkins	Traralgon

#### \*National

Janet Dale	Ballarat
Marina Darling	Waverley
Kumara Nainanayake	Waverley
Dan Phelan	VBA
Ming Zhang	VBA

#### \*\* National

Fatma Ahmet	Moonee Valley
Faye Bell	Geelong
June Clarke	Traralgon

#### Silver Life

Anne Gibson	South Gippsland
Gordon McRobert	Moonee Valley

#### Silver Grand

Peter Hollands	Waverley
----------------	----------

## **Do you want to represent Victoria?**

After consulting with players and clubs from all over Victoria the VBA is changing the way Victorian teams are selected. As foreshadowed in the September newsletter, it will now be much easier for players who are not able to play evening events at the VBA to qualify for the selection trials to determine the Open, Women's and Seniors teams.

### **Women and Seniors**

Both Women and Seniors will use an identical two-stage process, which includes a "Last Train" event for any pair that was unable to play in, or failed to qualify from, Stage One.

Stage One: Monday evenings (13 and 27 February, 6 March) (*Women and Seniors*)

Last Train: Saturday 25 March (*Women*)  
Sunday 26 Match (*Seniors*)

Final: Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 April (*Women*)  
Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 April (*Seniors*)

For both the Women and Seniors, the final will have 12 pairs as follows:

- top 6 pairs from Stage One
- top 3 pairs from the Last Train
- 3 pairs nominated by each of the three regions

### **Open**

There will be a weekend playoff contested by four teams.

These four teams will play a 64-board semi-final on Saturday 8 April. The two winners will then contest a 64-board final on Sunday 9 April.

The four teams are:

*State teams champions:* The winners of the Pennant final held on November 20, 2016.

*Butler:* The three highest-placed eligible pairs from the Butler (Wednesday evenings; qualifying: January 25, February 1 and 8; final: February 15, March 1 and 8).

*Congress VQP team:* This team will be self-selected by players who have won VQPs in congresses during 2016 (note: there will no longer be VQPs awarded for state events held at the VBA). These players must nominate as a team of four, five or six by January 31. If more than one team nominates then the team with the highest number of VQPs will qualify.

*Victorian Representative Qualifying Pairs:* This event, to be held on Saturday April 1 and Sunday April 2, will be open to any pair in which neither player has already qualified for one of the other three teams, and which meets the criteria below:

- The pair has been selected as a regional pairs representative; or
- both partners have either
  - won at least 1 VQP in a Congress during 2016; or
  - placed in the top two in any state event held at the VBA that concluded after March 7, 2016 or before March 31, 2017 or qualified for the Pennant round of six.