

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

August 2017

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



On the 8th of July, the VBA hosted a Pro-Am Development Day. Laura Ginnan, our tenacious and tireless convener, wanted to have an Under 150 and an Under 1000 masterpoint section and I thought that was great idea. Then she told me she wanted to have both pairs and teams, and a celebrity speaker. To be completely honest I thought she'd gone mad.

However, Laura was determined and I thought it would be great if she pulled it off so I said "good luck" and crossed my fingers. I don't know what I was worried about. Laura produced an absolutely fantastic day, thoroughly enjoyed by over 100 bridge nuts from all across the experience spectrum.

These sorts of days are so important for bridge. They show people bridge ideas they haven't seen before, but more importantly they bring people together. Just for me, it's really nice afterwards to be able to walk into a different bridge game and be able to chat with some people I already know, especially people I've had a game with.

PS ... We recently launched the new VBA website with all the information and services you're used to. Like every IT project ever, we're having a few teething issues, but it's a much cleaner, more modern, more robust and easier to manage format. I hope you like it!



100 bridge nuts

FOR STARTERS

Here's a common situation that leads a lot of starters astray. You have this hand:

♠ 7 ♥ KJ10984 ♦ Q62 ♣ 1043

Your partner deals and opens 1♠, and the next hand passes. Your move.

With 6 HCP, you owe partner a bid. One would like to bid the hearts here, but no can do. To respond 2♥, a two-over-one bid, Standard American bidding requires you to have at least 10 HCP. So what to do?

The answer is that you must bid 1NT, the most anti-intuitive bid in the game. 1NT is a coded bid; it says three things:

1. I have between 6 and 9 HCP
2. I do not have support for your suit (in this case, this means fewer than three spades)
3. I do not have at least 4 cards in any suit that could be bid at the 1-level.

The last of these is not relevant to this auction: after partner's 1♠, there is no suit that could be bid at the 1-level. But if partner had opened 1♥, then 1NT would deny 4 spades; if partner had opened 1♦, 1NT denies 4 hearts or 4 spades, and so on.

Nowhere does it say that this 1NT bid shows a balanced hand, and indeed, much of the time it won't be.

The auction continues:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	?

Now what?

Partner's 2♦ is natural and non-forcing: he has at least 4 diamonds to go with his 5+ spades and around 12 up to about 17 HCP.

You could pass 2♦, but now is an opportunity to reveal your excellent heart suit: this 2♥ bid shows long hearts (at least 5 good ones), not much interest in partner's suits, and

crucially, the same 6-9 HCP that you promised with the 1NT response.

Such a bid often ends the auction, as both opener and responder are quite limited in strength, but not here:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♥	Pass	?

Partner rather likes your hearts, and he is inviting you to bid to a game. Since he has heart support, and has already bid diamonds, he likely has about 5-3-4-1 distribution, and around 15-17 HCP.

Do you bid 4♥?

You probably should. Whilst you are dead minimum within your 6-9 HCP range, there is a lot to like about your hand. It has good distribution, an excellent heart suit, and the ♦Q fits well with partner's length there. Or put another way: your three small clubs opposite partner's likely singleton represents no duplication of values.

You try 4♥, LHO leads the ♠K, and this is what you see.

♠K led

♠ A9843

♥ AQ7

♦ KJ43

♣ Q

N
S

♠ 7

♥ KJ10984

♦ Q62

♣ 1043

Not bad. There are only two obvious losers, the minor suit aces. Of course that doesn't necessarily translate into 10 or 11 winners. How do you play it?

This is not the hand on which to draw trumps. Before doing so, you want to ruff some of your club losers with dummy's trumps. So win the ♠A and play a club.

Suppose the opponents win and play a trump. Win that in your hand, ruff a club, ruff a spade, ruff a club (with dummy's last trump), ruff a spade, and draw the remaining trumps. Now you can play on diamonds, scooping up 11 tricks.

The full deal:

♠ A9843			
♥ AQ7			
♦ KJ43			
♣ Q			
♠ KQ	N	♠ J10652	
♥ 653	W E	♥ 2	
♦ 10975	S	♦ A8	
♣ AJ87		♣ K9652	
		♠ 7	
		♥ KJ10984	
		♦ Q62	
		♣ 1043	

Points to remember:

- It is verboten to bid a new suit at the 2-level, over your partner's 1-level opening, without 10 HCP. Instead, you must either support partner if you can, bid a new suit at the 1-level, or if all else fails **bid 1NT**.

Your hand is not balanced?
Too bad. You have to bid 1NT.

You don't like playing notrumps?
Too bad. You have to bid 1NT.

Having bid 1NT, you have licence to bid a long suit if the opportunity arises, protected by the fact that you have already limited the strength of your hand to 6-9 HCP.

- Listen to partner's auction. He depicted short clubs: that helps you evaluate your hand. The ♦Q was a valuable card; but if it had been the ♣Q instead, it would have been worthless opposite partner's shortage. In that scenario, you would have passed 3♥.
- You may have to delay drawing trumps if you first need to ruff losers in the short trump hand.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

After the 1NT response

Nil vulnerable, matchpoint duplicate

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

Let's look at followups to the infamous 1NT response.

Just like in the For Starters, you have shown 6-9 HCP without spades; partner has at least 5 spades, and at least 4 hearts, and around 12-17 HCP.

2♥ is not a forcing bid, so you can certainly leave him there. If you go back to 2♠, that says much the same thing, but you think that 2♠ might be a better contract than 2♥.

If you like the hearts, and think there might be a game there, you can support the suit, to either the 3 or 4 level. These bids guarantee at least 4 hearts, as partner has only promised you 4.

If you don't like hearts or spades, but do have a long minor suit, feel free to bid it. However it will need to be at least a 6-card suit, as you are introducing it at the 3-level.

That leaves various other bids, including 2NT, or 3♠. My advice ... avoid such bids like the plague. Neither of them are consistent with you having shown 6-9 HCP without spade support.

All right, let's practise:

- (a) ♠ 86 ♥ A962 ♦ J852 ♣ Q104
- (b) ♠ J6 ♥ A962 ♦ A852 ♣ 1043
- (c) ♠ 6 ♥ KJ9652 ♦ A852 ♣ 104
- (d) ♠ K6 ♥ J102 ♦ 852 ♣ A10843
- (e) ♠ 6 ♥ K2 ♦ QJ852 ♣ J10843
- (f) ♠ 86 ♥ 62 ♦ A43 ♣ QJ9843

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♥	Pass	?

(a) ♠ 86 ♥ A962 ♦ J852 ♣ Q104

Pass. We've found a fit. And arrived at our destination. There's not enough strength here to contemplate a game in hearts, so stay comfortably low at the 2-level.

(b) ♠ J6 ♥ A962 ♦ A852 ♣ 1043

3♥. It could be wrong, but this hand is too strong to give up on game. The two aces are golden, and even the ♠J could be useful. So invite partner to bid 4♥ with a maximum.

(c) ♠ 6 ♥ KJ9652 ♦ A852 ♣ 104

4♥. It could be wrong, but this hand is too strong to stay below the game level.

(d) ♠ K6 ♥ J102 ♦ 852 ♣ A10843

2♠. There is a guaranteed 7 card fit in both hearts and spades. Partner could have an extra card in each of those suits, but you don't know anything about that. So you could pass 2♥ or bid 2♠. On this hand, it might be worth keeping the bidding open, in case partner has extra values and/or extra length. You have maximum values, and would be happy to accept any invitational bid that partner might make.

(e) ♠ 6 ♥ K2 ♦ QJ852 ♣ J10843

Pass. This is nightmarish. Guessing to bid a minor suit is very unlikely to work out happily. So put an end to it all ... not shoot yourself - that would be an over-reaction - but let the auction die gracefully.

(f) 86 ♥ 62 ♦ A43 ♣ QJ9843

3♣. There are two choices: go back to 2♠, a known 7-card fit, or try your own suit. I recommend the latter, even though it could be opposite partner's singleton. It's often a good idea to play in the weak hand's long suit: the long suit will win some trump tricks, whilst partner's opener will supply the outside tricks. That's the theory, anyway.

CONGRESS RESULTS**Dendy Park Winter Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 R. Gallus – S. Weisz
- 2 R. Berlinski – H. Snashall
- 3 C. Arul – A. Paul

Berwick Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 K. Muntz – L. Gold
- 2 S. Klofa – P. Fent
- 3 P. Hill – J. Hill

Swiss Teams

- 1 D. Clarke, M. Clarke, R. Muir, I. Muir
- 2 A. Maluish, A. Mill, M. Allison, R. O'Dell
- 3 M. Callander, P. Corrigan, S. White, R. Berlinski

Yarrawonga Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 K. French – T. Gariepy
- 2 E. Underwood – R. Ho
- 3 A. Thomson – D. Morton

Swiss Teams

- 1 L. Carroll, A. Peirce, W. Leppard, M. McQueen-Thomson
- 2 P. Glover, B. Krishan, D. Brennan, J. Rava
- 3 T. Gariepy, K. French, C. Parkin, G. Johnson

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 13 (July 1)*

- 2 E. Ramshaw – T. Woodley (Ballarat)
- 3 M. Baker – L. Carroll (Echuca)

Event 24 (December 18)

- 2 J. Sullivan – A. Johnston (Sth Gippsland)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS**Knox Congress**

Saturday 5th August, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 6th August, 10 am: Matchpoint Pairs

Venue Bayswater Senior Citizens Centre
 Cnr Scoresby Rd & Mountain Hwy
 Bayswater

Contact: Clare Stratton, 0438 547 647

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Melbourne (Kew) Congress

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

Venue MCC Kew
 397 Barkers Rd
 Kew

Contact: Sandra Mansell, 9853 1449

Enter: <http://www.melbournebridge.com.au/>

Traralgon Congress

Saturday 19th August, 11 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 20th August, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Federation University
 Churchill Building
 3E Auditorium

Contact: Rhonda van Dyke, 0448 319 660

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Gardenvale GNOT Heat

Sunday 20th August, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Gardenvale Bridge Club
 20 Spinks St
 Brighton

Contact: Jeff Fust, 9530 6622

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>



RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Isabel Barned	U3A Knox
Neville Cook	Eastern
Ismael Gulec	Northern
Susan Napier	Bendigo
David Owen	Waverley
Kathryn Smith	Sth Gippsland
Albert Thomas	Phillip Island

*State

Elaine Bennett	Bendigo
Derek Poulton	Shepparton

National

Deborah Anglim	Phillip Island
Colin Campbell	Moonee Valley

Dinnie Downie	Deniliquin
Sylvia Gluck	Bridge Fanatics
Robert Jacobs	RACV
Vivienne Roche	Moonee Valley

*National

Margaret Barrett	Geelong
Warren Cousins	Waverley
Patricia Frost	Geelong
Louise McKenna	Dendy Park
Michael McTiernan	Dendy Park
Pamela Richardson	Waverley

**National

Penny Blankfield	Kooyong
Reginal Bond	Frankston
Barb Evans	Bendigo
Heather George	Moonee Valley
Trevor Haley	Moonee Valley

Life

Kerry Delcourt	Bendigo
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Bronze Life

John Adams	VBA
Sue Brink	Waverley
Shannon Irwin	Geelong
Ken Tierney	Traralgon

Gold Life

Michael Petrie	Waverley
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Grand

Ken Lee	Waverley
Andrew Macready-Bryan	Waverley
Anna StClair	Grand Prix

Silver Grand

Tania Gariepy	Moonee Valley
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THE TWELFTH TRICK

Dlr: South	♠ KQ4		
Vul: all	♥ A65		
	♦ KQ75		
	♣ A82		
♦ J led	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td> </tr> </table>	N	S
N			
S			
	♠ A1075		
	♥ Q82		
	♦ A		
	♣ KJ1053		

In a teams match, you find yourself declaring the fine contract of 6♣, on the lead of the ♦J. Plan the play.

Solution over page.

THE TWELFTH TRICK

	♠ KQ4	
	♥ A65	
	♦ KQ75	
	♣ A82	
♠ J832	N	♠ 96
♥ J104		♥ K973
♦ J1094		♦ 8632
♣ Q6	S	♣ 974
	♠ A1075	
	♥ Q82	
	♦ A	
	♣ KJ1053	

You can discard two hearts on the ♦KQ, so there is no problem in the red suits. But there is a possible club loser and you may need to do something about your fourth spade.

The solution is easy, if you think of it: you can ruff your fourth spade! Win the diamond and play the ♣A and ♣K. If all follow, you are home, even if the ♣Q is outstanding. Simply play on spades, planning to trump the fourth round with dummy's remaining club.

This deal is from the 2017 Open Team Playoffs. Ben Thompson, playing with Adelaide's Phil Markey, successfully negotiated 6♣. They were the only pair to bid and make a slam, two pairs attempting and going down in 6NT. The hand is a curiosity, with North's 4-3-3-3 shape providing the crucial ruffing power – how often does one see that?

**GLOBAL BRIDGE
Christine Heesom**

The Bill Hughes Simultaneous Pairs is an event co-ordinated by David Stevenson in the UK and involves clubs from all over the world.

This year, 9 clubs from Australia took part, as well as clubs from England, France, Iceland, Ireland, Kenya, Malta, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa, Spain, America, Wales, Botswana, Northern Ireland and Channel Islands – in total 1013 pairs from 66 clubs in 16 countries.

Paynesville Bridge Club has played in this event for a number of years and this year managed to produce the winning pair.

Robynne Owen and Ilse Porritt, with 70.20%, narrowly defeated Pat Besley and Mieke Van Weel from Rye Beach Bridge Club on 69.08%. Bruce Arnup and Dorothy Love from Sale Bridge Club finished in 14th place with 65.16%.

Australian clubs seem to be making this event their own – in 2016 an Australian pair from NSW won the event and in 2015 Jeanne Anderson and Helen Cantwell from Sale Bridge Club were the winners.



Robynne Owen and Ilse Porritt

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

TIP OF THE MONTH

Here's a bridge problem that on the surface looks particularly difficult, but isn't.

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1♣	Pass
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

What is your opening lead?

It might seem harsh to have to make a lead when you aren't even given a hand to lead from, but what *suit* should you normally lead?



Declarer has clubs and spades, and a stopper in the unbid suit, diamonds. He has a good hand, perhaps about 16-18 HCP, but hasn't opened 1NT. He will usually have exactly one heart, and *hearts* (dummy's suit) is your default suit of choice. You are giving nothing away and are probably leading the suit declarer doesn't want to see led.

The tip is:

When declarer in a notrump contract has bid two suits, and dummy has only bid one suit, then your best lead is likely to be in dummy's suit.

2017 LAWS OF BRIDGE BRAVE NEW WORLD

It is August 2017, and a new set of laws is now officially in place throughout the country.

There is no reason to panic, and with a couple of small exceptions, nothing needs to change for you the player.

The golden rule is (and always has been): when in doubt, call the director. And when you do, don't be surprised if the director goes scurrying off to fetch the new lawbook, looking worried. The laws of bridge are complicated, and more so in 2017, as directors are handed more and more judgmental responsibilities.

Why is this? Well, the lawmakers, of which our own Laurie Kelso is one, are on a crusade. It started in 2007 and continues apace in 2017. Their goal is simple: *wherever humanly possible, have the board played normally, with a legitimate bridge result scored.*

A simple example illustrates this. Suppose you look at your cards, and then notice there are 14 of them. It turns out that the ♥Q belongs to another player, who only had 12 cards. In 2016, the board would probably have been scrapped, and an adjusted score awarded (typically 60% for the non-offenders, and 40% for the offenders).

In 2017, the hands are corrected and the board is played, no ifs, no buts. And at the end, the director must determine whether

the result was fair or needs to be adjusted in some way.

A more complicated example of the same principle involves bids out of turn. In 2016, your bid out of turn was quite likely to bar your partner for the rest of the auction. That left you (and to a degree your opponents) playing a rather silly guessing game. The result would typically be anything but normal. In 2017, your partner will probably not be barred, or if he is, it will be only for one round of the auction. The details of how this works are too gory to state here. Normality is partially returned, although again the director will have decisions to make.

So what changes should you, the player, be aware of? There are two that spring to mind.

First, if you are dummy, you are not allowed, under any circumstances, to look at a defender's hand. Equivalently, if you are a defender, you are not allowed, under any circumstances, to show dummy your hand. There are no exceptions to this sensible change to the laws.

The second relates to a claim or concession, whether it is by declarer or a defender. If any player claims, either by showing his cards, or making a statement, or both, then under the old Laws, if an opponent didn't agree with the claim, then the Director had to be called. All play would cease on the board, and the Director would rule on the claim and determine the final number of tricks.

In 2017, there is another option. An opponent can contest the claim by saying: "let's keep playing". Then if all four players, including dummy, agree, any faced cards are picked up and play continues normally. The claimant does not have to adhere to the words of his claim.

However if any of the four players does not want play to continue, the director is called, play ceases, and the director adjudicates as he would have under the old laws.

Do you see where this change has come from? The lawmakers want to, *wherever humanly possible, have the board played normally, with a legitimate bridge result scored.*



Victorian Bridge Association Limited

ABN 51 004 595 993

Do you wish to win a State Title?

Each Affiliated Victorian Bridge Club may send up to 6 pairs to play in this event.

If your club has made no special arrangements to select pairs and you are interested please ask your club's committee to enter you in this event.

Your club secretary has all details regarding this event.

2017 Victorian Day Time Match Point Pairs Champion of Champions

A Red Master Point Event

to be held at the VBA Club Rooms

On the weekend of Saturday August 26th & Sunday August 27th

Cost \$180.00 per pair – this includes lunch each day and hospitality throughout the event.

If you have any dietary requirements please get your club to inform us with your entry.

Main Prizes

A minimum of 30% of event entry fees will be returned as prizes.

Cash prizes will be awarded for the first 3 place getters in each final and to the best placed women's, senior and mixed pair.

So if you want a chance to win this State Title ask your club to enter you as individual entries will not be accepted.

Clubs are requested to enter via email to the VBA by Friday 11th August 2017 – late entries will only be accepted at the discretion of the organiser.

Additional details available from your club secretary or on the VBA website