

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

April 2018

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



I started writing this month using the Test cricket ball tampering scandal as a high profile spotlight on the importance of the spirit of the game but honestly I find that scandal too depressing.

Instead, something closer to our bridge player hearts caught my eye. I saw an article about an incident where a former world champion told a player the way he was holding his cards was illegal because it told his partner how strong his hand was.

Wow. That is just an outrageous accusation and, in my view, blatant intimidation. The victim posted the article wondering what he could or should have done. Or indeed do now. I felt sad for the player that he had been so put upon and didn't know what to do. And a little surprised that even a good player, as he is, should be so uncertain.

The response to the article was hugely supportive. Their National Recorder was alerted to it and posted a comment suggesting the writer file a formal complaint.

In Victoria we've recently strengthened our state and congress disciplinary code to ensure that we have consistent treatment (including suspensions) across all state and congress events, and to enable the scope of

suspensions to include congress, state and national events Australia-wide.

I know that some players are understandably nervous about making a formal complaint, and many others are still unaware that our code exists. Please don't be nervous, and please encourage others to talk with the director or the disciplinary committee if they've experienced bad behaviour. It's how we improve the experience for everybody.

And it works! I've been hearing for a while that our code has helped improve behaviour at congresses. I am optimistic about the spirit of our game and the future of our game.

TRIUMPHANT IN TASSIE

Victorians performed commendably in Launceston last month in the 2018 TBIB Australian Swiss Pairs Championship.

VBA Treasurer, Neil Ewart, combined with Canberran Liz Havas to win the event. Congratulations Neil!

Other excellent Big V performances came from Geoffrey Johnson (3rd), Keith and Charlie Kat (7th) and Denise Newland and Anna St Clair (8th). Also inside the Top 20 were Hollands/Leach (12th), Gold/Muntz (17th) and Gluck/Kingham (19th). Well done to all concerned.



Neil Ewart and Liz Havas

FOR STARTERS

In a local duplicate, you pick up:

♠ AQJ942 ♥ KJ8 ♦ A64 ♣ 7

Everyone is vulnerable, you are dealer, and the auction begins:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	?

Your bid.

There is a process to go through in auctions like this, and you should use it as a matter of course. It is arithmetic in nature.

Early in an auction, with partner's first or second bid, he will usually have shown a range of points. You then do a calculation: add your actual points to partner's range of points, to come up with a combined range of points. This is then compared to the points required for a game contract, and you will then have a fair idea of how high to bid.

Let's do it here. Your hand has 15 high-card points. Since you've now found a suit fit, you can add your distribution points, in this case, 3 points for the singleton club. That gives you **18** total points.

Partner's single raise shows between **6** and **9** total points in support of spades. Add 18 to 6-9 and you get **24** to **27** total points combined.

$$18 + (6 \text{ to } 9) = 24 \text{ to } 27$$

It's not differential calculus, and you need to do it every single time.

For a game contract in a major suit, you need about **26** combined total points. So with your actual 24-27, a 4♠ contract is a definite 'maybe'. Therefore you might bid 3♠ now, which invites partner to bid 4♠ should he be in the upper half of his 6-9 range.

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All pass	

The lead is the ♣Q and you see:

♣Q led

N

S

♠ K105

♥ 43

♦ J72

♣ A6542

♠ AQJ942

♥ KJ8

♦ A64

♣ 7

What many declarers do at this point is happily win with the club ace and ruff a club. This is worse than pointless. Trumping in the hand that has the long trumps rarely does any good: it doesn't win you any extra tricks because the long trumps in your hand are winners anyway.

All this manoeuvre is likely to achieve is make you lose control of the trump suit: if you ruff too often in the long-trump hand, then you might eventually find an opponent with more than trumps than you.

So let's think through this and make the right play.

Whilst ruffing in the long trump hand is no good, ruffing in the *short* trump hand can be very useful, because they are extra tricks that you would not make if you drew trumps too quickly.

So lead a heart from dummy, hoping to eventually ruff your third heart. RHO follows small.

What heart do you play?

If RHO has the ♥A, then you want to play the king. If RHO has the ♥Q, you want to play the jack. Superficially, it's a guess, but playing the *jack* is the better guess.

It's possible that RHO has both the ♥A and the ♥Q. In that scenario, the jack will win the trick. Return to dummy with a trump, and play a second round of hearts. RHO will have to take the ♥A, leaving your ♥K a winner, on which you can discard a diamond from dummy.

Eventually you may be able to ruff a diamond in dummy – wouldn't that be sweet?

In fact, LHO wins your ♥J with the ♥A. The full deal:

♠ K105		♠ 6
♥ 43		♥ Q9652
♦ J72		♦ K103
♣ A6542		♣ K983
♠ 873	N W E S	♠ AQJ942
♥ A107		♥ KJ8
♦ Q985		♦ A64
♣ QJ10		♣ 7

Eventually, your third heart is trumped in dummy, and you fulfil your contract with 6 trumps, one heart, one heart ruff, and two minor suit aces. Next board!

Points to remember:

- Always do the maths! Add your partner's range to your points, and see the combined range. Count distribution points only if you have found a suit fit.

You need about 26 HCP for 3NT, about 26 TP (total points) for 4♥ or 4♠, and about 29 TP for 5♣ or 5♦. If your range is below that threshold, stay in a partscore. If it is above that threshold, bid game. If it straddles the threshold, invite game.

With your actual South hand, you could have alternatively tried a bid of 3♦ or 3♥, a *long suit game try*, rather than 3♠, a more general try for game. The main point was to invite a game contract.

- Don't ruff losers in the long trump hand! It serves no purpose. (Yes, there are some exceptions to this. For example if you want to be in the long trump hand to play some other suit, you might have to get there by trumping.)
- Do ruff losers in the short trump hand. That gains you tricks. Ruffing in the short trump hand is the most common reason for delaying the drawing of trumps.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

They bid after partner's takeout double

all vulnerable

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♦	D'ble	1♥	?

When partner makes a takeout double, you are normally obliged to bid – otherwise you will be left defending doubled in their suit.

However when RHO (opener's partner) makes a bid over the takeout double, that is no longer the case. The scoring effect of the double has been cancelled, so you don't have to bid if you don't want to.

In this scenario, the rules of bidding more closely align with standard responses to an opening bid. With 0 to 5 HCP, you can pass ... indeed you can pass with a slightly stronger hand if you want to, because partner still has another bid.

A new suit shows about 6 to 9 HCP; you might want to jump if you have a stronger hand.

Notrump bids are natural, and tend to show a stopper in LHO's opened suit (given that partner is short there). You don't have to have a stopper in RHO's suit, as partner can be presumed to help.

That leaves a double. Whilst there are several ways to play it, standard is for the double to be for penalties, despite the low level. Partner should have length in the suit, and the opponents could be in trouble.

Decide your bid as advancer with:

- (a) ♠ Q1065 ♥ 93 ♦ 954 ♣ K972
- (b) ♠ 652 ♥ 973 ♦ AQ9 ♣ K1097
- (c) ♠ K52 ♥ 973 ♦ K543 ♣ J72
- (d) ♠ K652 ♥ 93 ♦ 54 ♣ KJ972
- (e) ♠ 52 ♥ K954 ♦ KJ109 ♣ K97
- (f) ♠ KQ1052 ♥ 9 ♦ 9543 ♣ A107

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♦	D'ble	1♥	?

(a) ♠ Q1065 ♥ 93 ♦ 954 ♣ K972

1♠. This is ample strength to compete. Remember, partner has at least three spades. Suppose you pass, and it goes 2♦ (or 2♥) on your left, pass, pass back to you. You'll wish you had bid 1♠ when you had the chance.

(b) ♠ 652 ♥ 973 ♦ AQ9 ♣ K1097

1NT. A fine way to express your values, and 1NT is quite possibly your correct final contract. In the unlikely event they take 4 or even 5 heart tricks at the start, then 1NT could *still* be your correct final contract.

(c) ♠ K52 ♥ 973 ♦ K543 ♣ J72

Pass. 7 HCP, but nothing to bid. 1NT comes closest, but you only have a single diamond stopper, and it's a bit rich to expect partner to provide enough tricks to make it. For the moment, leave your opponents with the headache.

(d) ♠ K652 ♥ 93 ♦ 54 ♣ KJ972

1♠. 2♣ is possible, but spades is the higher suit and the higher scoring suit. Both are relevant here, as your opponents may well compete further in a red suit. You are most likely to win this auction with spades, not clubs.

(e) ♠ 52 ♥ K954 ♦ KJ109 ♣ K97

D'ble. Their side is in a spot of bother! They have a minority of hearts, and a minority of points. Maybe they have an escape in spades, but if they don't, then you will keep doubling and they will go down.

(f) ♠ KQ1052 ♥ 9 ♦ 9543 ♣ A107

2♠. This hand is far too strong for 1♠, despite having only 9 HCP. The spades are excellent, and the heart shortage is worth plenty. You can count shortage points here, because you have a presumed fit in spades.

MORE GOLD COAST SUCCESS

Adam and Fiona Roberts are from Melton Bridge Club and were delighted with their 3rd placing in the Novice Pairs at the Gold Coast.



The 'Walsh Team' - Nick Walsh, Derek Poulton from Shepparton, and Lisa Yoffa and James Thomas from Waverley, were runners up in the Restricted Team championship.



Nick, Derek, Lisa & James

STATE EVENT RESULTS

Victorian Open Butler

- 1 D. Nie – C. Ding
- 2 K. Frazer – J. Ebery
- 3 R. Gallus – S. Weisz

Victorian Mixed Teams

- 1 N. Ewart, D. Beckett, K. Muntz, J. Yang
- 2 A. Krolkowski, K. Chan, K. Bailey, G. Bailey
- 3 H. Snashall, M. Gurfinkiel, R. Gallus, S. Weisz

CONGRESS RESULTS

Rye Beach Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 J. Yang – M. Gurfinkiel
- 2 S. Klofa – D. Harley
- 3 K. Frazer – J. Ebery

Swiss Teams

- 1 S. Klofa, D. Harley, A. St Clair, A. Czapnik
- 2 B. Mill. T. Gariepy, C. Chakravorty, S. Collins
- 3 G. Ghali, C. Ding, V. Zhang, D. Wei

Berwick Congress

Swiss Pairs

- 1 J. Tunks – L. McKenna
- 2 S. Klofa – L. Robinson
- 3 K. Frazer – J. Ebery

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs

Event 5 (March 3)

- 2 B. Hyett – E. Ramage (Bendigo)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS

Ballarat Festival of Bridge

Wednesday 11th April, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Thursday 12th April, 1:30 pm: MP Pairs
 Friday 13th April, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue 1001 Eyre St,
Ballarat

Contact: Richard Giles,
Email: r.giles@aussiebb.com.au

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Whittlesea Congress

Sunday 15th April, 10 am: MP Swiss Pairs

Venue Whittlesea Community Centre
57-61 Laurel St
Whittlesea (Melway 246 H9)

Contact: Lyndall Shaw, 0428 601 111

Enter: <http://whittlesea.bridgeaustralia.org>

Frankston Congress

Saturday 21st April, 10 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 22nd April, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue St Francis Xavier Function Room
Cnr Baxter & Davey St, Frankston

Contact: Yvonne Minton, 0418 348 264

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Victorian Daytime Swiss Pairs

Wednesday 25th April, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue VBA
131 Poath Rd, Murrumbeena

Contact: Andrew Macready-Bryan, 9530 9006

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

Theodor Herzl Congress

Sunday 29th April, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue Theodor Herzl Club
222 Balaclava Rd, Caulfield North

Contact: Babi Ehrlich, 0417 593 101

Enter: <http://www.bridgewebs.com/thsc/>

Bayside Congress

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

Venue Beaumaris Bowls Club
Martin St, Beaumaris

Contact: Jan Clyne, 9592 9273

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Beginner's Lessons at the VBA

The VBA will be running a 7 week beginner's course, starting Wednesday May 2nd (10:30 am start) and Thursday May 3rd (7:30 pm start).

Please contact Andrew on 9530-9006 or email info@vba.asn.au for further details.

SUBSTITUTIONS AT THE VBA

Substitutes are a necessary evil of a bridge competition. They create disruption and have the potential consequence of making an event unfair due to the presence of substitutes that are of markedly different quality to the players they are replacing.

But there is life beyond bridge, and sometimes you need a substitute. The following regulations apply to all events at the VBA, both club and state.

If you cannot play in a session of an event at the VBA, it is *your* responsibility to arrange a substitute, no one else's. If no one turns up to play, this is an unauthorised withdrawal from the event, and may result in a disciplinary penalty. Obviously, such an occurrence can play havoc with the event in question. Any disciplinary penalty will apply to all members of the entered unit, whether a pair or a team.

You must fill out a substitution form in advance of the session and have it signed off by a member of the Match and Tournament Committee. Wherever possible, substitutions should be approved in advance.

When arranging substitutes, try to get players of similar quality to those they are replacing. Of course this might be difficult, but it is very desirable. If, for example, your substitute is of greater experience than you, then that gives you an unfair advantage. Moreover, your opponents in that session will be at a disadvantage. To redress this imbalance, a downward adjustment will be made to your score, and an equivalent upward adjustment given to your opponents.

Having clearly weaker substitutes is also undesirable!

There is a minimum amount you have to play in order to qualify for outright awards in an event, or to qualify to progress to the next stage of a multi-stage event (for example, one with qualifying rounds and final rounds).

In principle you must play in at least half the sessions. That's easy to calculate if there are an even number of sessions in an event, or phase of an event. If there are an odd number of sessions, the rules vary.

In *pairs* events the minimum session requirement is rounded up when you divide by two. For example, in a 3-session event (e.g. the qualifying or final stages of the Victorian Open Pairs), the two players must play together in 2 sessions to qualify for a subsequent stage, or for an outright award.

In *teams* events, the minimum session requirement is rounded down when you divide by two. For example, in a 5-session teams event, you must play at least 2 of the sessions to be considered a bona-fide member of the team. (The difference between pairs and teams is that often there are more than 4 players in a team, so it's quite normal not to play all sessions even when you don't require substitutes.)

In summary:

- Substitutions should be for cause, not convenience
- Arrange substitutes of similar quality to the players they are replacing
- Fill out the paperwork and get approval in advance
- Ensure you play at least half the sessions in any event or stage of an event

NEWS FROM THE COUNCIL

New Affiliated Club - Bridge@Blake

The VBA is pleased to welcome Bridge@Blake as an affiliated club. Bridge@Blake has been operating for over ten years in Glenhuntly Road, Caulfield.

Awards for Excellence

Once again, the VBA invites nominations for the Victorian Bridge Awards for Excellence for 2017. These awards are designed to recognise individuals around the state who have made a significant contribution to our game during the last year, whether it is in your club or a broader role. Categories are for *Teacher*, *Official*, *Volunteer* and *Sportsmanship*.

Nominations are open until April 30 2018, and further details and nomination forms are available on the VBA website at: <http://vba.asn.au/documents/club-notice/>.

BLACK MAGIC
Bill Jacobs

Dlr: West ♠ K4
 Vul: nil ♥ AK
 Matchpoints ♦ AK5
 ♣ KQJ1083

♠ A108732	N W E S	♠ Q9
♥ 652		♥ J983
♦ QJ8		♦ 9762
♣ 4		♣ A97

♠ J65
 ♥ Q1074
 ♦ 1043
 ♣ 652

West	North	East	South
2♠	D'ble	Pass	2NT*
Pass	3NT	All pass	

* Lebensohl: probably a weak hand

West led the ♠7, declarer played low from dummy, and East went into a brown study.

Given that declarer had not played dummy's ♠K, it appeared South would have ♠J. The Rule of 11 then told East that partner must have started with A1087xx. So if East played ♠Q, then there would be no way to run partner's spades, West clearly being entryless.

But if East played the ♠9, then partner's spades *would* run when East played a second round of the suit, after taking his ♣A. That would be down two.

So when East eventually played the ♠9 at trick 1, it could fairly be described as Black Magic. However I don't know what colour to attribute to the magic that happened next.

South played low.

Bill Bennett turns 100!

The VBA and the entire Bridge community congratulates Bill on his milestone. Bill turns 100 on April 19th. He has been a stalwart of the game for a long long time!

Both Waverley Bridge Club and the VBA will be celebrating with him: check the clubs for dates and times.

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Gayle Bagg	Kings & Queens
Leslie Decker	Royal Sth Yarra
Patricia Fiskin	Ballarat
Richard Fitzherbert	RACV
Carmel Hill	Macedon Ranges
Toni Landis	Bayside
Stephen Singer	Kings & Queens
Jane Starr	Kings & Queens
David Stewart	Ballarat
Bei Tang	Yarra Valley
Fraser Thorpe	Moonee Valley

***State**

Leone Carberry	Northern
Louis Cukierman	Bridge Fanatics
Lisa Davis	Moonee Valley
Heather Gunn	Moonee Valley
Lou Innes	Mornington
Zygmunt Sielc	Waverley
Bella Szmerling	Dendy Park
Jolanta Terlecka	Waverley

National

Barbara Bell	Geelong
Denise Donald	Frankston
Anthea Gedge	Kooyong
Leif Michelsson	Northern
Derek Poulton	Shepparton
Lisa Yoffa	Waverley

***National**

John Evans	VBA
William Rossiter-Nuttall	Dromana
Andrew Slutzkin	Moonee Valley
Margaret Winchester	Geelong

****National**

Kathryn Graham	Geelong
Michael Miller	VBA
Allison Simon	Dendy Park

Life

Abul Azad	Yarra Vallery
Janice Coventry	Moonee Valley
Marina Darling	Waverley
Ian Wright	Yarra Valley

Bronze Life

Suzanne Robinson	Geelong
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Silver Life

Jenny Hoff	Waverley
Heather Scott	Geelong
Danny Sharp	Dendy Park
Denis Upsall	Bendigo

**TEACHING BRIDGE IN
SHEPPARTON SCHOOLS
Derek Poulton
Secretary, Shepparton Bridge Club**

At Shepparton Bridge Club, we have been teaching adult classes for a few years. Some of us agreed in early 2017 that we should also be teaching bridge in schools. We received encouragement and an offer of support from Phil Gue (the former ABF youth coordinator) and Kim Frazer (VBA secretary). Sandy Gunn (CEO, Better Together Alliance) spoke to the four public school principals on our behalf and before we knew it we were up and running. Three of the schools expressed an interest. Maths teacher Jeff Trevaskis at Mooroopna High School already had an interest in bridge and we formed a small but keen group of enthusiasts there. At Wanganui Park Secondary College we had a large group of students who turned up on the first day, but numbers gradually waned, despite inducements of fresh apples from Nick Walsh. At McGuire College no students turned up to any of the four sessions arranged - a fizzer!! Later in the year, through a serendipitous conversation with the school librarian, Rhonda McKie, the fourth public school in the region (Shepparton High) invited us to run a six-week lunchtime program. Despite dwindling numbers close to exam time at this school, interest has been shown in extending the bridge lesson program throughout 2018.

At each school we initially taught the students Knockout Whist (a basic trick-taking game) and then moved on to Minibridge. Although we were able to talk about how to bid the hands, we found it difficult to progress past Minibridge during the limited time available at school lunch-times. In the second half of the year we ran our normal four-week night class course in bridge basics. Two of the students from Wanganui Secondary College, Seb and Ellie Wright, came along with their father to that course. The Wright family are now playing regularly at the club.

Overall our experience teaching in schools has been good. The club has expanded, and there is a positive feel in the club (and the wider community) that we are working with

the next generation to pass on our skills and passion for the game.

We plan to continue teaching in schools during the current year (2018), but with a more structured program, so that we move beyond Minibridge. We would like to arrange an inter-school tournament at the end of the year. It would be great to collaborate with Jamie Thompson and the Youthbridge group based at Waverley, and Gippsland Youthbridge program, so watch this space!!



Students at Wanganui Park Secondary College
L-R Meg Cowling, Seb Wright, Sarah Hirst,
Brayden Clark

NEVER TOO OLD



Pictured above is Yvette Liebergreen, aged 96, and a regular Thursday player at Macedon Ranges Bridge Club.

Demonstrating once again the benefit of keeping mind and body active. And note, she is playing East-West.