

Victorian Bridge Association Bulletin

June 2018

Editor: Bill Jacobs

THE SOAPBOX Ben Thompson



Meredith Woods has been working her way through some old and very old Victorian bridge documents. Some are humdrum, but some are just fantastic. With the Victor Champion Cup starting shortly, my ears pricked up immediately when Meredith said she'd found a scrapbook filled with articles written by the presciently-named man himself, and others featuring him.

Bidding systems in the 1930s were fairly basic, and bidding even by expert partnerships was equally rudimentary. However, the experts of the day were typically strong card players, and also had a very sound understanding of human psychology.

Champ (as he was known) had some excellent tips and maxims, which hold as true today as they did then. For example, "never redouble if the opponents can escape unless you can collect a compensating penalty", which seems obvious but is still surprisingly hard to follow. His example hand required the player who had redoubled in the passout seat to then sacrifice 1 level higher for 1 off against his opponents' making game. Ouch!

I enjoyed Champ's article on psyches, which gave an interesting insight into their then fashionability whilst dispassionately laying

out the case against them. He closed with a nice quote from Dorothy Sims (a leading American player of the time) – "in the long run, a relaxed condition of your partner's nerves will yield you a much more profitable dividend".

We'll have copies of some of Champ's articles at the VCC for anyone interested. We'll also be gradually putting some of our historical material up on the VBA website. We have some gaps, for example in our collection of VBA bulletins, and we'd love it if someone(s) can help us fill them in (our websites soon-to-go-live History section has lists of our holdings).

NEWS FROM THE COUNCIL

The VBA approved two new policies at its most recent council meeting:

Player Rights of Entry to Congresses:

This policy defines under what circumstances a player registered with the ABF Masterpoint Centre may be refused entry to a Victorian Congress event.

Victorian Congress Director Charter: This charter lays out the expectations, responsibilities and duties of a congress director in Victoria.

The policies are on the VBA website at: <https://vba.asn.au/documents/governance/>

ABF Player Database

The ABF is considering the development of a comprehensive player database. The VBA supports the concept provided appropriate privacy issues are managed. Player details are currently recorded upon registration with the ABF Masterpoint Centre, however many players have incomplete contact details recorded. All clubs are being asked to ensure their member details, and in particular email addresses, are updated on the ABF MPC.

FOR STARTERS

Playing in a Congress Swiss Pairs event, you pick up, with no one vulnerable

♠ Q6 ♥ 954 ♦ 10932 ♣ AKQ3

LHO is the dealer and the auction starts:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1♣	1♠	Pass	?

Your call.

If partner had *opened* 1♠, you might consider bidding 2NT here, showing about 10-12 HCP.

But 1♠ is an *overcall*, which is a different beast. It has a lower strength range, starting at 8 HCP. So if you want to bid notrumps here, and surely you do, you need more points than when responding to an opening bid. The approximate ranges are:

1NT: 8 - 12 HCP

2NT: 13 - 15 HCP

3NT: 16+ HCP

So with your 11 pointer, 1NT is enough. The auction continues:

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

Your call.

Well, partner is showing 5+ spades and 4+ hearts (probably exactly 4 hearts - can you see why?), but could still have as few as 8 HCP. So don't repeat the notrumps - go back to 2♠ instead. Partner will know you have exactly 2 spades: you would have supported spades directly if you had 3 cards.

On the auction goes.

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

Your call.

Is there no end to this? Partner is inviting you to bid 3NT if you are maximum within your range. I have said this in the past (October 2015 bulletin): *2NT always invites 3NT*.

If partner is inviting, you are accepting. Your 3NT bid completes a tortuous auction.

The lead is ♣J:

3NT, South ♠ AJ432
 ♥ AK63
 ♦ A6
 ♣ 72

N
S

♣J led

♠ Q6
 ♥ 954
 ♦ 10932
 ♣ AKQ3

Plan it.

Step 1: count your top tricks. 1 spade + 2 hearts + 1 diamond + 3 clubs = 7.

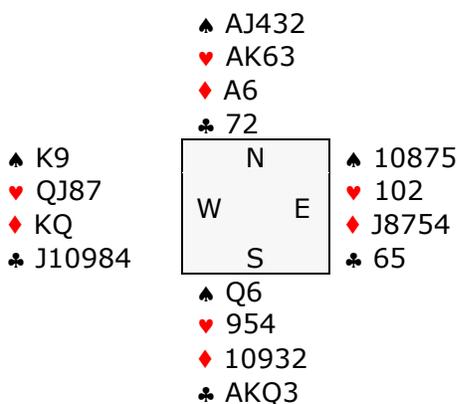
Step 2: look for extra tricks. The spade queen and jack will combine to provide another trick (in fact West has the ♠K for sure to make up his opening bid, so the spade finesse will work). That's 8 and the 9th should come from dummy long spades.

It's the usual notrump story: play on your long combined suit. You win the club lead and play the ♠Q - ♠K - ♠A. All follow to the ♠J, and East wins the third round of spades as West throws a club (you discard a heart). East plays a second round of clubs, and you win it.

Now what?

Don't forget to play your third club winner right now, otherwise you will never get it. Then cross over to the ♥A to play a fourth round of spades, setting up dummy's fifth spade for your ninth trick. Well played, perhaps.

The full deal:



Points to remember:

- The point ranges are different for notrump bids after an overcall at the 1-level, as distinct from an opening bid at the 1-level. You need a little more strength to make the equivalent bid.
- When you don't support partner's major initially, and you bid it the second time round, you are showing exactly two cards. Very useful, that.
- In notrumps, 9 times out of 10, you play on your long suits.

But you did make a mistake in the play – not your fault, I forced you into it. Can you figure out what it was?

It was an error to play the ♠Q at trick 2. It's normal to play the honour from the short hand when playing a suit – it can prevent a subsequent blockage – but every rule has its exceptions.

On this deal, the bidding told you that the ♠K was with West, based on his opening bid. And it could conceivably been a *singleton* king. In that scenario, East will have 5 spades, and you cannot set up a long winner in dummy's spades.

You should have led a *low* spade at trick 2. On the actual layout, the play will proceed identically. But should West have started with a singleton ♠K, leading low from your hand would have presented you with 3 immediate spade tricks and your contract.

TEST YOUR BIDDING

Partner doubles 1NT

Nil vulnerable

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1NT	D'ble	Pass	?

Last month we looked at the auction where your partner's 1NT opening bid was doubled.

Here is a similar situation. This time it's your partner that has doubled 1NT, showing a generally good hand of some sort, and RHO has passed it. What should you do with your usual heap of rubbish?

I have similar advice for this situation: if you are going to bid, then bid naturally. Removing to two of a suit shows a weak hand and a long suit.

But there are two important differences between this auction and the one where your partner's 1NT has been doubled.

First, this time, your partner's strong hand is sitting over the 1Nter's strong hand. This is a positional advantage, and gives you more reason to be optimistic about your chances in the play.

Second, and most importantly, your partner does not have to have a balanced hand. He could have anything that's strong. His hand might be balanced, or it could be extremely unbalanced. Therefore you cannot be sure of a fit in whatever long suit you might hold.

So you should be more circumspect about bidding a suit in this auction.

Your call with the following familiar hands:

- (a) ♠ 65 ♥ J93 ♦ J10652 ♣ 972
- (b) ♠ 65 ♥ J73 ♦ Q652 ♣ 10972
- (c) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ97532 ♦ 652 ♣ 2
- (d) ♠ J654 ♥ K3 ♦ A652 ♣ J72
- (e) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ973 ♦ Q6532 ♣ 2
- (f) ♠ 8654 ♥ A532 ♦ 3 ♣ 10752

Solutions over page.

TEST YOUR BIDDING - SOLUTIONS

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1NT	D'ble	Pass	?

(a) ♠ 65 ♥ J93 ♦ J10652 ♣ 972

Pass. Well done if you got this difficult problem right. You have a little something to contribute to the defence, and should roll the dice in 1NT doubled. Partner might have a good suit to lead, and there is no indication that 2♦ will lead to a suitable contract for your side.

(b) ♠ 65 ♥ J73 ♦ Q652 ♣ 10972

Pass. Stay back in class if you got this easy problem wrong. No suit to bid, no reason to think 1NT is not going several down: this is a clear-cut pass.

(c) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ97532 ♦ 652 ♣ 2

2♥. It could be right to defend 1NT doubled, but in this case, you have reason to believe you will score better in a heart contract. Partner will probably bid something over your 2♥ (he doesn't have many!), but you will repeat your hearts to indicate that he doesn't need many.

(d) ♠ J654 ♥ K3 ♦ A652 ♣ J72

Pass. Happy days. You'll kill 'em.

(e) ♠ 65 ♥ QJ973 ♦ Q6532 ♣ 2

Pass. You wanted to bid, didn't you? You shouldn't. LHO is balanced, RHO is presumably balanced (no long suit to escape to). This means that partner's hand is as black as yours is red. This is almost certainly a misfit deal, and you should aim to defend. Your red honours will please partner, as they prevent declarer getting too many tricks in those suits.

(f) ♠ 8654 ♥ A532 ♦ 3 ♣ 10752

Pass. This was difficult after partner's 1NT was doubled, but très easy here. You might not welcome a diamond lead, but one point to note: partners shouldn't double 1NT without having given some thought to whether they have a nice opening lead.

NATIONAL RESULTS**Autumn Nationals Open Pairs (Adelaide)**

- 1 J. Thompson – M. Smith
- 3 L. Gold – H. Melbourne

STATE RESULTS**Fred Altman Swiss Pairs¹**

- 1 P. Fent – M. Chrapot
- 2 B. Thompson – D. Thompson
- 3 K. Frazer – M. Phillips

Victorian Restricted Pairs Championship

- 1 D. Phelan – P. Knightley
- 2 S. Groves – A. Lowe
- 3 C. Irwin – M. Simons

CONGRESS RESULTS**Theodor Herzl Congress***Swiss Pairs*

- 1 J. Coutts – J. Ebery
- 2 A. Glasson – K. Radcliffe
- 3 H. Snashall – M. Gurfinkiel

Bayside Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 K. Frazer – J. Ebery
- 2 D. Swabey – D. Keenan
- 3 C. Shugg – W. Sieredzinski

Swiss Teams

- 1 K. Frazer, J. Ebery, S. Klofa, M. Gurfinkiel
- 2 C. Shugg, W. Sieredzinski, L. Young, C. Lane
- 3 M. McTiernan, J. Lawrence, A. Slutzkin, F. Thorpe

Sale Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 S. Watson – K. French
- 2 C. Watson – M. Willcox
- 3 K. Nainanayake – C. Arul

Swiss Teams

- 1 S. Klofa, L. Robinson, A. St Clair, D. Harley
- 2 S. Watson, K. French, C. Watson, M. Willcox
- 3 B. Mill, T. Gariepy, S. Collins, C. Chakravorty

¹ The result of this event was prematurely reported last month, even though there was a session still to be played. The editor is getting old.

Bendigo Congress*Swiss Pairs*

- 1 G. Ridgway – A. Robbins
- 2 J. Yang – M. Gurfinkiel
- 3 V. Zhang – G. Ghali

Swiss Teams

- 1 G. Ridgway, A. Robbins, P. Jain, R. Gillard
- 2 S. Klofa, S. Weisz, A. St Clair, D. Harley
- 3 J. Adams, D. Middleton, J. Lawrence,
M. McTiernan

Queen's Slipper Nationwide Pairs*Event 10 (May 20)*

- 3 A. Race – C. Parkin (Yarra Valley)

UPCOMING CONGRESSES & EVENTS**Wodonga Congress**

Saturday 16th June 10:30 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 17th June, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue The Hangar
 University Drive, Latrobe University
 West Wodonga

Contact: Mary Prowse, 0401 132 074

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Dendy Park Congress

Sunday 24th June, 10 am: Swiss Pairs

Venue Dendy Park Clubrooms
 Breen Drive
 East Brighton

Contact: Boris Tencer, 0414 353 996

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Geelong Congress

Saturday 30th June, 10:30 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 1st July, 10 am: Swiss Teams

Venue Highton Bowls Club
 cnr Roslyn and North Valley Roads
 Highton

Contact: Sue Robinson, 5229 0300

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

Kattery Congress

Saturday 7th July, 10:30 am: Swiss Pairs
 Sunday 8th July, 10 am: Gold Point Swiss Pairs

Venue Waverley Bridge Club
 21a Electra Ave
 Ashwood

Contact: Keith Kat, 0428 130 844

Enter: <http://bridgeunlimited.com>

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**Joan's back**

Joan Butts is returning to the VBA for two days of continuing bridge education on the weekend of June 24/25. All bridge teachers and prospective teachers seeking accreditation are warmly invited to attend. In addition, all interested players of intermediate standard or above would be most welcome.

Joan will be presenting on **Modern Bidding Methods** on June 24 and **Defence** on the 25th. Both sessions are from 9.30 am until 2.00 pm. A light lunch will be provided.

Seminars at the VBA

Starting in July, The VBA will offer Intermediate/Advanced seminars on Saturday mornings. Come and learn from some of our best players in a friendly, low stress environment. Classes will initially run fortnightly. We have a fine selection of teachers lined up. The seminars will start at 10 am and run for about 2 hours. Cost will be \$20 for the session, or \$25 if you stay for the afternoon duplicate, starting at 1 pm.

The first session on 5th July will be run by **Bill Jacobs**, Victorian 2016 Teacher of the Year, and is titled **All about Take-out Doubles**:

- When to make them
- How to respond to them
- Variations such as the negative double
- When is double takeout, when is it for penalties, and how am I to know?

You don't need a partner, just come along and enjoy the day.

TIP OF THE MONTH

You are having a reasonable session, and sit down against one of the stronger pairs for your next 3-board round.

On the first board, the opponents reach 4♠, and your partner leads the ♣K. You follow with your singleton and the king wins the trick. Partner thinks for a while and then switches to diamonds.

Declarer wins this, draws trumps and makes his contract. Naturally if partner had continued with clubs, the contract would have gone down. You manage to restrain yourself from the accusatory post-mortem, as you could see that partner had a genuine problem at trick 2.

On the second board, they bid to 3NT against you, and play it well to secure an overtrick. Nothing you could have done about that, but it's a second poor score.

Final board, you are dealt:

♠ Jxxx ♥ x ♦ AQJxx ♣ Kxx

Partner deals and opens 1S. You've agreed to play splinter bids, and this seems a perfect specimen. You respond 4H, partner has a think about that, and passes!

4H is not a success: the play goes rather quickly as a bottom is a bottom is a bottom whether you take 6 tricks or 7.

The round has mercifully finished, and there are 3 minutes left on the clock.

What do you do?

I suggest you get up from the table and take a walk. Do they have water at this club? Coffee? Cyanide tablets?

When you have a bad round, it's useful to remove yourself from the scene of the disaster. Remind yourself that this is a game. Remind yourself that partner is on your side, whatever evidence there may be to the contrary. So the TotM is:

After a bad round, take a walk

BLACK MAGIC Bill Jacobs

♠ J95	N	♠ 83
♥ 10632	W E	♥ KJ8
♦ KJ742	S	♦ Q6
♣ 7		♣ 986532
		♠ AQ7642
		♥ 95
		♦ 1053
		♣ J4

West	North	East	South
Pass	6♠	All pass	2♠

Here's a sleight of hand attributed to the English star, Tony Forrester.

He was West, defending against the seemingly impregnable 6♠ by South, a contract with 12 top tricks.

Can you see how he defeated it?

Forrester led his singleton club. Declarer won in dummy, and started drawing trumps. On the ♠K, Forrester dropped the ♠J!

It was a devastating play. Declarer took the ♠J at face value as a singleton. So now he cashed the ♠10, not overtaking as it appeared East had started with ♠9853, and to overtake the ♠10 would create a trump loser.

No doubt declarer had a sinking feeling when Forrester followed suit to the second spade. But there was nothing he could do. He tried a club to his jack, but Forrester ruffed and declarer later lost the heart finesse.

It was a cost-free play. If perchance East had held ♠Qx, then Forrester's ♠9 would still convert to a trick.

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

RECENT MASTER PROMOTIONS

State

Julie Alliston	Frankston
Ray Beacham	Ballarat
Tony Heath	Moonee Valley
Jennifer Matheson	Frankston
Alan Monger	Benalla
Chris Oberink	Traralgon
Louise Strauss	Kooyong
Ronella Stuart	RACV
Penny Van der Riet	Rye Beach

*State

Bron Sund	Phillip Island
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National

Janet Attrill	Warrnambool
Barbara Callan	Geelong
Mary Cameron	Warrnambool
Eunice Payne	Mornington

*National

Mary Church	South Yarra
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**National

Bobbi Burton	Frankston
Margaret Copland	Macedon Ranges
Fred Eccles	Moonee Valley
Anne Howes	Traralgon
Geoffrey Temple	Geelong

Life

Chen Ding	VBA
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Bronze Life

Daoping Nie	VBA
Don Stewart-Uden	Phillip Island

Silver Life

Trish Brown	Bairnsdale
Kaye Douglas	Phillip Island
Jacqui Morton	Moonee Valley

Sound bridge advice

Get your zeros early. That way, you have more time to catch up.

Never insult an opponent until the round has been called.

If you must go down, for heaven's sake, get on with it.

Delay criticizing partner for one complete round and the urge will die of starvation.

The road to hell is paved with good conventions.

Positions Vacant

Our long-standing VBA Bulletin Editor - Bill Jacobs, and our State Masterpoint Secretary - Colin Campbell, have both announced their intention to step down from their respective roles at the end of the year.

The VBA seeks applications for both roles.

VBA Bulletin Editor & Web News Editor

The VBA has agreed to reconfigure the role of VBA Bulletin Editor to one which includes editor of regular news items for the VBA website. The Editor utilises a range of sources to generate articles for the Bulletin.

The successful applicant will be required to produce a maximum of six VBA Bulletins annually as well as source and create news stories on current topics around the state for the VBA website.

A strong interface with Victorian clubs is highly desirable.

Victorian State Masterpoint Secretary

The responsibilities of the role include:

- Administering the ABF Masterpoint Scheme in Victoria;
- Supervising allocation of masterpoint awards for all events held within the state;
- Ensuring all relevant data is forwarded to the ABF Masterpoint Centre;
- Advising and supporting Victorian Club MP secretaries with allocation and management of masterpoints within the club.
- Advising the Chief Tournament Director on the authorisation of Congresses within the State.
- Appraising the State Association of issues with timely submission of masterpoints.

The MP Secretary must have a detailed knowledge of the ABF Masterpoint Scheme and be able to interpret the ABF Masterpoint Manual for Club Masterpoint Secretaries.

Computer and analytical skills are essential.

For further details on both the above positions or to submit an application, contact secretary@vba.asn.au.

The closing date for applications is June 25th.

**Do you have less than 50 Masterpoints?
What about less than 500?**
If you answered yes, you are invited to
**learn from the experts at the 2018 Victorian
Pro-Am Development Day:
July 14 at the VBA**

see <http://vba.asn.au/teams-of-three/>
for more information

What is it?

Many of Victoria's leading players kindly donate their time to the development of the game by having a game with less experienced players. This fun event always has a vibrant atmosphere and provides an opportunity to play with a much more experienced player.

What's the format?

There are two divisions (under 50 MPs and under 500 MPs). You can enter as a partnership, individual or group of three. Teams will be formed with 1 (maybe even 2) expert players and 2-3 amateurs. Teams will then compete against each other throughout the day. If you haven't played teams bridge before, this is the perfect time to get started!

Why is this an opportunity for me?

Imagine a tennis fanatic having the chance to play with Federer. They would be nuts to pass it up! Playing with more experienced players is the quickest way to improve your game and not an opportunity that comes along very often.

What are the key details?

Saturday July 14
10.00 – 5.00
\$55 per player, including lunch
Entries must be submitted by July 11
Entries are restricted to players with <500 MP at May 31

Where do I find out more?

<http://vba.asn.au/teams-of-three/>



The 2017 Vic Pro Am Development Day bridge addicts - about 100 of them!

2018 Victorian Pro-Am Development Day: Saturday July 14