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GEELONG BRIDGE CLUB NEWSLETTER

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August 2022

From the President

Marion and I recently attended an online webinar held by the VBA, with the topic for discussion being “How to grow membership and bring members back to face to face bridge”. Clubs from across Victoria attended. It was soon obvious that all clubs, including the biggest, have suffered substantial drops in membership as well as club attendance. From the clubs attending, six were asked to give reports on what they were doing, followed by discussion. I would like to highlight some of the key points discussed below.

GBC, unlike other clubs, has grown its membership. How did that happen?

At the AGM in 2019 our membership was 261. As I write it is 271. GBC was asked to explain how it managed to grow its membership. We explained how we surveyed new members to find out how they heard about classes, and used this information in subsequent marketing of our lessons. We found that most people came via a combination of being referred by friends/associates, and also checking on our website. The sign at the front of the club is important, but less so. Several members came as a result of a brochure advertising lessons, which was letterbox-dropped by members back in 2021. Several came following contact being made with U3A by Jennifer Blyton, also in 2021. What we now know is that focussed marketing yields results. As a club we should be very proud of achieving club growth over the last 3 years. **All members can help maintain this momentum.**

Recommend our upcoming training course (starts 7 October) to your friends. Take 50 brochures and letterbox drop, because we now know that works. Always make a point of welcoming new players and fostering a friendly environment.

Of course the other major reason for our success is due to the outstanding job that Dot (and Geoff) Read have done as teacher(s). In discussion with “graduates” I have received glowing reports regarding the lessons, as well as the out of hours support Dot offered. Thanks Dot and Geoff.

Continued next page

From the President continued from previous page

Our website is currently being upgraded. Thanks Maureen Peck. We are using an advanced platform, which will make it visually more attractive and will enable us to attractively introduce more content. I have seen an early version that looks very good. This will further assist our course marketing.

Some clubs are offering mini lessons before a session

To encourage face to face bridge, mini lessons are being offered at the start of some sessions. Say 15 to 30 min. These lessons can be formatted/themed in different ways. This is probably something that we need to look at soon.

Some clubs are introducing refreshment breaks, say 15 minutes, where refreshments are offered mid-session.

Face to face bridge provides a venue for meeting up with friends which is not available with online bridge. But often members attend club-bridge without much catching up. Newer members need a format where they can get to know other members. The above approach seeks to address that. When I was in WA 3 years ago, I played at the BC of WA, a big club with 1000 members. They stop all sessions mid-way for a 15 min break. A similar thing happened in a NSW mid coast club. At Waverley BC they have “home cooked cakes and biscuits supplied by volunteers, much loved and appreciated. Recipes supplied in the weekly bulletin.” Perhaps there is scope for GBC to do something similar, one session a week.

Keep focused on what you can do for the club

Best Wishes

Alan Blackburn

President GBC



Annual General Meeting 7.00pm Wednesday 7 September 2022

**All members are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting,
to be followed by a free game of bridge.**



www.geelong.bridge-club.org/

Club Results

Swiss Pairs (final) Fridays 27 May & 3 June

| | |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1st | A.Robbins, G.Ridgway |
| 2nd | D.Newland, S.Lester |
| 3rd | W.Dennis, C.Bowman |

Geelong Congress Open Pairs Saturday 25 June

| | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1st | P.Jain, G.Chettle |
| 2nd | K.Frazer, J.Fust |
| 3rd | T.Ranasinghe |

Geelong Congress Restricted Pairs Saturday 25 June

| | |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 1st | J.Blyton, L.Lee |
| 2nd | W.Dennis, C.Bowman |
| 3rd | A.Blackburn, K.Thomas |

Geelong Congress Teams Sunday 26 June

| | |
|-----|---|
| 1st | S.Lester, D.Newland, A.Robbins, D.Newlands |
| 2nd | P.Jain, G.Ridgway, R.Gillard, M.Stokie |
| 3rd | K.French, P.Corrigan, J.Hackett, T.Hackett |

Heidenfeld Teams Wednesday 6 & 13 July

| | |
|-----|---|
| 1st | A.Robbins, D.Newlands, K.Bailey, G.Bailey |
| 2nd | J.Johnstone, D.Peacock M.Stokie, R.Gillard |
| 3rd | V.Sercombe, B.Fitzpatrick, P.Frost, S.Duff |

Nationwide Pairs (Club Result) Friday 15 July

| | |
|--------|-------------------------|
| 1st NS | A.Robbins, D.Newlands |
| 1st EW | L.Frankenburg, J.Prowse |
| 2nd NS | C.Dodgshun, M.Glover |
| 2nd EW | P.Ward, G.McAlpine |
| 3rd NS | M.Barrett, G.Temple |
| 3rd EW | L.Lee, L.Johnston |

Western Victoria GNOT Pairs Sunday 17 July

| | |
|-----|---------------------|
| 1st | G.Bailey, K.Bailey |
| 2nd | P.Jain, G.Chettle |
| 3rd | R.Gillard, M.Stokie |

Intermediate Teams Mondays 18 & 25 July

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1st | G.Temple, V.Temple, M.Barrett, A.Neunhoffer, J.Walsh (abs Wk2) |
| 2nd | J.Keyte, J.Ham, S.Napier, S.Oman, S.Wood (abs Wk 2) |

Joan Wilson Trophy Winners

| | |
|-----|-----------|
| Jun | S Irwin |
| Jul | A.Robbins |

NEW MEMBERS

The Geelong Bridge Club welcomes the following new and re-joining members:

| | |
|--------------|---------|
| A.Van Orsouw | J.Ham* |
| S.Napier * | S.Wood* |
| S.Oman* | |

**Affiliate*

HIGH SCORES

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------|------|
| Jun | D.Newland S.Lester | 74.8 |
| Jul | A.Robbins D.Newlands | 74.0 |

Yarrawonga Congress Saturday 23 & Sunday 24 July

The Yarrawonga Congress was held over the weekend of 23 and 24 July with a Welcome Pairs event held on the Friday night before. Seven Geelong players made the trip and achieved creditable results in both the Teams and Pairs events.

Alison Feiner and Anne Gunst came 1st in the Welcome Pairs on the Friday night. Dot Peacock and Jenny Johnstone came 2nd. They all won a bottle of wine each.

Thanks to Dot Peacock and Anne Gunst for the information and photo.



We all know the rules of the money game. There are two kinds of money - coins for parking and small items and paper money for bigger items. Having lots of money is nice and spending it all is nice. Spending more than you have is really bad! Sensible people keep track of how much they have and how much they have spent. Sensible people stop buying once they have spent all their money.

The Bidding Game

We all know the rules of the bidding game. There are two kinds of values - high card points and shape. Having lots of points and good shape is nice and bidding it all is nice. Bidding more than the values you have is really bad! Sensible people keep track of how much they have and how much they have already bid. Sensible people stop bidding once they have bid all their points and shape.

Example 1 Dealer West, Both Vul, Teams

| | | | | |
|----------|----|---|----|---|
| S Q3 | W | N | E | S |
| H AQ1065 | 1H | P | 1S | P |
| D KQ43 | ? | | | |
| C A2 | | | | |

What is your rebid? How much length money have you spent if you rebid 2H?

Answer: **5** because you have shown 5 hearts.

How much length money have you spent if you rebid 2D?

Answer: **9** because you have shown 5 hearts and 4 diamonds.

Which is the better rebid? Answer: **2D**

Example 2 Dealer West, Both Vul, Teams

| | | | | |
|----------|----|---|----|---|
| S Q3 | W | N | E | S |
| H AQ1065 | 1H | P | 1S | P |
| D KQ43 | 2D | | | |
| C A2 | | | | |

Will you accept the invite if partner now bids 2NT?

How much strength money do we have? **17 hcp** (no fit yet so no shape points)

How much of that money have we spent so far? **12hcp** (11 if you and partner open 11 counts)

What unspent values do you have? **5hcp**

Will you accept the invite? **Yes** since you have extra values which you haven't bid yet!

Example 3 Dealer West, Both Vul, Teams

| | | | | |
|---------|----|---|----|---|
| S 83 | W | N | E | S |
| H A1054 | 1D | P | 1S | P |
| D KQ643 | ? | | | |
| C A2 | | | | |

What is your rebid? How much length money have you spent if you rebid 2D? **5**

How much length money have you spent if you rebid 2H? **9**

Which is the better rebid from a length point of view? **2H** because it shows what 9 of your cards are.

But, on the other hand

- How much strength money do we have? **13 hcp** (no fit yet so no shape points)
- How much of that money have we spent so far? **17hcp** (we have reversed i.e. we bid a higher ranking suit on the second round)
- What unspent values do you have? **NONE**, we are overspent, we should not have rebid 2H.

There is a clash between bidding shape and showing strength! Just rebid 1NT.

Example 4 Dealer West, Both Vul, Teams

| | | | | |
|--------|---|-----|---|----|
| S AQ82 | W | N | E | S |
| H K3 | P | 2NT | P | 3H |
| D A98 | P | 4C | P | 4D |
| C AK74 | P | ? | | |

2NT was 20-22, 3H is a transfer to spades. 4C shows the AC and shows slam suitability in spades. 4H shows the AH and also suggests extras for a slam. What do you call?

You have shown 20 hcp when you opened, so you have no extras. 4C showed the good spade fit and so you have shown the relevant part of your shape. Partner has shown a diamond cue bid so they are still interested in slam so cue the AH by bidding 4H and leave the decision to partner.

Example 5 Dealer West, Both Vul, Teams

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----|---|----|
| S K109765 | W | N | E | S |
| H 10 | P | 2NT | P | 3H |
| D J1043 | P | 4C | P | ? |
| C Q6 | | | | |

2NT was 20-22, 3H is a transfer and 4C shows slam suitability for spades. What do you call? You have shown 5 spades and you have shown 5+hcp. You have some unspent values in terms of 6 card spades but nothing in terms of strength. There are not enough hcp for slam (28 at most).

The ruffs are in the long trump hand so they are not worth anything since you might have 6 trump tricks, but if you take two ruffs in the long hand and cash 4 trumps, you still only have 6 tricks. Make sure you grasp this point about ruffs in the long trump hand not providing any extra tricks! This means **do not add extra points for shortages in the long trump hand!** It is clear to sign off in 4S.

Just to check your understanding

Think about your answer before reading the solutions. What is your 2nd bid after 1H-1S-2D when holding these hands?

| | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| S KJ952 | S KJ952 | S KJ952 |
| H Q2 | H Q2 | H Q2 |
| D 984 | D 1087 | D A72 |
| C 1087 | C AJ6 | C AJ6 |
| Hand 1 | Hand 2 | Hand 3 |

Continued next page

Solutions

Hand 1: 2H : you have spent 5 of length money (preference only promises 2) and 5 of hcp. 2S would spend 6 length values but you only have 5 spades! So that would be over-bidding.

Hand 2: 2NT: you have only spent 5 hcp but need to spend 11 which the invitational 2NT does. No way to spend length money since 3S shows 6+cards.

Hand 3: 2C: no fit, use 4th suit forcing to game to spend 13+ of hcp money and hope partner can show 3 spade cards or 6 heart cards on the next round.

Douglas Newlands

Finding your results on the Web

Most members know how to look up their results on the Web for a standard single session. If you don't, then follow the 'Single Session Results' instructions below.

Often there is a multi-session event conducted over two or more sessions e.g. the recent Heidenfeld Teams and Intermediate Teams. For these events, players obtain a result in each individual session and these are then aggregated in some manner to obtain an Aggregate Result and Overall Placings. The results of each individual session are displayed in the same manner as for Single Session Results, but the Aggregate Results are in a different location and much harder to find for many players.

Sometimes this leads to confusion if players (and even Newsletter Editors) find a result for a second session and not realise that the Aggregate Result may be different, which it very often is.

Single Session Results

For results of any single session, go to www.geelong.bridge-club.org then click on 'Results' at the top of the page; then 'All Results'; then find your event in the list and click 'Result'. Now click on your pair names to obtain a short summary, then 'Full Result' for board-by-board details.

Aggregate Results

GBC's scoring software and web service do not permit the Aggregate Result (or the Datums for some IMPs events) to be displayed in the same location as for single session results. Instead for Aggregate Results and Datums, select 'About Us' at the top of the homepage and then click 'Documents'. Aggregate results, datums and other items are displayed here.

Mike Stokie

(Thanks for this Mike. I can attest that sometimes Newsletter Editors make the occasional error. If you see that a result is incorrect, please let me know and the result will be corrected in the next issue. Editor)



The Bridge Club in sunny Noosa

Postcards from Noosa



What a lovely club! It's a big and vibrant club, with about 400 members and at least 20 tables in five sessions per week, and then an Open session for the Pros. Great clubrooms with a full kitchen, and a lovely veranda outside where we gather for a cuppa.

I arrived here at the end of July, and have been playing with different partners throughout, including my lovely partner from Geelong, Margaret Varga. I was invited to play in the Pro-Am, where the Pros above 100 Masterpoints, play with an amateur. It's a chance for normal partners to have a break from each other and teach the novices a thing or two. A very fun and social day with drinks and nibbles afterwards, or should I say soooooo much food and never an empty glass. I felt so welcome!

In fact, each time I play I make a new friend and they all offer to fill my glass. All games have a break in the middle of the session, say halfway through the boards, and this allows a quick cuppa on the veranda with each other, and of course the needed loo stop for everyone. Every Saturday session has drinks and food afterwards. They love it!

One partner I have been playing with is Warwick. We hit it off on our first game and came second. He used to play at Coolum Bridge club, where all the ladies had their name tags made with diamantes around the edges. He claimed he wanted one. And so, he wore it on the day we played together. I nicknamed him 'Sparkles'. And the members said it would stick. Towards the end of the game that first day, he fessed up. He said and I quote "My wife's budgie is named "Sparkles". He had me in hysterics.

Such fun and very talented Bridge players here in sunny Noosa. I highly recommend it.

OnyabikeGen

It should be noted that questions during an auction, or after the auction has concluded, are fraught with danger - likely to create an **Unauthorised information (UI)** situation.

It is within the rights of opponents to ask, but there are times to ask and times not to ask about opponents' bids. For example if a bid is not alerted, asking infers some reason for the inquiry, which is likely to alert partner. Any ongoing action, particularly if the person asking then passes, is likely to be very questionable and end up with a Director call. Rightly so, with severe implications.

If a bid is alerted, asking may be for a number of reasons. Partner, I have that suit (naughty), or Partner, I have some interest with my hand, or just stickybeaking (I just want to know what is going on). All of these reasons are dangerous and often lead to **UI**, particularly if the questioner then passes. Again, as above, implications may apply.

Just because you think someone may have forgotten to alert a bid is no reason to ask about an unalerted bid. If an alertable bid is not alerted, then at the completion of the auction, when a general description is called for and it comes to light that there was a failure to alert, the Director may need to review the auction and adjust the outcome if deemed appropriate. This can be a Director call at the end of play for that hand, as well. These situations are messy and likely to be less than pleasant.

Similarly, asking about the auction at its completion is generally the thing to do - particularly if there were some interesting bids. It is important, however, to ask about the auction with words such as:

“ Tell me about the auction”

“ Is there anything in the auction I should know about”

“ Tell me about the alerts”

These are ok, but **not** -

“ What does that bid mean”

It is a cardinal sin to ask about a specific bid or worse point at a particular bid and seek information. You must ask about the auction in general.

It is best for declarer to give an account of the details of the auction, outlining any and all information that has been revealed in the auction. This preempts any likely inappropriate questions and keeps all players happy(or at least not unhappy depending on the auction and the partnership). Difficulty may arise with cue raises, and other self alerting bids that may happen in competitive auctions. Again ask with care and only if you are planning to bid.

Gavin Bailey

Watch out in the next issue for an article “To answer or not to answer” (Editor)

One of the things that comes with experience (and longevity!!) is understanding the wide variety of methods and plays that are available. Watching the cards and counting are part of that experience. While the bidding is not the main point of this article, it is also illustrative. You are North, not vulnerable, against vulnerable opponents. The bidding starts, from East, (1H)-P-(2H)-? Do you bid? You have a scratchy 7 count, but the vulnerability is favourable, and you don't expect the bidding to finish, so why not? It at least indicates a lead for partner, an important point, and may lead to putting pressure on the opponents. So 2S. My hand:



LHO bids 4H, and partner comes to light with 4S, end of auction (no double, no trouble!). The full hand:



East leads AH, KH, KD, QD which you ruff. Drawing trumps, you notice East has 2. Turning your attention to clubs, you seem to have 2 losers. Is it possible to reduce this? East is likely to be 2533 or 2542, 2524 or even 2551 Your clubs are not robust (no fillers) and there are quite a few possibilities.

To reduce your club losers, and to enhance your count, you must first **eliminate the other side suits, ie trump a heart, trump a diamond**, (notice, you want to be in hand after this!). East follows to the third diamond. Now to start the clubs. Would East have bid 4H on a 2533 hand? (West has shown up with QH and AD, you think). You expect East to be 2542 or 2551, and to hold at least a club honour, so do not lead JC (if it is covered, you will lose 2 clubs), so small to the 10 is a possibility. When West returns the 9C, you have to guess whether to play the J or not (does West have QC and KC ? Not on this bidding!).

A better line is to play small to AC and another club. This loses if East has KQx in clubs, but wins if East has Kx or Qx, as this now gives you a ruff and discard. Note that this is not foolproof, but your methods need to:

1. count the hand;
2. visualise East's possible holding, based on the bidding; and
3. even if you visualise the holdings, you need to **eliminate the other side suits**. It will be of no use without that step. This often leads to a ruff and discard situation.

Elimination and endplay is an important technique for you to learn to become a good bridge player.

Arthur Robbins

Western Region Friendly Pairs

The Friendly Pairs was held at Ballarat on Sunday 14 August. Seven pairs attended from Geelong and the results were good. Marion and Phillip Scambler came 3rd, Dot Peacock and myself 4th, Shannon Irwin and Arthur Robbins 5th.

Ballarat put on an amazing morning and afternoon tea followed by wine and nibbles at the completion of play. It was a very enjoyable and fun day of bridge.



The next Western Region event is the **Novice Pairs** which is being held at Torquay on **Saturday 15th October**. We hope many of you will be able to attend.

Jenny Johnstone

Rank Promotions

Congratulations to the following members who have received new Masterpoint rankings.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Graduate | Barbara Wilson-Browne Fiona Johnston Judith Jenkins |
| Bronze Local | Peter Horan |
| Silver Local | David Casey |
| Regional | Bill Rowley |
| State | Alan Blackburn Wendy Dennis |
| Silver Life | Dot Peacock |

PIZZA SUNDAYS

The next Pizza Sunday is on the
25 September 2022

Please come along and join in the fun,
but be sure to put your name on the list if
you wish to attend.

The next beginners lessons are
starting on 3 October at
7.00pm.

Members are encouraged to
take a flyer to give to their
friends.

YARRAWONGA 1992
SWISS TEAMS

| R# | TEAM | R1 | R2 | R3 | Tot | PL | R4 | R5 | Tot |
|----|-------------------------|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1 | D WATFIELD S BELLAMY | 14 | 19 | 15 | 48 | 12 | 8 | 2 | 58 |
| 2 | L ALLCOCK J SPEER | 5 | 25 | 10 | 40 | 20 | 14 | 18 | 52 |
| 3 | A EASTAUGH J TURNELL | 23 | 17 | 8 | 48 | 9 | 13 | 23 | 45 |
| 4 | T HACKETT J HACKETT | 25 | 15 | 22 | 62 | 1 | 16 | 11 | 44 |
| 5 | S GARTLETT J MILLMAN | 21 | 16 | 21 | 58 | 4 | 21 | 1 | 42 |
| 6 | BARKER BARKER | 24 | 20 | 14 | 58 | 5 | 15 | | 49 |
| 7 | AITCHISON J EDDIE | 11 | 11 | 15 | 37 | 13 | 22 | | 35 |

This is how competition results used to look.
Thanks for the photo **Dot Peacock**.

Vale

Esme Jouita Baptista(14/12/1939– 3/7/2022)

A quiet achiever

A well educated Singaporean of Indian origin, Esme's interests were literature and history. She later ventured into journalism, a career few women dared to choose at that time. This gave her the opportunity to travel extensively. At one stage she was Editor of Singapore Airlines Newsletter.



Esme later chose to make her home in Geelong, joining her daughter and family and learning bridge. She was a quietly spoken, much loved and respected member of the Club.

She was elected Secretary in 2004 under Geoff Temple's Presidency and followed on with Michael Stokie. She said learning to play Bridge at the Club was her best decision and that, as someone said, the love for the game stems from the intellectual stimulation it provides, the potential for constant improvement and the camaraderie among its players.

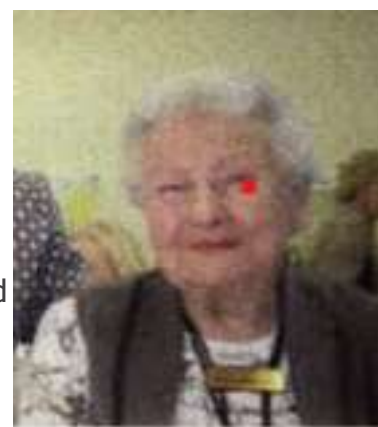
Moving into retirement living some years ago, she eventually went into care where she passed away on 3 July, aged in her 90's.

Dot Peacock (with thanks to those who helped with their memories)

Vale

Sybil Cecilia Bowman (21/12/24 - 16/07/2022)

Loved wife of Jack (dec) and mother of Tony, Judy, Moira, Gill, Chris (dec) and Clare. Adored gran and great grandmother. Loved mother in law of Carol, Peter and Robyn.



Sybil was born in Gippsland and spent most of her married life in Mitcham. She played Bridge at Yarra Valley before retiring to Geelong in 2005. One of her regular Bridge partners, Margaret Barrett, recalls that Sybil was a very good golfer, playing one year in an Australia-wide competition and placing 17th.

Sybil started playing Bridge with her parents at the age of 11 and advised beginners to play regularly. Her favourite convention was Gerber and Paul Marston was one of her favourite Bridge authors.

*Thanks to **Margaret Barrett** for her memories of Sybil.*

Vale

Lois Donald (2/4/31 to 14/7/22)

Lois was a member of GBC from the mid 90's when she retired to Clifton Springs after an extremely active business life. She played most of her bridge with the late Graeme Mitchell and was always an entertaining opponent with a flair for the unexpected.

Her many interests outside bridge included test cricket, current affairs, Jane Austen Society and politics. She was held in high regard in Liberal circles, so much so that she invited the then PM, John Gorton as guest speaker to a fund raiser at her Mt. Eliza home. Of course he came!

Her other love was her beloved St. Kilda Football Club. Indeed, on the occasion of their last grand final appearance she and fellow tragic Rose Humeniuk played bridge together and had themselves and their table decorated in their team colours. A very brave effort in front of the home town crowd!

Lois loved to travel, having a two year working holiday in the U.K in the 1980s as well as several trips abroad. Indeed, in her seventies she took herself off to Morocco for some weeks to study Arabic, duly arriving back with her certificate in hand.

I particularly loved her wicked sense of humour, no better evidenced than the first time she appeared at the bridge table with a walking stick. Fellow player Doris Gunn asked with some concern 'why the stick?' to which a deadpan Lois replied - "That's to hit you with when you open 1NT with a singleton!"

Lois returned to Melbourne about 2016 where she was still one of the most active residents at the retirement home in South Melbourne until her passing.

Dot Peacock

Coming Up—Club and Regional Events

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Wednesday 7 September | Annual General Meeting |
| Thursday 15 September | Restricted Teams 1/2 |
| Friday 16 September | Nationwide Pairs |
| Thursday 22 September | Restricted Teams 2/2 |
| Wednesday 28 September & 5 October | Open Pairs A (qual) |
| Friday 30 September & 7 October | Open Pairs B (qual) |
| Wednesday 12 & 19 October | Open Pairs Finals |
| Saturday 15 October | Western Region Novice Pairs (Torquay) |
| Monday 17 & 24 October | Intermediate Pairs |
| Tuesday 25 October | Seniors Mini Congress |

Interpreting Partner's Irresolute Actions

Interpreting partner's irresolute actions: Part 1

First, I want you to interpret three auctions. I know it looks like one but there are three!

W N E S
 1S 2D 2S 3D
 3S* P

Auction 1: partner bids 3S very quickly

Auction 2: partner bid 3S in normal tempo

Auction 3: partner bid 3S very slowly

Make up your mind and make a note of your answers before reading on.

Secondly, I want you to interpret 3 more auctions.

W N E S
 1S 2D 2S 3D
 P* P

Auction 4: partner passed very quickly

Auction 5: partner passed in normal tempo

Auction 6: partner passed very slowly

Make up your mind and make a note of your answers before reading on.

Interpreting partner's irresolute actions: Part 2

The normal interpretation of these auctions is something like

- Partner has an obvious 3S bid and there was never any chance of him passing.
- Partner's normal tempo should offer no inference that he was thinking of passing.
- Partner's slow bid suggests that he might have passed (colloquially, he has a two and a half spade bid.)
- Partner has a minimum hand with not the slightest interest in bidding on.
- Partner's normal tempo should offer no inference either way.
- Partner's slow pass suggests he was considering bidding on (another two and a half S bid!)

The problem with auctions 1,3,4,6 is that we have an insight into partner's thinking which came from the tempo of his bid. However, the Laws of Bridge (Law 16 to be specific) say that players may only use information from legal calls or plays and may not use information from extraneous sources and specifically mentions the following extraneous sources - questions or remarks, unexpected alert, failure to alert, **unmistakable hesitation**, **unwonted speed**, special emphasis, tone, gesture or mannerism. So, we see that partner is providing extraneous information which we are not allowed to use!

Continued next page

So, what does this all mean?

Auction 1 suggests partner is keen to bid on and suggests the partner should lean in that direction.

Auction 3 suggests partner is minimum and responder should lean to passing.

Auction 4 suggests partner is minimum and responder should lean to passing.

Auction 6, suggests partner is not minimum and wants to bid and partner should lean to bidding on.

All of these auctions are providing extraneous information and to use it is illegal (L16) and, if you do use it, the director may well adjust the scores, usually by disallowing that bid and putting in the score for the last bid. In all of these cases, partner should avoid the action which is suggested by partner's tempo. Yes, you may get a poor score but it is partner's fault, not yours and nobody will talk about you away from the table!

Auction 6, the slow pass, is the most common one in terms of director calls since it makes it clear partner has values but without calling. It is damaging to partner whose choices are now constrained to actions which are not suggested by the break in tempo (or BIT) i.e. the slow pass.

After partner's BIT (usually a hesitation), you must decide what your logical alternatives are at that point. Having identified them, you should choose from among the options which are not suggested by the break in tempo. Partner should usually pass rather than take any borderline action suggested by the hesitation. If Pass is not an option, i.e. partner has made a forcing bid or preference is expected, then you are allowed to bid normally.

Interpreting partner's irresolute actions: Part 3

What should happen at the table when a player breaks tempo? Firstly, just ask the other side if they agree there has been a hesitation (or break in tempo). If they agree, just play on and if you are unhappy with the result at the end of the hand, call the director. If they disagree about the hesitation, call the director then.

The director may ask a few questions to decide whether there has been a hesitation or not. Normally, you will then be instructed to play the hand out to obtain a result. At the end of play if you are unhappy with the result, summon the director again. The director will listen to claims and make a ruling that the score stands or that an adjustment is necessary. When there is a playing director, this last process sometimes has to wait till the end of play.

There are a couple of things to note.

1. It is not illegal to hesitate, but doing so may constrain your partner's legal choices in the auction.
2. Partner is not absolutely required to pass although this is not an uncommon outcome in part score battle auctions. If partner has sufficient values, they can continue the auction normally. After 1H-2H, the 2H bidder is unlikely to be able to convince anyone to let them bid 4H after a later pass or slow 3H bid by their partner.

3. If the director awards an adjusted score, they may do this by simply disallowing the bid after the slow pass and assigning the score for the earlier contract making the normal number of tricks.
4. If the auction is already game forcing, both players are allowed to bid on normally to game.
5. If the auction is slam going, there is one well known problem. Suppose spades are agreed and opener uses RKC and gets some reply and hesitates before signing off in 5S and responder bids 6S. If opener was short key cards for slam, they would signoff without hesitation. When they hesitate and signoff in 5S, it is clear that there are enough keycards but they want to get partner to make the decision about slam. This is illegal and this misdemeanour is named "Hesitation Blackwood". Directors rule back to 5S in their sleep!

Douglas Newlands

(By the way, does the style of writing in this article look familiar? Victorian Bridge Association articles by the Knave of Clubs ring a bell? You guessed it—the Knave of Clubs is our very own Douglas Newlands. See his latest contribution in the September 2022 VBA Bulletin. Editor)

Geelong Bridge Club Beginners Lessons

Commencing Monday 3 October 2022 at 7.00pm

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