

A MINOR BIDDING ISSUE

Terry Pearson

It can be a nervous moment when a significant system change is put to the test. Such an occasion arose for me in this year's Regional GNOT Qualifying event.

For those not in the know, I mention that the GNOT is a unique kind of event in Australia. The regulations have this to say about its scope:

The Grand National Open Teams Championship of Australia (GNOT) is a national, Australia-wide bridge event administered by the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF). The twofold mandate of the GNOT is (i) to make a national bridge event and its associated benefits, e.g. the award of gold masterpoints, readily accessible to every bridge club in Australia irrespective of location and to every bridge player in Australia irrespective of domicile, and (ii) in so doing, to promote the game of bridge throughout the nation.

In November of each year, the GNOT Championship takes place in Tweed Heads, NSW. The format is unusual. Instead of the usual Swiss draw, it is run as a knockout teams with a repechage Swiss for eliminated teams. The finals are contested by the last four teams in the knockout and the top two teams from the repechage.

The GNOT has a field of 64 teams from around Australia and each state qualifies teams according to the guidelines. South Australia is entitled to qualify two teams from SABA, an Under Grand Master team and a Regional clubs team—regional in this context meaning all clubs other than SABA. In keeping with the GNOT mandate, bridge players who find themselves in remote areas where it is impractical to run, or participate in, a qualifying event can also apply for direct qualification to the GNOT.

Thus, on Sunday 21 August 2016, teams from Adelaide Bridge Centre, Broken Hill, St Vincent, Glenelg, Bridge in the City, Barossa and Reynella, as well as a youth team, gathered at St Vincent Bridge Club for the Regional GNOT Qualifying Final to select the South Australian Regional representative team.

John and I were playing with John and Alison Sturgul in Adelaide Bridge Centre 3. In the final match of the day, we met Bridge in the City 2. On the second board of the match, sitting west, I picked up this rather unpromising collection:

♠ 5
♥ T 6
♦ J 5 4 3 2
♣ Q 9 8 6 3

In first position, green against red, partner opened 2NT showing 21-22 HCP in a balanced hand. Like most players, we use Stayman and transfers to find our major suit fits, but our mechanisms for investigating minor suit fits have tended to be less well-developed. Until now, that is.

Recently, we (by which I mean John!) devised a scheme based on Minor Suit Stayman which

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we named McPhee, where a response of 3 ♠ shows a hand that is 5-4 or more in the minors, is forcing for one round and initiates a dialogue intended to find minor suit games or slams but which still allows the partnership to play in 3NT or stop in 4 ♣ or 4 ♦.

Of course, I am not obliged to use McPhee just because my hand has the required shape: passing 2NT is still an option. How should I assess my hand? Because I am 5-5, the 2NT opening affords me the guarantee of at least one 8-card minor suit fit. My values, while limited, are in my long suits, and I can visualise my baby diamonds being put to good use soaking up major suit losers in a suit contract.

How much does context matter? I observe that, throughout the day, each time I return to our home table, Alison has been reinforcing that, 'It's teams, Terry! You've got to bid the close games.' Accordingly, I am starting to take a few more risks. Moreover, I am emboldened by the fact that on the previous board, we have just made a close 4 ♠ on a hand where a 5 ♣ 'sacrifice' against us would not just have been profitable, but would have actually made. I decided not to let 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would'. I took the plunge and bid 3 ♠.

Partner has options now. With no 4-card minor and strong values in the majors, he may still attempt to settle in 3NT. (I have already decided that if he does, I will pull it to 4C as a pass-or-correct signoff.) Partner may himself bid four of a minor, suggesting that a Roman Keycard ask may take us past our last making contract unless I have a good few controls and wish to advance the auction in spite of his caution. If he thinks game is a fair chance but slam is unlikely, he can bid game in either minor directly, or bid 4NT which would say, essentially, 'My minors are equal length, choose a minor suit game or bid on!'

In fact, John has four-card club support and is rich in minor suit controls, so he bids 4 ♥, which is a Roman Keycard ask in clubs. Evidently, he has a hand that is prepared to contemplate slam,

but when I make the minimum step bid showing 0-3, holding four keycards, he signs off in 5 ♣. This is the whole deal:

	♠ K J 9 8 3	
	♥ A Q 3	
	♦ T 9 6	
	♣ J 5	
♠ 5		♠ A Q 4
♥ T 6		♥ J 4 2
♦ J 5 4 3 2		♦ A K 7
♣ Q 9 8 6 3		♣ A K T 4
	♠ T 7 6 2	
	♥ K 9 8 7 5	
	♦ Q 8	
	♣ 7 2	

Seven EW pairs gambled on 3NT with three going one off on a heart lead and four making 10, 11 or 12 on a spade lead, while four others found a safe minor suit partscore. One NS pair tried 3 ♠ and went two off doubled for -500 (a bottom at matchpoints, but in teams only -2 IMPs against 3NT making 10 at the other table), while one South boldly stole the auction and played in 2 ♥, going only one off against 3 NT making, for a swing of +8 IMPs.

At our table, on the lead of ♣ 7, partner immediately drew trumps and took the spade finesse, subsequently expressing regret that he hadn't tested the diamonds first. Sometimes God smiles: on this lie of the cards, there was no way to go wrong. The ♠ Q held, the ♦ Q dropped doubleton and he collected 12 tricks, as did one other pair in the field of 18. This was worth +7 IMPs as our opponents were one of three pairs who, not unreasonably, settled for 2NT and made eight on a heart lead.

Putting aside the successful outcome on this occasion, the question arises: was McPhee the right bid to make on this hand? 'I would rather you had had at least a king for the 3 ♠ bid', commented partner afterwards. I pointed out that I too would rather have had a king for the

A Minor Bidding Issue (Continued)

3♠ bid, but that that wasn't the deal (pun intended). How good is the game in terms of percentages? If the defence start by taking their two heart tricks, the spade finesse is irrelevant but we need the ♦ Q to drop doubleton (or singleton, given that the outstanding trumps are 2-2 and declarer can ruff the two losing spades and a losing diamond.) With five cards missing in the suit, a 3-2 break is more or less 68%, but a queen doubleton is only two-fifths of all the 3-2 breaks, which makes it about a 27 per cent chance. The 4-1 break is a 28 per cent chance but the queen singleton is only one-fifth of the 4-1 breaks, which increases the odds only by a meagre 5.6 per cent, making a total of just 33 per cent – well short of the 50 per cent one would prefer when bidding game.

However, a heart lead is not a foregone conclusion. South, who has paid attention to the bidding, takes into account that the strong hand is on her right and declines to lead away from her ♥ K, instead making what she hopes will be at worst a neutral lead of the ♣ 7, and that changes the odds. Now we need either the ♦ Q doubleton or the spade finesse, as the spade finesse

generates a pitch for a heart loser, meaning that declarer can afford to give up a diamond trick. In this case, declarer may test the diamonds first and, if the ♦ Q doesn't drop, the spade finesse remains a 50-50 chance, increasing the overall chance of the game making to somewhere over 60 per cent. Phew! I have some chance of 'winning the post-mortem' in spite of my inability to be dealt a king, and McPhee's first outing may be called a success.

ABC3 went on to win the match and the day, and our team, augmented by John and Carole Foreman, is looking forward to representing Regional South Australia at the GNOT Championship.

It is always a special pleasure to participate in teams bridge. The Regional GNOT Qualifying Final was an entertaining day's play and we enjoyed meeting some new players and re-acquainting ourselves with others from a range of clubs. Our thanks go to St Vincent Bridge Club for hosting the event, David Anderson for directing and Phil Gue, the regional coordinator, as well as both the SABF and the ABF.

ABF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

On Sunday 11th September, Joan Butts conducted the second ABF professional development day for teachers in Adelaide. A group of 11 participated and included teachers (and interested players) from various SA clubs. Participation in these days, organised and funded by the ABF, earns 10 points towards Teacher Accreditation.

Joan reinforced the STEAM principle, for teachers to use when conducting classes: S (Student Safety), T (Timing), E (Energy), A (Attitude), M (Material).

The emphasis for the day was on Defence – with boards designed to highlight strategies for defensive play. The set hands were played and then analysed.



Attendees: Arthur Porter, Wendy Hopkins, John Smith, Julia Hendry, Jill Allanson, Angela Norris, Rita Jones, Ray Jones, Herb Neumeister, Bruce Hendry, Marg Neumeister

BILL HUGHES SIMULTANEOUS PAIRS

International Bridge Tournament

By David Stevenson

Liverpool, England, UK

The Bill Hughes Simultaneous Pairs started as a small Simultaneous pairs event between three clubs in Merseyside in England. It has grown a lot, but it tries to be the cheapest international Simultaneous Pairs, despite giving out 50% of the entry as prizes and trophies. Scoring is across the field, and each player gets a booklet with a commentary on the hands. In Australia ABF Red master points are given on a scale based on the pair's overall position.

This year there were 68 clubs from 15 countries (including Malta, USA, Wales, France, New Zealand, Kenya, Aruba and Iceland!) with 962 pairs playing the same cards in the same week. While the largest number of clubs is in England, the second largest number is in Australia. The winners were from Australia both this year and last year, and this year the pair that came second was from Australia as well.

Two clubs in South Australia participated, Riverland Bridge Club and Victor Harbor Bridge Club, an unaffiliated club in Encounter Bay.

Susan Britton and Peter Moller from Riverland won overall, Juliette Griffiths & Carole Maple were 23rd, Pat Elliott & John Elliott from Victor Harbor were 34th, Helen Smith & Vonnie Hondow were 90th and Grace Altschwager & Marg Phillips were 94th.

Full results may be seen at: <http://www.simpairs.com/default.asp?session=005531>

Over the years the number of clubs participating in England has gone down, but the number in other countries has increased, so in fact there were more clubs this year than ever before. Since special arrangements are made for money collection in Australia (it is all collected by one Australian club and a single payment transferred to England) it is very easy for Australian clubs to hold it and with ABF points being given it is hoped the number of Australian clubs will increase.

REPORT ON 2016 BRIDGE IN THE BAROSSA CONGRESS

The Ninth annual Bridge in the Barossa Congress was held on 23/24 July at the pleasant Tanunda Bowling Club.

On Saturday 19 tables enjoyed a pairs event which, in the afternoon, was divided into three sections. Final winners of the first section were Attilio De Luca and Susan Emerson, followed by Gary and Sue Hollands, then Linda Alexander and Dianne Marler. Consolation winners were Jill Allanson and Kevin Jones, then Jack Gallagher and Tony Ward, Angela Norris and Gopal Hingorani. Section C winners were Carolyn and Chris Mroczek from Eunice Kampman and Valerie Paltridge, followed by Herb and Margaret Neumeister.

The Sunday produced amazing results for the field of 18 teams. Final winners were Jones, Ray and Rita Jones with Les Barnett and Trevor Darling from Kadina. Second were Moller, Dianne Marler and Linda Alexander with Susan Britton and Peter Moller, then Dunbar, Lauren Travis and Howard Melbourne with Jarrad Dunbar and Justin Williams.

In all a significant amount was distributed in cash and wine prizes. The congress was held in very comfortable surroundings, with suitable lunches well organised by Jill and the Club ladies. And quite a few enjoyed dinner at the Tanunda Club on Saturday. David Anderson directed the happy competitors in his usual efficient manner and the event was enjoyed by all. Next year's Congress is now scheduled for 1/2 July 2017.

DIRECTORS' FORUM

On Sunday 14 August, David Anderson conducted a forum for directors and prospective directors at the SABA clubrooms. It was attended by directors from Adelaide Bridge Centre, Bridge in the Barossa, and the Gawler, Glenelg and Tea Tree Gully bridge clubs as well as a few interested parties who are not yet qualified directors.

The leading topic for discussion was hesitations, which creates the most work for directors. A hesitation or a bid out of tempo may give rise to unauthorised information – that is, that partner had something to think about. When directors are called in relation to a hesitation, the key thing they should consider is whether or not the hesitation has resulted in damage. Just because a hesitation has occurred, it is not a foregone conclusion that it has resulted to damage. For example, a player may make the same bid they would have made irrespective of their partner's hesitation, or the offending side may end up in a contract that does not result in an improved score for their side compared to the auction that may have occurred without the hesitation. In such a case, the unauthorised information will not have resulted in actual damage.

It is apparent that some players believe that once their partner has hesitated, they are barred from the auction, but this is not so. In fact, such thinking may lead to a deliberate hesitation from a player who wishes to silence their partner! If the hesitation itself is disputed, the director should look at the cards to consider how plausible it is that the player made a bid or pass in tempo. This then led to some discussion of the quick pass being equally likely to give rise to unauthorised information as a hesitation. Other jurisdictions use the 'stop card' to enforce a prescribed pause following a jump in the bidding to give players time to consider their options

without breaking tempo, but their use was discontinued in Australia.

Ian Ramsay and Mick Koziol from Gawler said that a problem in their club was players not calling the director when an infraction occurs and trying to resolve the issue on their own, which sometimes resulted in their making up their own rulings.

Arthur Porter from Glenelg raised the issue that, from time to time, the practice of placing the bidding cards on the board results in a lead out of turn in circumstances where a defender believes that the placement of the cards indicates they are on lead. It was pointed out that such a situation would be avoided if players made their opening lead face down.

The topic of psyching was touched on, with most clubs having rules that ban light openings in first and second position or prohibit the use of multi-two openings against protect players.

There was some discussion about directors playing while also directing. Difficulties may arise where a director is called to a table that is playing a hand they haven't yet played themselves. Playing directors should arrange to sit somewhere where they can easily see around the room.

Prospective directors were urged to take the club directors' exam, and club directors were urged to 'upgrade' their qualifications to become congress directors and state directors. It was noted that there is a shortage of qualified state directors. Taking the exam can be arranged by contacting David Parrott who will provide a copy of the exam paper. The exam is open book and will be assessed by David Anderson, once (he says) he has looked up the answers!

Terry Pearson

RESULTS

SABF COMPETITIONS

State Teams Phase I

1. Peter Colmer, Andrew Eddie, Judy Hocking, Kevin Lange
2. Attilio De Luca, Peter Chan, David Lusk, Joel Gue
3. Mark Jappe, Marc Deaton, George Evans, John Maddison

State Singles Championship

1. Kevin Lange
2. John Zollo
3. Paul Hudson

Open Trials Qualifying

1. David Anderson & George Smolanko
2. Russel Harms & Jeff Travis
3. Attilio De Luca & David Lusk

State Mixed Pairs Championship

1. Peter Colmer & Susan Phillips
2. Gamini Amerasinghe & Anne Harris
3. Alison & Gordon Fallon

GNOT – Under Grand Master Qualifying

1. Mark Jappe, Marc Deaton, George Evans, John Maddison
2. Brian Leach, Carolyn Leach, Sandy Leach, Peter Mika
3. Georg Trzesinski, Jackie Franco, Alex Bremner, Gamini Amerasinghe

GNOT Regional Qualifying

1. ABC 3. Alison Sturgul, John Sturgul, Terry Pearson, John Pearson
2. Glenelg 2. Petter Carlmark, Kari Heikkonen, Bill Jensen, Kathy Quinn
3. ABC 1. Margaret Walters, David Shilling, Carole Foreman, John Foreman.

SABF Disciplinary By-Laws

The SABF have updated procedures for dealing with complaints/disputes. These new procedures can be found under "Regulations" on the SABF website. In summary, a complaint has to be lodged in writing with the Secretary, President or Director within seven days of the dispute.

Player Suspensions

It is Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) policy that:-

- a. Players suspended at national level will be barred from playing at all national events **and** all state events for the period of suspension.
- b. Players suspended at state level will also be barred from playing at all national events for the period of suspension.

If a player is suspended by a club, the SABF is not obliged to suspend the player from state events, but may choose to do so. Similarly, other affiliated clubs may choose to ban the player from their club events, at their discretion.

CONGRESS RESULTS

Barossa Bridge Congress

Pairs Section A

1. Sue Emerson & Attilio De Luca
2. Gary & Sue Hollands
3. Linda Alexander & Dianne Marler

Pairs Section B

1. Jill Allanson & Kevin Jones
2. Jack Gallagher & Tony Ward
3. Gopal Hingorani & Angela Norris

Pairs Section C

1. Carolyn & Chris Mroczek
2. Eunice Kampman & Valerie Paltridge
3. Herb & Marg Neumeister

Teams

1. Ray Jones, Rita Jones, Les Barnett, Trevor Darling
2. Peter Moller, Susan Britton, Linda Alexander, Dianne Marler
3. Justin Williams, Lauren Travis, Howard Melbourne, Jarrad Dunbar

Riverland Congress

Pairs Championship:

1. Linda Alexander & Dianne Marler
2. Felicity Smyth & Jeff Travis
3. Attilio De Luca & Susan Emerson

Consolation:

1. George Evans & Lauren Travis
2. Chris Brady & Barbara Keil
3. Paul Hudson & Justin Williams

Teams

1. Justin Williams, Felicity Smyth, Jeff Travis, Paul Hudson
2. Attilio De Luca, Sue Emerson, Judy Hocking, Kevin Lange
3. Helen Kite, Chris Barnwell, Helen Rollond, Jane Caddy

Glenelg Swiss Pairs Congress

Section A

1. Attilio De Luca & John Zollo
2. Peter Teubner & Neil Welch
3. Carmel & Norman Thompson

Section B

1. Catherine Ellice-Flint & Robert Martin
1. Julie Boyce & Christine Thomas
2. Adel Abdelhamid & Sue Lusk

Section C

1. Josie Cock & Helen Wetherell
2. Kari Heikkonen & Bill Jensen
3. Geraldine Eitzen & Sylvia Newton

SABF MATTERS

2016 Management Committee

President	John Zollo	gzollo@bigpond.net.au
Secretary	Margaret Walters	margaret.walters@bigpond.com
Treasurer	Paul Walker	pvwalker@gmail.com
Education & Training	David Parrott	yadi.david@bigpond.com
Tournament Committee, Chairperson	David Anderson	revoke1@live.com
Committee	David Anderson	revoke1@live.com
Committee	Bob Clarke	rclark01@ozemail
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Committee	Sue Phillips	suejohnp@tpg.com.au
Committee	Phil Gue	adelaidebridge@bigpond.com
Committee	Jeanette Lunnie	jeanette.lunnie@bigpond.com
Committee	Jinny Fuss	jinny@panorama.sa.co

Tournament Committee

- David Anderson
- David Parrott
- Phil Gue
- Carole Foreman
- Bob Clarke

Contact members of this committee about issues relating to the timing, format, and organizing of SABF events.

This newsletter is published quarterly. Send contributions by email to the SABF. **Copy deadline** for the next issue is **25 Nov 2016**

HELP NEEDED

The South Australian Bridge Federation (SABF) is the administrative body that works with South Australian bridge clubs to promote bridge in this state. Representatives from affiliated clubs make up the Management Committee. Members of the Committee organise training courses for directors and teachers; state bridge tournaments; and the selection of state representatives. While most of the tasks are undertaken by the Committee on a voluntary basis some tasks attract payment. We are seeking help from club members who are able to help with the roles listed below.

Newsletter Editor:

Tasks: obtain articles, check copy, liaise with the person handling the formatting, organise the posting to the web, printing copies and posting to SA clubs through Australia Post. Publish quarterly.

Tournament Organiser/Promotions Officer:

Tasks: advertise and promote each event, liaise with venue, take entries, find substitutes, arrange for boards to be dealt, recruit directing staff and caddies. Chair the Tournament Committee.

ANOT Assistant Convenor:

Tasks: Assist the Convenor with the promotion and preparation for the Autumn National Teams tournament.

Please contact one of the Committee members above to express your interest.

SABF EVENTS

SABF Club Congresses

Sunday 9 October	Edwardstown	Bridge in the City Congress
Saturday 5 November	Gawler	Gawler Teams Congress
Saturday 31 December	ABC	New Year's Eve Congress

SABF Events October – December 2016

The full Calendar of Events for 2016 is available online at:-

http://www.sabridgefederation.com.au/docs/Calendar_of_Events/SABF_Calendar_2016.pdf

State Teams Phase 2 Venue: SABA Thursday 7.30pm	Thursday 6 Oct, 13 Oct, 20 Oct
State Pairs Qualifying Venue: SABA Thursday 7.30pm	Thursday 27 Oct, 3 Nov, 10 Nov
State Teams Final Venue: SABA Tuesday 7.30pm	Tuesday 1 Nov, 8 Nov, 15 Nov, 22 Nov, 29 Nov, 13 Dec
State Pairs Final and Consolation Venue: SABA Thursday 7.30pm	Thursday 17 Nov 1 Dec, 8 Dec
State Pairs Consolation Venue: SABA Thursday 7.30pm	Thursday 24 Nov
SABF Christmas Party – Speedball Pairs Venue: SABA Thursday 7.30pm	Thursday 15 Dec

GNOT Finals

GNOT Finals Tweed Heads	Friday 25 th to Monday 28 th November
GNOT Pairs Tweed Heads	Sunday 27 th November

SABF Youth Bridge and Cards Club

Every Saturday afternoon, 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Adelaide Bridge Centre, 209 Glen Osmond Rd, Frewville.

For players between 7-24 years keen-to learn bridge, and similar card games (whist, mini bridge etc)

* NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED *

Included is a Sausage Sizzle lunch, and it is free.

If you are coming for the first time please contact the Adelaide Bridge Centre, phone 83792044 or email adelaidebridge@bigpond.com

Experienced youth bridge players (members of the ABF Youth Club) can come to the Saturday afternoon duplicate free of charge (1pm – 4.15pm) and enjoy the sausage sizzle too!

*Youth players under 18yrs will need to have their parent/guardian complete the SABF Youth Club consent form.