

MVBC DIGITAL HANDBOOK

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History

Moonee Valley Bridge Club commenced in 1975. Some of the members then, including the inaugural president, are still playing bridge now at the club. In the early 2000's, we moved to our current location, sharing facilities with Moonee Valley Bowls Club. We currently have over 400 members, making us the third largest club in Victoria.

Sessions/Fees

Regular sessions are held on: -

Sunday 1.30pm

Monday 1pm and 7.15pm

Tuesday 1pm* and 7.15pm**

Thursday 1pm*

Friday 1pm – Social Bridge on the 1st Friday of each month

1pm – Practice and Development on the 3rd Friday of each month

*Less experienced players can be accommodated in a section at these two sessions

**Tuesday night has a supervised Beginner's Duplicate section.

Membership fees are payable by end of February each year and are

\$50 for club members

\$25 for non-home club members (i.e. members who are already members of another bridge club but also wish to belong to MVBC)

Session fees as at 1st April, 2025 are \$10, this includes all red point events.

Please note we are a “cashless” club, and payments for membership and playing vouchers may be paid by EFTPOS and/or through MyABF.

Players should be seated 10 minutes before the scheduled start time, so as to enable the Director to plan the movement.

You are welcome to arrive without a partner- if so please arrive 20 minutes prior to the start time and inform the Director that you require a partner. The Director will organize a partner for you, or if no one is available, he/she will play with you.

Note for large sessions (Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, and Tuesday night), there will be a standby player always available.

Committees

MVBC is run by a committee of 9 people. Office bearers President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and five ordinary committee members. The committee is elected by members at the Annual General Meeting each year.

There are 3 subcommittees reporting regularly to the main committee, focusing on Education, Events and Facilities.

The club is entirely run by volunteers, and we are grateful to all those who pitch in to help run our community club.

Directors

a) Role

MVBC has 6 directors who organise the seating and oversee the running of the sessions. The Director's role is to ensure smooth running of the game, to run the scoring and to assist when called to rule on any irregularities.

For example, the wrong defender may make the opening lead, when this happens, the director will offer several options to the innocent party according to the "Laws of Duplicate Bridge". The laws are designed so that no pair is disadvantaged by an irregularity. The Director will not apportion blame but will try to ensure that the laws of bridge are observed and both parties are not disadvantaged.

Whenever an irregularity occurs such as insufficient bid, revoke etc., the Director should be called, instead of players trying to resolve the situation.

b) Movements

The Director also organizes the movement of players during a session. There are 2 types of movement that are used regularly – Mitchell and Howell.

In a Mitchell movement North/South remain stationary, but East/West move to a higher numbered table (1>2, 7>8 etc), and boards that have just been played move to a lower number table (2>1, 8>7 etc). When there is an even number of tables, halfway through the session East/West will be told to skip a table, i.e. move 2 tables not 1. This is to ensure that no pair will play boards that they have already played.

A Howell movement is usually used when there is a small number of tables (5 or less). In this movement every pair moves at the end of each round. So, you may play North/South at table 2 and then play East/West at table 4. This movement ensures that each pair plays every other pair, and 1 overall winner can be determined. In a Howell movement it is vital to check the Bridgemate so that you know which table to go to for the next round.

c) Scoring

In bridge, your score on a board is compared to all the other players who played that board in the same direction. So, in a Mitchell movement, if you are 3EW, your score on each board will be compared with and ranked with 1EW, 2EW, 4EW etc. So, at every board played you have many opponents – the pair you are currently playing against, and all the other pairs who will play this board in the same direction.

At the end of the session, each board is scored for all who played it, by the scoring program on the Director's computer. The scores will range from 0% through 50% to 100% for each pair on each board. These are then averaged over the total number of boards to provide a final ranking.

Etiquette

Bridge is a game for enjoyment and competition. We must ensure that in competing we do not spoil the enjoyment of ourselves, our partner or our opponents.

When you pick up your cards, immediately count them face down, and call the Director if there are not 13 cards in your hand.

It is unethical to convey any information to your partner by facial expression or body language. We should strive to always bid and play in the same tempo and manner.

You may ask one of your opponents to explain a bid, only when it is your turn to bid. Questions should not be asked if you intend to pass, as this may give unauthorised information to your partner.

It is common to say, "thank you partner", when your partner puts down the dummy cards.

Dummy can never suggest which card to play. If declarer says a suit then dummy plays the lowest in that suit.

Make the opening lead face down and wait until your partner says “okay” or “thank you”, to acknowledge that the lead should come from you.

In bidding, when your partner opens 1 club, please advise your opponents of how many clubs are the minimum of your 1 club opening. When your partner opens 1 no trump, please advise your opponent of the number of high card points held for that bid (e.g.15-17).

North/South are in charge of the table, and one of the players will enter the information into the Bridgemate. Either East or West should check the input thoroughly.

North/South are responsible for tidying up at the end of the session, but any assistance from East/West is always appreciated.

All players should remove their own “rubbish” and place used cups in the dishwasher.

If at any time you feel uncomfortable at the table due to poor player behaviour, please call the Director. You may prefer to speak privately to the Director away from the table.

MVBC has zero tolerance for poor behaviour at the bridge table.

Masterpoints

At every regular session of bridge at MVBC, the winners and a number of placegetters (depending on the number of tables) are awarded masterpoints.

Players accrue masterpoints, which are registered by the ABF (Australian Bridge Federation).

Masterpoints come in 3 colours:

- Green – regular sessions at MVBC
- Red – special events, championships at MVBC and congresses throughout Australia
- Gold – National competitions, special congresses

As you accrue masterpoints, you will be promoted in your ABF ranking; Graduate Master, Local Master and Bronze etc.

Many of our special events are restricted to players according to their number of masterpoints.

The categories are:

- Super Novice – under 15 MPs
- Novice – under 50 MPs
- Restricted – under 300 MPs
- Open – for all players

Special Events

MVBC runs many special events throughout each year, including club championships, and events named after members who have made a significant contribution to our club e.g. Eddie Karen, Jenny Date, Judy Larsen, Alan Glasson.

Most of these are Red Point events and require prior registration through MyABF (see section below).

Some events are restricted to those with a maximum number of MPs. See the previous section.

Please refer to our website for a list of all events, and the names of the current title holders.

MyABF

MyABF is an app run by the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) to assist clubs schedule and advertise events and allows players to find, enter and pay for events held throughout Australia.

To set up a myABF account, you will need your ABF number and an email address. Go to the ABF website <https://www.abf.com.au/> and click on the MyABF tab on the top right of the page. Once you have an account, you may register for events at MVBC, by clicking on the links provided via our members' weekly email, or on the MyABF website – use the calendar tab to find the event.

Entry payments are made through MyABF credits - \$1 = 1 MyABF credit. There are no handling fees or hidden charges. You may transfer money to your MyABF account by bank transfer or credit card.

MVBC uses MyABF for registration to special events, championships, our congress, social events, educational events and practice and development afternoons.

Should you require assistance with setting up your myABF account, please reach out to a committee member, who will happily help.

Problems, Complaints

Should you have a problem at MVBC, or wish to lodge a complaint, there are a number of people whom you may contact. If there is an issue with scoring, results of a game or play in a game, the first point of call should be the Director.

If the issue is with the facilities, personnel or related to the running of the club, then you may contact one of the 9 committee members. The President may be contacted via mvbridgepresident@gmail.com

or the Secretary via mvbridgesecretary@gmail.com

MVBC strives to be a friendly community club, and therefore any reasonable complaint will be dealt with promptly.

Library

MVBC has a library with a large range of bridge books available for members to borrow free of charge. Our website has a complete list of all the titles, so you may search by either author or title. The library is located in the small room adjacent to the bar.

The procedure for borrowing is based on an honesty system – choose a book, record your name and the date borrowed on the appropriate page of the library record book. When you return the borrowed book, write the date returned in the record book.

We ask that books be borrowed for only a few weeks, so that all members can have access.

Find a Partner

Members may turn up to any regular session and are guaranteed a game. Often there are other players without a partner, and the director will pair up players. For larger sessions there is always one standby rostered on, and for smaller sessions, the Director will play if necessary.

On the home page of our website is a section “Looking for a Partner”. Go there and fill in the required details and submit the online form.

You may also fill in a paper note and pin it on the noticeboard outside the Director’s office.

You may also talk to the Director of the session: the Director may know of players who are available and looking for a regular partner for that session.

You may talk to committee members as they may be able to sound out players who would be suitable for you as a partner.

Finding a partner does take some work, but bridge is so much more enjoyable with a regular partner.

System Cards

All players should have a system card which lists the range of bids and style of play used with your regular partner.

System cards are mandatory for our championship events and for many other red point events.

The club provides blank ABF system cards free to members. You and your partner may receive help to fill out a system card from one of the Directors. Alternatively on the ABF website you may fill out a system card in PDF form, a comprehensive guide on how to complete your system card is also available on the website. Opponents may look at your system card before the bidding has opened, or during the bidding when it is their turn to bid. They may also review the card when it is their turn to play a card. At their turn to call or play, they are entitled to ask for clarification.

How to Improve Your Bridge

Play, play, and more play!

You are encouraged to keep a hand record as you play and then obtain a record sheet at the end of the session. You then you may review play individually or with your partner (recommended).

The club provides on a regular basis:

- Supervised play
- Mentoring
- Practice and Development sessions
- Social bridge
- Seminars
- Lessons

Full details of these are available on the website, on the home page under the Education – Further Learning tab. The home page will also highlight any upcoming education events. All education events are promoted in the member's weekly email.