

## IMPs to VPs - Changing tactics

For decades teams bridge has been simple - make your contracts, defeat their contracts, don't worry about undoubled overtricks or (additional) undertricks, save your energy for the boards that matter.

The new WBF [victory points scale](#) makes one change this strategy.

Previously matches had been scored with a draw being 15-15 VP and 25 VP the maximum win. The new scale has the draw at 10-10 VP with 20 VP maximum. But there is more to it than that.

The new IMPs to VPs conversion table adopted by the WBF differs in two ways from the old one. Firstly every different IMP win now scores a different number of VPs, which leads to some decimal VP scores. The new continuous scale not only means that every imp makes a difference, secondly there is a bigger reward for small wins. It is this bigger effect of small wins and losses that demonstrates the more important aspect of the scale.

As an example, let us compare the old and new scales for 16-board matches.

So let's consider a 2 IMP win. In the old days this was a draw, so 15-15 VP. Now it is a 10.61-9.39 VP win, so the winning side gets 1.22 VP more than the losers. This may not seem like much, but it is 6% of a maximum win.

More dramatically previous wins in the range 3-7 IMP scored 16-14 VP, so the winners got 2 VP more, about 8% of maximum win. Now a 7 IMP win is 12.03-7.97 VP, so the winners score 4.06 VP more, 20% of a maximum win. The relative positions of the winner and loser are markedly changed.

So if you lose four tight matches, each by 7 IMP, then previously you would now be 4 VP below average and you would need a 19-11 VP win to recover, that is a win by 16 IMP was needed. But the new scale means that you are actually 8 VP below average and need a 40 IMP win to recover.

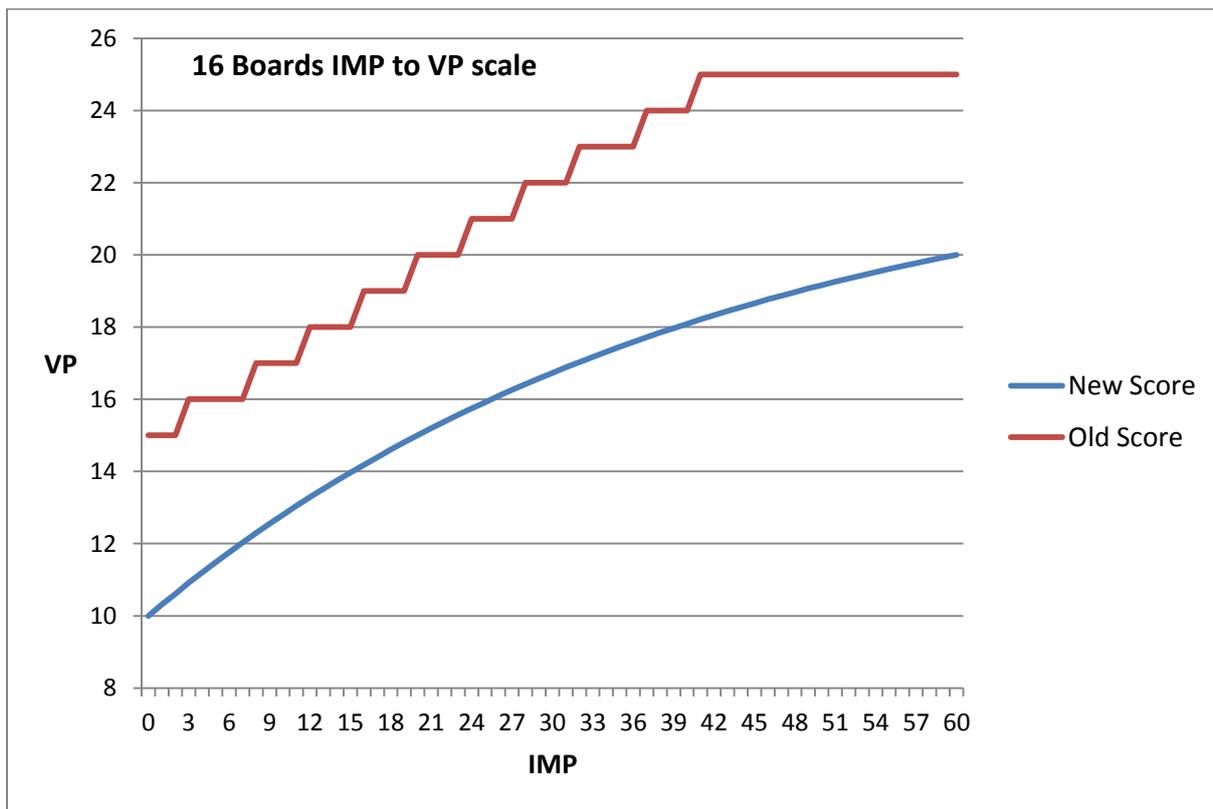
The new scale continues to give relatively greater reward up to 15 IMP wins and then the differences start to reduce, and big wins remain big wins on both scales.

So being on the winning side of these small wins and losses makes a large difference to your eventual score. And this is why overtricks and all undertricks become more important, especially in tight matches.

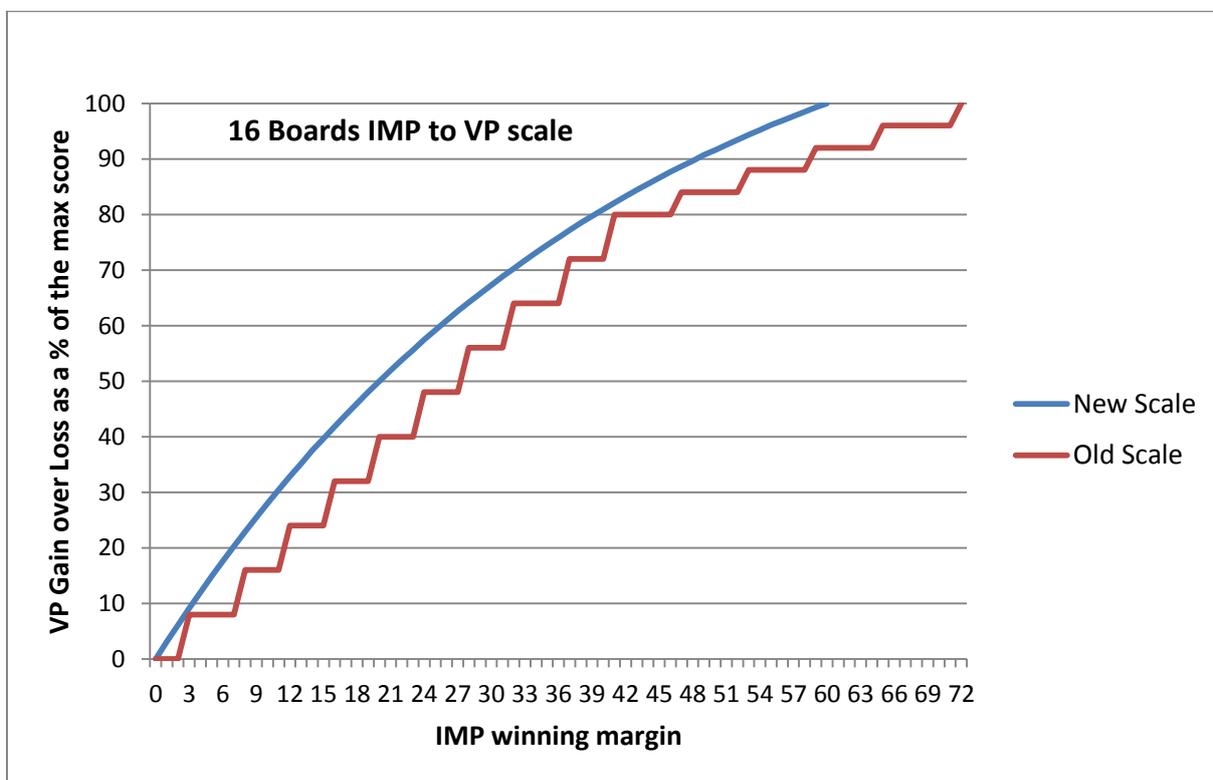
IMP ≠	Old 25 – 5 scale					New 20 – 0 continuous scale				
	Winner	Looser	% gain	% loss	% ≠	Winner	Looser	% gain	% loss	% ≠
02 IMP	15	15	60 %	60 %	0 %	10.61	9.39	53 %	47 %	6 %
07 IMP	16	14	64 %	56 %	8 %	12.03	7.97	60 %	40 %	20 %
10 IMP	17	13	68 %	52 %	16 %	12.80	7.20	64 %	36 %	28 %
15 IMP	18	12	72 %	48 %	24 %	13.97	6.03	70 %	30 %	40 %
20 IMP	20	10	80 %	40 %	40 %	15.00	5.00	75 %	25 %	50 %
30 IMP	22	8	88 %	32 %	56 %	16.73	3.27	84 %	16 %	67 %
40 IMP	24	6	96 %	16 %	72 %	18.09	1.91	90 %	10 %	81 %
45 IMP	25	5	100 %	20 %	80 %	18.66	1.34	93 %	7 %	87 %
50 IMP	25	4	100 %	16 %	84 %	19.16	0.84	96 %	4 %	92 %
60 IMP	25	2	100 %	8 %	92 %	20.00	0.00	100 %	0 %	100 %
70 IMP	25	1	100 %	4 %	96 %					
72 IMP	25	0	100 %	0 %	100 %					

\* % gain & % loss = % of the max score of 25 in the old scale and 20 in the new scale

The graph below shows how IMPs are converted to VPs, on the old and new scales, in absolute values.



The graph below shows how IMPs are converted to VPs, on the old and new scales, the vertical axis measuring the winning margin as a percentage of the maximum win.



You can see the new scoring system is much smoother, and is 'higher' on the left hand side, meaning small IMP wins now have a bigger effect than before. The new scale also flattens off a bit sooner, meaning (for a 16 board match), you get a 100% win at 60 IMPs.