

July 3, 2021

## Bridge with Richard Ward

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This year's Australian National Championships which were due to start in Perth later this week have been postponed to November. Full marks to the organisers for choosing to battle on with this event when they could have simply cancelled altogether, deciding that it was just too difficult in these unpredictable Covid-19 times.

The number of possible bridge hands is debatably greater than  $10^{21}$ . This is relatively small in comparison with the number of chess games which is about  $10^{120}$ . But each game has its own attractions. With chess, the players can see all of the pieces. With bridge, at least twenty-six of the cards in each deal are concealed from each player which adds intriguing elements of probability, psychology and strategic thinking. That is why we keep playing year after year.

NORTH		N/ NS VUL
♠	-	
♥	A K 7 5	
♦	A 9 5 2	
♣	A J 7 6 2	
WEST		EAST
♠	J 6	♠ K 8 5 3
♥	10 9 6 4	♥ Q J 3
♦	K Q J 6	♦ 10 4 3
♣	Q 4 3	♣ K 10 9
SOUTH		
♠	A Q 10 9 7 4 2	
♥	8 2	
♦	8 7	
♣	8 5	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1C	PASS	1S
PASS	2H	PASS	4S
PASS	PASS	PASS	

Many books have been written on the trillions of ways in which certain card combinations should be played for maximum success. There are far too many to memorise so you have to fall back on general principles and work it out at the table. On this hand, after the king of diamonds lead, declarer has to play the trump suit for only one loser. If spades break 3-3 or 4-2 with the king doubleton there are two unavoidable losers. So, the only layout which works is to play for jack of spades to be doubleton. Play the ace then the queen.

**TOOWONG PAIRS:** [Director: Alan Gibson] 1 Pele Rankin / Greer Tucker; 2 John Scrivens / Paul Roberts; 3 Watson Zhou / Charlie Lu; **B** 1 June Glenn / Alan Hamilton; 2 Barbara Kent / Ross Murtagh; 3 Krystyna Homik / Frank Hymus; **C** 1 Sandra Mulcahy / Fiona Hosier; 2 Wal Brake / Jonathan Burley; 3 Valerie & Peter Robbins; **RESTRICTED** 1 Karen Gosney / Jason Cooney; 2 Kathleen Clifford / Sameer Pandya; 3 Linda Lee / Greg Dobson

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