

August 14, 2021

## Bridge with Richard Ward

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One of the legends of the Australian bridge community, Margaret Bourke, passed away last week in Canberra. Arguably one of Australia's finest players, she was regularly successful in both Open and Women's competitions. Her playing record speaks for itself and includes international representation, playing for Australia on no fewer than 31 occasions, attending 47 consecutive National Championships, and winning 74 national titles over her long and consistent career. Marge became the fourth Australian to reach the pinnacle award of Emerald Grand Master – the fourth to do so and the first from outside Sydney.

In addition to her renowned skills in both bidding and play, she was also adept at playing for defensive errors by her opponents when there seemed little technical hope of making the contract as this hand illustrates.

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

WEST	NORTH L BEECH	EAST	SOUTH M BOURKE
	1S	2H	PASS
PASS	DBL	PASS	3C
PASS	3D	PASS	3NT
PASS	PASS	PASS	

The same contract was reached at both tables. West led the nine of hearts. Both East's took the trick with the ace of hearts and returned a heart, taken by the king. At the other table, the declarer continued with ace and another club and East-West had little trouble in defeating 3NT by leaving the heart and club suits untouched for the rest of the play.

At Margaret's table, after winning the second trick with the king of hearts, she saw there was little genuine hope for the contract and instead tried a psychological play. She ran the queen of clubs, expecting that that East would win the trick with the king of clubs and return a heart. When East did just that, Margaret was able to discard the ace of clubs on the queen of hearts and the impossible game was made.

Margaret Bourke was not only a very fine player, but also an actively ethical competitor and a fierce opponent. Vale Marge R.I.P (1945-2021)

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