September 4, 2021

**Bridge with Richard Ward**

“Bridge is a game of honour” said international star Zia Mahmood recently, reflecting on the chaotic events of the European Bridge League Qualifying Teams for next year’s World Championships. The story so far: One of the Italian players had been accused of cheating in 2014 and, following a video investigation by the EBL, the Italian Bridge Federation and the American Contract Bridge League was, with his partner, banned in 2016. On appeal to the Court of Arbitration in Sport in 2017, it was ruled that the allegations had not been proven and so it came to pass that this player turned up to play online as a ratified member of the Italian Open Team last week. In a display of unprecedented and unanimous solidarity, all of the 30 other teams chose to boycott their matches against Italy. For each forfeited match, the Italy team received the regulatory 12 out of 20 victory points while their opponents received zero. At the end of these qualifying rounds the leaders were Switzerland and the Netherlands. In third place, not having played a card, was Italy. What a farce it has been and such a tragedy for our beloved game.

This week’s hand needs little explanation.

 **NORTH**

 ♠ A 4 **W/ NIL VUL**

 ♥ K Q 4

 ♦ 10 7 6 3

 ♣ A 9 6 4

**WEST EAST**

♠ Q J 10 6 ♠ 5 3

♥ 5 ♥ J 6 3 2

♦ J 5 4 2 ♦ Q 9 8

♣ K Q 10 5 ♣ J 7 3 2

 **SOUTH**

 ♠ K 9 8 7 2

 ♥ A 10 9 8 7

 ♦ A K

 ♣ 8

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WEST** | **NORTH** | **EAST** | **SOUTH** |
|  | 1C | PASS | 1S |
| PASS | 1NT | PASS | 3H |
| PASS | 4H | PASS | 4NT |
| PASS | 5C | PASS | 6H |
| PASS | PASS | PASS |  |

West leads the king of clubs and the key is to set up the spades by ruffing high in dummy twice then giving up a trick to the jack of hearts.

**DARLING DOWNS CONGRESS:** {Director – Chris Snook] **TEAMS** Jenni Buckley / Jim Wood / Robert Fulton / Laurie Sutton; **PAIRS** Diane Wenham / Margaret Keating; **YEPPOON CONGRESS** [Director – Geoff Taylor] **PAIRS** Jan & Peter Randall **TEAMS** Max & Diane Holewa / Eric Leivesley / Janelle Conroy; **BRISBANE ZONE GNOT FINAL** [Director – Jan Peach, 44 teams]: 1 Therese Tully / Richard Ward / Neville Francis / Tony Hutton; 2 Murray Perrin / Janeen Solomon / Carmel Martin / Phil Hale; 3 Pamela & Jim Evans / Toni Bardon / Patrick Bugler; 4 Jill Magee / Terry Strong / Martin Qin / Charlie Lu