

January 1, 2022

Bridge with Richard Ward

The **James O'Sullivan Award** for the Queensland player earning the most masterpoints in 2021 has been won by Tony Hutton, nearly 40 points ahead of multiple-award winner Neville Francis. Other winners, provisional at the time of writing, are: **GRAND** Janeen Solomon; **GOLD LIFE** Annette Hyland; **SILVER LIFE** Abby Wanigaratne; **BRONZE LIFE** Rachel Langdon; **LIFE** Kate Balmanno / Jennifer Sawyer; **SILVER NATIONAL** Natalie Bloch; **BRONZE NATIONAL** Charlie Georgees; **NATIONAL** Eugene Pereira; **BRONZE STATE** Sumant Handa; **STATE** Raelene Clark; **BRONZE REGIONAL** Rosemary Porter; **REGIONAL** Sandi Pirozzo; **SILVER LOCAL** Ann Sauer; **BRONZE LOCAL** Peter Lyons; **LOCAL** Linda Lee; **CLUB** Robyn Wells; **GRADUATE** Mark Harnack; **NIL** Alan Kestenberg

There are a number of ways to lose on this slam hand. Declarers who are simply oblivious to the value of cards below the jack will remain in ignorance long after they are writing down minus 100 on their score sheets.

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

South opens a weak no trump (12-14 points). After a transfer sequence and Blackwood ask for key cards he finds himself in a good six spades contract. Most of us would probably lead a trump after this auction but today West chooses the nine of diamonds. There are ten top tricks and the other two could come from a successful heart finesse, one or two club ruffs or a combination of these. But wait!! That opening lead has pinpointed the whereabouts of the queen and ten of diamonds which makes your holding of K-8-7-3 opposite A-J pure gold.

The way forward is now clear. Win the ace of diamonds then play A-K of clubs and a club ruff; draw four rounds of trumps; jack of diamonds-Q-A then eight of diamonds discarding the last club whilst establishing the seven of diamonds as a winner for a heart discard. Making five spades, one ruff, one heart, three diamonds and two clubs for 12 tricks.
