

December 24 2022

Bridge with Richard Ward

2022 has been a year of ups and downs for bridge clubs across the country as they emerged from pandemic restrictions which caused a decline in membership and in numbers playing regular face-to-face bridge. The prestigious Gold Coast International Congress in February was the worst affected, but later events, such as the Barrier Reef Congress in Townsville, the new River City Gold Mixed Pairs at Toowong and the QBA Festival of Bridge were outstanding successes. 2023 looks promising for bridge in all of its formats – club sessions, congresses, State and National events and online competitions.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
PASS	PASS	3D	4S
PASS	PASS	PASS	

The bidding seemed straightforward and was replicated by both teams. The 4-card spade support was a welcome sight but, with three unavoidable losers, both minor suit kings needed to be onside for success. West started with the ace, king and queen of hearts. Both declarers ruffed the third heart with the nine of trumps to preserve the single entry to dummy. West took the continuation of the king of spades with the ace and played the ten of hearts. Again, both declarers retained the two of trumps and took the trick by ruffing with the ten. Both declarers drew the last trump as they crossed to dummy in trumps: 2-7-8-D3. However, at this point, their paths diverged.

The first declarer ran the ten of clubs successfully and then led the queen of clubs - king - ace. As a result of the blockage in clubs, this declarer had to lose a diamond trick and so finished one trick short of his contract. The second declarer avoided this trap by leading the queen of clubs on the first round of the suit intending to unblock the jack of clubs if East played low. Whether East followed with a low club or covered this, declarer had forced an entry for the successful diamond finesse and ten tricks.
