

June 3, 2023

Bridge with Richard Ward

The Toowong Bridge Club hosted the River City Gold Mixed Pairs in style last weekend with faultless organisation, meticulous tournament direction and gourmet catering. Winners were Brisbane's Eileen Li and Watson Zhou who held off strong interstate challenges from some Sydney and Canberra star performers.

Today's hand illustrates the old bridge adage that, when playing a trump contract, if there is a 5-card side suit, always consider ways to create extra tricks.

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

The bidding was straightforward: 1H:1S, 2S:4S. West led the three of spades-2-8-9. Clearly the defence planned to keep leading trumps to prevent a diamond ruff in dummy but the 5-card heart suit provided a promising alternative. Declarer needed access to dummy to allow for two heart ruffs and then a third entry to cash the established winner. The play to trick one appeared to place the seven of spades with West so, after cashing the king of hearts, the spade four was played intending to win with dummy's six. However, an alert West inserted the seven and the plan was foiled. Down one.

There is a way home but probably too complex for most of us: Cash the king of hearts and lead a diamond at trick three. If West wins and returns the three of trumps, dummy's six wins the trick and there are the entries to set up and enjoy a long heart. If, instead, West exits with the seven of trumps, win it with dummy's ace, following with the ten from hand, thereby preserving the six of trumps as an entry to dummy. And finally, if West fails to exit with a trump, leading a club instead, or allowing East to win the diamond, a diamond ruff will be the tenth trick.

RIVER CITY GOLD MIXED PAIRS [Directors – Jan Peach & Steve Murray] 1 Eileen Li / Watson Zhou; 2 Elizabeth Havas / George Kozakos; 3 Marianne Bookallil / Stephen Fischer; **B** 1 Elaine Jonsberg / John Lahey; 2 Richard Fox / Christine Newbery; **C** 1 Joyanne Gissing / Greg Lee; 2 Sarah Strickland / Darren Brake; **NOVICE** 1 Kate Macdonald / Ben Leung; 2 Elizabeth & David Ward.
