

July 29, 2023

Bridge with Richard Ward

Beginning declarers are taught that, when playing no trump contracts where the defence attacks a suit which has just one stopper, it is good technique to delay winning that trick until at least the third round. More experienced players soon learn that there are exceptions to every 'rule'.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1S	1NT
PASS	3NT	ALL PASS	

West leads the nine of spades and declarer deduces that East must hold almost all of the high cards given the opening bid. Declarer ducks the first round of spades, but takes the second round to keep open the option of endplaying East with a spade later in the play. And so it comes to pass, as declarer cashes six red cards with the aid of the almost-certain diamond finesse. East discards a club on the third heart. Next comes the third spade and, as expected, East is forced to lead away from the king of clubs at the end for the ninth trick. Eagle-eyed readers will point out that, had East started with a 5-2-4-2 shape and smoothly bares the king of clubs on the third heart, then the defence might prevail.

CAIRNS SHOW PAIRS [Director – Julie Jeffries] 1 Josephina Burrie / Gideon Azar; 2 Alexander Long / Tony Lusk; 3 Andrea & Dave Mathieson; **B** 1 Patricia Ottone / Kate Gargan; 2 Klarika Tortely / Camilla Nicholson; **C** Sonja de Rooy / Annemarie Stevenson; **QLD CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB GRADED TEAMS** [Director – Alan Gibson] **OPEN A** 1 Ben Leung / Kate Macdonald / Tere Wotherspoon / Siegfried Konig; 2 Kevin Steffensen / Carolyn Miller / Usher Zeng / Ann Liu; **OPEN B** 1 Margie Knox / Sheila Wills / Carol Loth / Carmel Wikman; 2 Jan & Ian Argent / Bernadette O'Connell / Narelle McIver; **NOVICE** 1 Debbie Carroll / Jacinta Lee / Louise & Stephen Bennett; 2 Jenny Thompson / Peter Fredericks / Carol Findlay / Carolyn North.

The next big gold point event will be held at Coffs Harbour next week. Pre-Covid, this popular congress always reached capacity within days of entries opening. It is pleasing to report that they are only a couple of tables short of reaching that impressive level once again.