

March 2, 2024

### Bridge with Richard Ward

The final session table count for the Gold Coast International Congress was 7200, up by 750 on 2023. Next year promises to be even larger as players from all over the world descend on Broadbeach from 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> February. Major winners this year were Ella Jacob and Phil Markey [South Australia] in the Open Pairs and Michael Ware, Tom Jacob, Matthew Thomson, Brian Mace, Peter Hollands and Hugh McGann [an international mix from Ireland, New Zealand and Australia] in the Open Teams.

In the early stages of a bridge voyage, a number of supposedly guaranteed strategies are taught such as: 'play an honour on an honour', and, 'against no trump contracts, lead fourth highest of your longest and strongest suit'. Mid-way through the journey it becomes clear that none of these are 100 percent guaranteed and that it just as important to learn the exceptions as it is to remember the early lessons. "Third player plays high" is another one which works only 90 percent of the time.

<b>NORTH</b>		<b>W/ NIL VUL</b>	
♠	J 8 6		
♥	J 6 5 4 2		
♦	A Q		
♣	9 6 3		
<b>WEST</b>		<b>EAST</b>	
♠	A 10 5 4 2	♠	Q 7 3
♥	K 3	♥	10 8 7
♦	J 5 4	♦	7 6 3 2
♣	A 10 2	♣	Q 8 4
<b>SOUTH</b>			
♠	K 9		
♥	A Q 9		
♦	K 10 9 8		
♣	K J 7 5		

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1S	PASS	1NT	DBL
PASS	3H	PASS	3NT
PASS	PASS	PASS	

Four hearts is makeable but South chose to protect the king of spades by settling in three no trump. West led the four of spades and East passed the first test by ignoring the 'third hand high' dictum, playing the seven – the queen gives declarer two tricks. Declarer crossed to dummy with a diamond and played a heart to the queen and king. West must now play for the layout shown by cashing the ace of spades. At Broadbeach our expert pair failed this test, just like everybody else. Tough problem.

**QUEENSLAND FINALISTS AT THE GCC TEAMS - UNDER 1500:** Wendy Gibson / Chris Woolley / Annette Corkhill / Christine Newbery; **INTERMEDIATE:** Jenny McGowan / Vanessa Brewis / David Zhang / Lilly Jia; **NOVICE:** Debbie Carroll / Jacinta Lee / Louise & Stephen Bennett; **BEST QUEENSLAND:** Kate Macdonald / Ben Leung / Michael Gearing / Pele Rankin.

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