

November 22, 2025

Bridge with Richard Ward

Today's hand features a recurring theme highlighted in an Australian Bridge magazine (2022) article by UK expert Andrew Robson and a similar hand in a recent International Bridge Press Association Bulletin which is edited by Australia's Brad Coles. A traditional rule is that the pre-emptive opener is barred from bidding again. It's a maxim drilled in to us as soon as we take a lesson on pre-empting. It makes perfect sense since you have already shown your hand and can leave further bidding to partner. There are exceptions however.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
TABLE 1			
PASS	2NT	PASS	2S
PASS	4S	PASS	3H
TABLE 2			
3H	3S	4H	2S
PASS	4S	DBL	DBL
			ALL PASS

At Table 1, South's sound two spades opening showed 8-11 high card points and a 6-card suit. Two no trump asked for a shortage so the excellent game was easily bid and made despite the low point count. At Table 2, after West's brave intervention, South chose to bid again. The double of four hearts was optional saying: "I would like to bid four spades but, if you have good defensive values, please pass for penalties". When North chose to bid game, East doubled and eleven tricks came home after the five of diamonds lead. As Robson said in his article, "Partner won't thank you if you bid an undisciplined fourth spade and turn a plus into a minus" so an optional double is the best solution.

GOLD COAST TEAMS [Director - Alan Gibson]: 1 Jill Magee – Terry Strong – Pamela & James Evans; 2 Lauren Morgan / Kate Macdonald / Paddy Taylor / Andy Hung; **B** 1 Juliet Rogers / Sheila Wills / Dewi Eastman / Linda Norman; 2 Joan Jenkins / Joyce O'Brien / Valerie & Peter Robbins; **C** 1 Maria & Alexandra & Anthony & Stephen Mills; 2 Kevin Gosling / Deryl McConaghy / Jacqui Wardhaugh / Helen Betts; **REDCLIFFE UNDER 300 PAIRS** [Director – Julie Jeffries]: 1 Brian Clark / Brooke Anderson / Karen Gosney / Maria Setiyawan; 2 Siobhan & Bob Davies / Linda Lee / Peter Zanki; 3 Lesley Brown / Jen Borowski / Jenny Easey / Peter Hancock.