

February 14, 2026

Bridge with Richard Ward

Two gold point online pairs events were conducted by the Queensland Bridge Association last weekend. More than 200 pairs played each day, predominantly Australia-wide but also including those from New Zealand, the UK, Japan and the USA. This ground-breaking initiative for Australia was the work of Chris Snook, Ronnie Ng, Gary Barwick and Kim and Ray Ellaway who are to be congratulated on their behind-the-scenes outstanding co-ordination.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2NT
PASS	3D	PASS	4H
PASS	4NT	PASS	5C
PASS	5D	PASS	6D
PASS	6H	ALL PASS	

After South indicates a balanced big hand North transfers to hearts. South then shows: four hearts; three key cards; the queen of trumps; and the king of diamonds but not the king of clubs so North sensibly gives up on grand slam aspirations.

West leads a trump and, at first glance, the contract appears to depend on selecting which one of the three finesses on offer would be best. Say declarer guesses to take the club finesse and it wins, twelve tricks would now be assured with a no-risk second finesse available to make thirteen. On the other hand, if the first finesse loses, the contract will still be alive with a 50:50 choice of one of the remaining two. There is however a 100 percent line available. It involves no finesses at all! Can you spot it? The contract is unbeatable by drawing trumps then playing a spade to dummy's king and following this with the five of spades, intending to cover East's card. When East follows with a low card, the eight of spades will be won by West's ten, now end-played in three suits. That makes six trumps, two spades, two diamonds, the ace of clubs plus an extra trick in whichever suit West returns. Notice that if East were to play the nine of spades, the jack would be taken by the queen and then the ace-eight of spades would still provide the twelfth trick.

COMING UP IN FEBRUARY: Caloundra Congress 21-22; Northern Suburbs Pairs 22; QBA Mixed Teams – Noosa 28 – 1 March.
