

February 21, 2026

Bridge with Richard Ward

The theme of today's hand is a common one. When there seems to be only one line of play, take the time to look for another option before playing on.

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			2C
PASS	2D	PASS	2H
PASS	4H	PASS	6H
PASS	PASS	PASS	

There are two questions: Is the club finesse the only possibility here?; and, does the diamond suit provide any other chances? Let's see. West leads the queen of spades and the two entries to dummy are a welcome sight. The ace of spades wins and a heart goes to the ace. Next comes a low diamond towards dummy. When West rises with the king of diamonds and plays a second spade, declarer ruffs, cashes the king of trumps and then the ace of diamonds. Next comes a trump to dummy and, before touching clubs, declarer cashes the queen of diamonds for a discard of the jack of clubs. As it happens, declarer's luck is in and the jack of diamonds appears, providing a discard for the queen of clubs. Of course, if the jack of diamonds had not dropped, declarer would fall back on the club finesse. Notice that it would not do West any good to play low smoothly on the seven of diamonds, because one club discard is of no particular use to declarer. Accordingly, declarer would rise with the queen of diamonds and make the contract, losing only a club.

ARANA TEAMS [Director – Julie Jeffries]: 1 Therese Tully / Paul Hooykaas / Pele Rankin / Kim Morrison; 2 Pamela & Jim Evans / Vanessa Brewis / Peter Evans; **B** 1 Jan Jones / Sarah Huntington-Wynne / Keith Cohen / Peter Gruythuysen; 2 Julie Cutmore / Tony Agar / Budi Maher / Carol Bellis; **C** 1 Tom Murphy / Ross Mangano / Brian Clark / Brooke Anderson; 2 Kelvin Wheeler / Nat Kay / Jane Geutjes / Sue Norton; **REDLANDS UNDER 50 TEAMS** [Director – Chris Snook]: 1 Bob Ren / Davis Zhang / Alice Edwards / Jenny Andrews; 2 Lynette Crookall / June McNamara / Lee Pitt / Robyn Chippindall; **B** 1 Timothy Freeman / Annie Henderson / Turgut Manli / Robyn Esdale; 2 Sue Sherrell / Joshua Davis / Cathy Mathieson / Shirley Burgess.
