

March 7, 2026

Bridge with Richard Ward

The World Youth Transnational Championships will be held in Hefei, China in August. Members of the Australian teams will include Queenslanders Jasmine Skeate, Kate Macdonald and Paddy Taylor. **UNDER 26** Adrian Le – Fletcher Davey; Bertie Morgan – Paddy Taylor; Heath Watkins – Kate Macdonald; Mike Doecke [NPC] and **UNDER 26 WOMEN** Alexis Wilsmore - Sijie He; Natalie Newman - Ida Andersen; Jasmine Skeate - Lara Topper. Congratulations on this international representative honour and best of luck to all.

The hand from last week illustrated the need to duck the first trick in order to disrupt the communication between defenders. But, as always, sometimes it pays to ignore such rules.

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

After a simple 1NT-3NT auction, West leads the two of spades, “4th highest of the longest and strongest suit”. South knows that the defence has only three spade winners. Why is this relevant? Well, if declarer allows trick one to go S 2-3-J-5 then East, who also knows the spade distribution, may find the killing switch to the jack of clubs. West will take the queen of clubs with the king and it will not matter which black suit is continued, the contract will be doomed. So instead, the ace of spades should win the first trick planning to make a ninth trick whenever East holds either the king of hearts or the king of clubs. At trick two, cross to dummy with a diamond and lead the nine of hearts, planning to play the queen from hand unless East produces the king. If West were to hold the king of hearts, a successful club finesse will be required. As the cards lie, it does not matter whether or not East rises with the king, the heart suit will produce the ninth trick.

QUEENSLAND BRIDGE ASSOCIATION MIXED TEAMS [Director – Peter Busch]: 1 Ken Dawson / Janeen Solomon / Ian Afflick / Alison Dawson; 2 Ann Liu / Usher Zeng / Nikolas Moore / Rachel Langdon; 3 Adrian Lohmann / David Harris / Tim Ridley / Maureen Jakes; **B** 1 Kerry Rutter / Margaret & Don Robertson / Julie Caldwell; 2 Debbie & Gary Gibbards / Elizabeth Van Vugt / Julie Scott; 3 Joan & Simon Reeve / Lindley & Trevor Stafford.
