

March 14, 2026

### Bridge with Richard Ward

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

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1H
1S	2S	PASS	4NT
PASS	5H	PASS	6S
PASS	PASS	PASS	

North's 2S cue bid promises at least a limit raise in partner's hearts and the response to Roman key card blackwood, 4NT, shows two key cards without the heart queen. When West starts with the queen of diamonds and dummy appears South can only stare glumly at the two unavoidable spade losers. However, before calling for a card, declarer decides to follow the advice of innumerable bridge columns through the decades and pauses to think. What is going on in spades? If West's overcall had included the king, queen and jack then surely a spade would have been led. Conclusion? East has a singleton spade honour and so an 'elimination and endplay' line could save the day. Declarer takes the diamond lead in hand with the king and draws trumps in two rounds. After cashing the ace of diamonds, a diamond is ruffed, eliminating that suit. Next, the ace and king of clubs are cashed, leaving only major suit cards remaining in dummy and hand. Now comes a low spade from dummy and East's queen of spades is a welcome sight. Declarer ducks, giving West an unpleasant choice of poisons. If the queen is allowed to hold the trick, East will have to concede a ruff-and-discard. The alternative for West is to overtake the queen with the king but then will be forced to either lead away from the jack of spades into declarer's ace-ten or to give a ruff-and-discard. Either way, declarer will make twelve tricks. Of course, an unlikely opening spade lead would have beaten the contract.

**QUEENSLAND BRIDGE ASSOCIATION MARCH PAIRS** [Director – Chris Snook]: 1 Magnus Moran / Justin Mill; 2 David Smith / Tony Hutton; 3 Patrick Bugler / Tim Runting; **B** 1 Alexandra Mills / Kate Macdonald; 2 Janelle & Jim Williamson; 3 Chris Woolley / Wendy Gibson; **C** 1 Emma Langford / Robert Cumming; 2 Inta Devine / Peter Grinlaubs; 3 Matthew Page-Hanify / Peter Lang.

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