

August 22, 2026

Bridge with Richard Ward

The Rule of Eleven can be applied when opponents lead fourth highest from their longest and strongest suit. It states: When an opponent leads a low card, subtract its rank from 11. The result tells you how many cards *higher* than that card are in the other three hands. In today's hand, the spotlight is on East for some accurate defence which is countered by some thoughtful declarer play by South based on this rule.

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

After a simple 2NT:3NT auction, West began proceedings with the lead of a small spade: 4-8-king-ace. Hoping for four diamond tricks declarer played the king then the queen of diamonds on which West played the 8 and 3 – standard count, showing a doubleton. East therefore took the ace of diamonds which blocked the suit and, hoping to remove the entry to the diamonds, switched to a heart: 7-queen-king. Declarer could see that, had the ace of hearts been played there would only be eight tricks, so the king was allowed to win. This was safe because declarer knew that East began with only one card higher than West's four of spades, the already played king. So, on any return, declarer would be able to make one spade, two hearts, four diamonds and two clubs.

Best Queensland pair at the recent Coffs Harbour Gold Congress was Jenny McGowan and Vanessa Brewis who won the Intermediate Swiss Pairs and then placed second in the Intermediate Teams playing with Oliver Goodman and Ming Shu Yang. Winners of the Open Pairs were Hugh Grosvenor (TAS) / George Kozakos (ACT) who were also runners-up in the Open Teams playing with Sophie Ashton (NSW) / David Beauchamp (NSW) which was won by Sam Coutts (NZ) / Mike Doecke (SA) and Justin Williams (SA) / James Coutts (NSW).

REDCLIFFE PAIRS [Director – Julie Jeffries]: 1 Shanaal De Zoysa / Terry O'Dempsey; 2 Carmel Martin / Abby Wanigaratne; B 1 Barbara & Warren Holmes; 2 Roxanne Blaylock / Robyn Church; C 1 Chris Loton / Terry Davies; 2 Sarah Huntington-Wynne / Brian Pridham.
