

July 11, 2020

### Bridge with Richard Ward

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The play of this hand contains a number of instructive points and traps for the unwary.

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

You reach the normal 3NT (via 1C – 1S; 1NT – 3NT) to which West leads the king of diamonds. Count your top tricks – three spades, two hearts, one diamond and two clubs equals 8, with chances for the ninth in spades or hearts. Duck the first two diamonds and take the third which severs the link between East and West. You now need to keep West off lead. So, duck a heart to East and also duck East's return of the club queen. You have now lost four tricks. As you cash your two heart winners (no 3-3 break) and two club winners you find that, provided your brain hasn't imploded, you have an accurate count on West's hand – two hearts, five diamonds and two clubs and hence four spades. Play a spade to the ace, and another to the king so you know that the spade finesse will work. Lead the two – you did play the ten of spades first to unblock did you not? – to the nine and the queen is your ninth trick. Well played!

The 2020 Australian Online Youth Tournament continues today with QLD having two matches against NSW and one against ACT. The leader board is tight at the top. VIC, QLD (William Han, Paddy Taylor, Sebastian Langdon Macmillan, Darren Brake, Ben Leung, Ellen Visscher and Andrew Gosney (NPC)) and SA are all vying for the top two spots in the final.

More jewels from Kate McCallum: "Partner never has the exact cards you want. Be practical – don't look for the miracle hand unless you can do so safely"; and, "Always believe your partner. She's on your side. Trust the information she gives you. Always assume that she knows what she is doing, even when it looks as if she's lost her mind"

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