

August 8, 2020

Bridge with Richard Ward

The latest Australian Bridge Federation Newsletter was published this week and contained an article by the ABF Head of Marketing, Peter Cox, which reflected on the state of bridge in the light of Covid-19. He writes: 'A major outcome has been that the main beginners' lessons that normally occur in February to April have been cancelled or postponed which means that Australia has lost nearly a year's intake of new players that are so vital to our game. In the June quarter, the number of new players fell from 781 last year to 199 this year and this trend will continue.

We need over 3000 new players each year to maintain our membership numbers. With a high attrition rate in our mature-aged members, the growth of bridge is threatened in the future. Online bridge has been a saviour to many during the shut-down, and has kept people playing bridge. This may continue to provide an alternative to some in the future whilst reducing the frequency of attendance at clubs.'

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

A defensive problem: West is playing in 4H facing an inspired ace of clubs lead after North has overcalled and been raised in spades. South wins the second club trick and knows that she needs partner to have a trump trick or the diamond ace to defeat it. But, before returning another club, she carefully cashes her ace of spades and only then does she play a club which promotes a trump trick for partner. Had she returned a club without cashing the spade, declarer would throw his singleton away. This looks easy on paper, but only 7 of 20 declarers were defeated in 4H despite facing the same play at tricks one and two.
