

September 19, 2020

### **Bridge with Richard Ward**

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Heading into 2020 the number of people playing online bridge world-wide was marginally ahead of the number playing in bridge clubs. Now, with the impact of COVID-19 restrictions, the number of online players is streets ahead of everything else. There are advantages to this which include: elimination of playing cards and dealing machines; reduction in the number of irregularities such as revokes, insufficient bids and leads out of turn; easy access to the opponents' bidding and carding agreements; and, immediate availability of the complete records of every hand including the bidding and play at every table. The controversial matter of detecting the possibility of cheating, a work-in-progress, will eventually allow organisations to use software to flag questionable players. As American AI Levy has written: 'Bridge will take on a new image, modern and youthful, while showing that bridge is a game for everyone, young and old.' Bridge clubs will need to adapt in order to continue to offer the social face-to-face experience so essential to their members albeit in a contemporary and technologically-friendly environment.

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

Playing the popular 2-over-1 system, the bidding at both tables went 1S – 1NT (forcing) – 2S – 4S. On the jack of clubs lead and with only nine tricks in view, the tenth must come from the heart suit where the percentage play is to run the heart queen. Then, if that loses to the king, later play a heart to the ten. Down 1 - unlucky! The second declarer looked a little further. A club was ruffed immediately then, after drawing trumps and eliminating both clubs and diamonds, the queen of hearts lost to the king, end-playing East who had only two losing options, returning a heart around to the A-10-9 or giving a ruff-and-discard.

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