

December 5, 2020

Bridge with Richard Ward

SOUTH	NORTH
♠ A K J 8	♠ 6 5
♥ K J	♥ A 7 5
♦ A 10 9	♦ K J 4
♣ A 6 5 2	♣ K Q J 8 7

This one is easy to bid: 2NT – 6NT is an obvious sequence. West leads the ten of clubs and you can count 11 top tricks with finesses available in spades, hearts and diamonds. Which ones will you try? Decide before looking below for the complete hand.

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

Experts avoid taking unnecessary finesses if ever possible and would go out of their way not to have to guess which opponent holds the queen of diamonds. Our South found a 100% no-finesse line. She played A-K-Q-J of clubs leaving the fifth winner in dummy. Then she played the spade five planning to cover whatever card East played. If it goes 5-3-8-Q then you have 12 tricks. If it goes 5-10-J-Q then, whatever card West returns, there are 12 tricks. Simple!

With state and territory borders finally open across Australia you might think that bridge would be back to normal but, because the social-distancing restrictions together with the necessary Covid-19 plans remain in place, progress has been limited. Of Queensland's fifty-six clubs, five have closed permanently, ten are hoping to re-open in the New Year and the remainder are operating but with reduced numbers depending on the venue space. The 2020 bridge calendar is in tatters and has been given up as a dead loss.

So we are looking forward to 2021 with cautious optimism. Queensland will go ahead with the selection trials for our Open, Women, Senior and Youth teams once confirmation is received in January that the Australian National Championships will definitely be going ahead in July.

In these uncertain times, players are advised to check the QBA website for the latest updates on the status of all events.
