



Tuesday Night Tips

The Sydney Bridge Centre mini lesson

If you have joined our F2F session on Tuesday night, you probably already know the host Martin Clear. He is a big fan of the evening game because of his daytime job, and has been leading the group for bridge discussion after the session. This "discussion" will now continue online - Each week Martin will play in the field and pick an interesting hand from the Tuesday night BBO session. Join your bridge buddy for a game on Tuesday night (7.15pm start)!

Using Dummy's Trumps and Long Suit

#29320 BBO – Tuesday Night 9th November 2021

18		N	W	N	E	S
		♠ AQJ107 ♥ J543 ♦ 64 ♣ K9	1♦	1♠	X	4♣
			P	P	P	
W			E			
♠ 942 ♥ A986 ♦ J9853 ♣ 10			♠ 85 ♥ KQ72 ♦ KQ7 ♣ Q632			
	S					
	♠ K63 ♥ 10 ♦ A102 ♣ AJ8754					
		4♠ N		NS: 0 EW: 0		

When you are declarer in a trump contract, and dummy comes down, one of the first things you should think about when making your plan is to decide what you are going to do with dummy's trumps. In some cases, you only need dummy to have trumps so that the opponent's DON'T have those cards! Other times, you might need a trump honour in dummy's hand as an entry to take a finesse in another suit. But the most common use for dummy's trumps is to ruff losers from the declarer's closed hand, whenever the dummy has a shortage.

Sometimes however, those same losers from the closed hand can be discarded on a long suit in dummy. In fact, if dummy has some trumps and a

long suit, you often have both these advantageous situations at the same time: dummy has a shortage you can use to ruff losers, and dummy also has a long suit you might be able to develop to discard losers. So which do you decide to do?

It's important to note that the plan you take is different for the two strategies. If you plan to ruff losers in dummy, you do not draw trumps; you play the short suit until dummy is void and then ruff in dummy, returning to the closed hand with other entry cards to repeat the ruff as needed. Once all desired ruffs are taken, you draw trumps, returning to the closed hand in another suit if necessary. If however you plan to discard losers on dummy's long suit, you probably draw trumps first and then establish the long suit in dummy.

Sometimes you can do both: ruff some losers in dummy, then draw trumps, then establish a long suit to discard other closed hand losers. If this is possible, you need to map out the play in your head to decide if it will work before starting on the plan, because if you do the ruffs first and then find you can't draw trumps and establish losers before letting the opponents in, they may cash winners in the suit you were ruffing.

A lot of the choice of strategy on these hands depends on whether you can establish the side suit for certain or not. If you have Qxx opposite AKJxx, you have no problems in relying on 5 tricks from this suit (96% chance), and even Qxx opposite AKxxx is a 68% chance to run 5 winners. Qxx opposite AKTxx? 82% if you play it right (take the Queen on the SECOND round of the suit, so that if you find your RHO showing out, you are in the right hand to finesse the Ten when you find that info out).

But how about side suits that contain winners once established, but have a loser? There are two kinds I'd look at: Kxx opposite Axxxx, and Qxx opposite KJT9x. Kxx opposite Axxxx will provide 4 winners (ie. 2 discards) 68% of the time, but you will certainly lose one trick first. Qxx opposite KJT9x will always provide 4 winners and 2 discards, but has an extra problem.

What is the extra problem with the latter case? You can't control when the opponents take their winner. Unless you are lucky and the Ace is in the hand with only 2 cards, the opponents will refuse to take their Ace until the third round,

and you will not get your 2 discards unless you happen to have a further entry to dummy outside of this suit and the trump suit. Kxx opposite Axxxx has a lower percentage of success, but by keeping the Ace until the thirds round ie. giving the opponents their trick on the first or second round - you can guarantee those two discards. One sign of a less-skilled declarer is winning the first two rounds of a suit like this.

However what happens if you draw trumps, and then concede to the opponents their winner in this side suit, and then they happily grab a whole chunk of tricks in the suit dummy was short in? That means your plan was faulty! Perhaps you should have ruffed in dummy instead.

There's a good example of the general dilemma in Board 18 of the Sydney Bridge Centre & Friends competition on Tuesday Night, 9 November. Most declarers were in the 4 Spade contract, and the ♦K was led. Declarer can ruff heart losers in dummy, but this would mean conceding a heart trick and the defenders would then take a diamond and lead a trump, leaving declarer with 11 tricks when the clubs work and 10 otherwise. There'd still be work to do by this line to get back to hand to produce more heart ruffs, so a declarer attempting this should really duck the first diamond, so that after diamond duck, ♦A, then a heart trick conceded, declarer can win the exit (probably a trump), ruff a heart, come to ♣K, ruff a heart with ♠K, then ruff a diamond and draw trumps. Declarer then makes 10 without risk (the last trick will be lost, assuming East is clever enough to discard his heart honours to keep Qx in clubs, and declarer does not want to risk dropping the contract by finessing to ♣J).

What declarer actually did however was to pin everything on the clubs being perfect. ♦A was taken, trumps were drawn, and declarer played ♣K and finessed ♣J. This won, but when West showed out, declarer was in trouble. ♣A got one loser away, but declarer still had 4 red losers and went 1 off. The line relies on clubs being 3-2 with ♣Q on side, a 34% chance.

Ruffing losers in dummy, or bringing the long suit in - are these the only alternatives? No, because sometimes there is a halfway option. On these declarer and dummy hands, you could cash the ♠Q and the ♠J, and then play ♣K, ♣A and ruff a club. If that works (any 3-2 club split would do), re-enter dummy with the ♠K and cash three club winners. In practice, the 4-1 club split wrecks this plan as well. Incidentally, when trying this declarer should use ♠Q and ♠J, not ♠A. Routinely, it is a good idea to 'interlace' your trumps when possible: with ♠K in dummy, retain one spade higher than the King, and one lower. This allows you to later use trumps to go either from dummy to closed hand, or from closed hand to dummy. Interlacing allows you to retain flexibility.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

We have REOPENED for Face-to-Face bridge with ONLINE games continue on BBO

For Face-to-Face sessions:

Welcome back! Our clubroom on Goulburn Street has opened from Monday 18th October 2021. We will start with 6 regular sessions on the first week: Monday – Thursday morning, 10am – 1.15pm and Tuesday night 7.15pm – 10.00pm. There will be a separate field for Supervised players on Wednesday morning and a “Play it out loud” Supervised session on Wednesday night (6.30pm start).

For BBO sessions:

We will continue to run the 5 regular club session online on BBO. Please check our [session timetable](#) here.

All are welcome. No need to book. Please find us on BBO / Featured Areas / Virtual Clubs / ABF-Australia. Tournament title “Sydney Bridge Centre & Friends”. Tournament will open only 2 hours before the game starts.

24 boards, BB\$4 per person per game.