



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)!

Establish Tricks, and then Cash Out

#78574 BBO – Tuesday Night 2nd November 2021

<div>2</div>		<div>N</div> <div>♠ K109</div> <div>♥ 76</div> <div>♦ Q1095</div> <div>♣ KQ98</div>	<div>W N E S</div> <div>P 1♦ P 1NT</div> <div>P P P</div>
<div>W</div> <div>♠ A863</div> <div>♥ 932</div> <div>♦ K743</div> <div>♣ 107</div>			<div>E</div> <div>♠ J54</div> <div>♥ A10854</div> <div>♦ AJ6</div> <div>♣ 32</div>
	<div>S</div> <div>♠ Q72</div> <div>♥ KQJ</div> <div>♦ 82</div> <div>♣ AJ654</div>		<div>1NT S NS: 0 EW: 0</div>

The best contract in bridge is the 1 No-Trump contract. It traditionally provides the most significant difference in Pairs percentage score between good declarers and poor declarers, and it is quite rare for it to be a simple collection of easy tricks as sometimes arises in higher level no-trump contracts. It often requires the declarer and the defenders to establish tricks in several suits, rather than simply having some suits belonging to the defenders and others to the declarer. Both need to set themselves a target of tricks to try and get, and as usual in Pairs, that target may not be related to the contracted amount of tricks!

There was a very good example of the tactical battles that come up in a 1 No Trump contract on Board 2 of the Sydney Bridge Centre & Friends competition on Tuesday Night, 2 November. Most North-South pairs played in 1NT, with the usual Pairs penalty meted out to those who ended in a minor suit contract. A couple of declarers propelled a 13-count and a 10-count to 3NT, a dubious decision when you are missing 3 of the 4 Aces, as this gives the defenders too much ability to switch tactics, and declarer may find it difficult to get to some established winners if due care is not taken.

South was declarer in most cases, opening 1♣, and rebidding 1N over partner's 1♦ response. The lead varied: in one case, East had overcalled 1♦ with 1♥ and West dutifully led a heart. One North had bid 1NT direct over 1♣, and must have been worried when a heart was led, until dummy's KQJ came into view. There was also, a spade lead and there was a diamond lead. Which is best?

One might think that the diamond lead would fare best, as it is clearly the defenders' best source of quick tricks. The defenders at that table scored the ♦J, the ♦A and the ♦K, and then looked for dessert. A heart went to the Ace, and a heart was returned.

Let's look at the situation now. The declarer has a diamond, two hearts and five club tricks, making 8. The opponents have the 5 they have always had: three diamonds, ♥A, ♠A. West in particular knows he can get 5 tricks for the defenders by grabbing ♠A the first chance he gets, because the other 4 tricks are already banked. That situation happened at the tables where 3NT was reached; the defenders were happy to put declarer down. However in 1NT, the defenders don't know whether they are trying for 5 tricks, or six, or to defeat the contract by taking seven. How can declarer play on that lack of information?

There are three points to trying to sneak a 9th trick. The first is to try to make sure that the holder of the ♠A does not think his partner can cash a lot of hearts. So when the second round of hearts is led, declarer played the ♥Q not the KH. This makes it obvious that he holds ♥K, because East would have played that card on the first round. Normally declarer tries to hide as much information as possible, but here he gives this away for free, because it benefits him to have West know that hearts are not ready to run. If West thought they might be - if declarer played ♥K for instance -

he might pop his ♠A and lead a heart. Declarer does not want him to do that, so the grandiose play of ♥Q helps. Can the defenders see through this by wondering why declarer is being so accommodating? Possibly at high levels of bridge, but at club levels, so many declarers see a holding like KQJ and say "Oh, it doesn't matter which one I play" that declarers being deceptive can hide among them.

Declarer is going to attempt to sneak a spade trick past the ♠A holder, which will not work if the ♠A is played fourth to the trick, so declarer needs to identify who holds ♠A. Here declarer uses some basic counting. East passed as the initial bidder, but has so far turned up with ♦A, ♦J, and ♥A. With ♠A, he would have opened. So West has ♠A.

The third important factor in declarer's play is to avoid doing what so many declarers tend to do when they first get the lead - cash their long suit. Declarer's only advantage over the defenders on this hand is that the defenders don't know declarer has 5 solid tricks in clubs ready to go. If declarer cashes three of them - enough to show the defenders he has 5 - each defender can count 5 clubs, a diamond, and 2 hearts for declarer, and will go up with ♠A as soon as spades are led. Can the defenders guess that the clubs are ready to run, and can they work out there are five tricks? Certainly they should: they can place ♣A with South for the opening bid, and South has had only 2 diamonds, only 3 hearts, and on the bidding only 3 spades. However defenders often don't do this analysis and declarer failing to play the suit immediately lures them into complacency.

So a small spade is led immediately after ♥Q wins. West ducks, the ♠K wins, and declarer cashes the rest for 9 tricks, and 93% of the matchpoints, despite the defenders having found their 'best' lead. The lesson? Cashing your long suit immediately isn't always the best idea, especially when the defenders' tricks are quick ones like Aces.

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.