



## Tuesday Night Tips

### The Sydney Bridge Centre mini lesson

The Tuesday night BBO has discontinued from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021. Please join Martin Clear on Tuesday night for a Face-to-face game at Sydney Bridge Centre, 7.15pm start.

Martin Clear continues to host and lead the group for bridge discussion after the session. He will also pick an interesting hand from the face-to-face session for the Tuesday Tips column.

## Finesses, and How to Avoid Them

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021

<b>5</b>		♠ K6	Dir: N
		♥ AT853	Vul: N-S
		♦ K	
		♣ AJ543	
♠ Q873	♠ T942	15	
♥ 94	♥ K6	5	8
♦ J765	♦ Q943	12	
♣ Q62	♣ K87		
		♠ AJ5	
		♥ QJ72	
		♦ AT82	
		♣ T9	

The finesse is probably the first bridge-specific card-play technique bridge beginners learn, and many players enjoy it so much they never quite lose the sense of fascination it gives them. After all, you have an Ace, you have a Queen, the opposition have a King ... and yet you get to win tricks with your Ace and your Queen while your opponent's King may fail to trouble the scorers at all. It's like magic.

However the problem with a finesse situation is that many players recognise them instantly and have a bad case of a syndrome called See Finesse Take Finesse. So many times they have led the Queen from Queen-Jack toward the Ace that sometimes they fail to recognise when it is not the

correct play. With QJ opposite Ax, the finesse can gain a trick. However with QJxx opposite Axxx, leading the Queen first can never gain: if the King sits over the Queen, it will be played on it and the Ace will win, promoting the Jack, but this gives you only 3 tricks when the defenders' cards break 3-2 and 2 tricks when the defenders cards break badly. This actually achieves the MINIMUM number of tricks available. The best method is to cash the Ace, then lead toward the Queen, and then later re-enter the other hand to lead toward the Jack. This method gets three tricks whenever the suit breaks 3-2, and also when the King is over the Ace, no matter what the break is, and also picks up King singleton sitting under the Ace.

What is the best line with QJx opposite Axx? Almost all inexperienced players lead the Queen, but this achieves the minimum (2 tricks) no matter where the King is! The better play is to simply cash the Ace hoping for the King to be singleton - it gains only rarely, but it is never inferior to any other play.

Bridge players often see finesses as a way of making extra tricks. Some top-level bridge players try to think of a finesse as a potential way of LOSING a trick, and use the finesse only as the last option. It is often better to leave a finesse until later in the play because you may be able to give the lead to an opponent (in a different suit) who might then have to lead into the finesse. If he sits over dummy's AQxx with Kxxx, he will have to give up a trick if he is forced to play this suit. If however declarer has already tried finessing the Queen and it has lost to the King, the defender will be able to safely exit in the suit after that. Finesses should only be taken early in suits that require further development, perhaps to provide discards from the fourth or fifth card in the suit.

There are some finesse situations where losing the finesse creates a loser, but this then gives you a winner for a discard elsewhere. In an example from a game last week a heart contract saw the opponents cash two diamond tricks and lead a spade from over dummy. Declarer had Kxx in the closed hand and Axx in dummy. However in clubs he had Ax in the closed hand and KJx in the dummy. He should have won in hand with ♠K so he could take the finesse in clubs, allowing him to throw a spade loser if it works or if it doesn't. But he ran the spade to dummy, and now could not risk the club finesse, as if it lost, he could not get to the ♣A to discard the spade loser.

One more thing to consider came up on Board 5 on Tuesday night 30-November in face-to-face play at the Sydney Bridge Centre - the hand illustrated - make sure that if the finesse wins, it actually gains you something!

Declarer ran the spade lead around to his King and then enthusiastically finessed the ♠J at the second trick. The ♠Q was not on side and this lost a trick that no-one else lost. Was this just unlucky? No, because even if the finesse had worked, the ♠A would only allow the discard of declarer's fifth club - a card that could be ruffed in dummy anyway. Declarer effectively saw the finesse opportunity - a 50% chance - but did not recognise that it was a 50% to lose a trick, not gain one.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

## Let's get together this Christmas!



Another difficult year that we've been through together, another memory that we shared in common. Let's get together this Christmas on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December and /or Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021! Each party will have two sessions of duplicate, you can choose to play in both sessions or in either the morning or the afternoon session for the same entry fee. That means you can choose to play the whole day with a lunch break or play one session with lunch either before or after your chosen session. Morning tea, afternoon tea and snacks will be served during the sessions.

- **Date:** Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 or Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 (you're welcome to join both)
- **Time:** 10.00am – 1.00pm and / or 2.15pm – 5.15pm with morning & afternoon tea and lunch
- **Venue:** City, level 1, 162 Goulburn Street, Sydney 2010
- **Cost:** Members \$40 / Visitors \$45 per person (fee includes a delicious Christmas themed morning tea, afternoon tea, snacks and a 3-courses lunch. Vegetarian options available. No concession, no vouchers).

There will be separate sections for Open and Supervised players.

**RED** masterpoints.

We can only accept bookings for 28 tables at each party. You [MUST book online](#) for catering and board dealing purpose.

### For Face-to-Face sessions:

Welcome back! Our clubroom on Goulburn Street has opened from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> 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.