



Tuesday Night Tips

The Sydney Bridge Centre mini lesson

The Tuesday night BBO has discontinued from 1st 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.

Ruff in Dummy? Or set up a suit in Dummy?

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 14th December 2021

14		♠ 5	Dir: E
		♥ T976	Vul: Nil
		♦ AJ862	
		♣ K93	
♠ AQT76	♠ K9842	8	
♥ 3	♥ Q42	10	7
♦ 5	♦ QT3	15	
♣ A87652	♣ T4		
♠ J3	♣ J3	♣ ♦ ♥ NT	
♥ AKJ85	♥ AKJ85	N - 4 4 - 1	
♦ K974	♦ K974	S - 4 4 - 1	
♣ QJ	♣ QJ	E 3 - - 4 -	
		W 3 - - 4 -	

So many makeable contracts on shapely hands go down because the declarer looked at the shape of one of the hands and saw its shortages instead of the more important part of the shape equation - the length in a side suit. Many times declarer has to make this decision, and it's surprising how often setting up the side suit to provide discards is a much more effective strategy than using the hand's shortages in the other suits to provide ruffs.

Such a hand came up on Board 14 on Tuesday night 14-December in face-to-face play at the Sydney Bridge Centre. After a pass by East, South opened a heart, and West bid 2♥, a Michaels cue-bid showing a two-suited hand of

spades-and-another. North bid 3♥, and East bid 3♠ with the ten-card fit. South bid 4♥ and West raised to 4♠ on the grounds that he had one more card in his two suits than his partner could expect, and quick controls in all suits, preventing the opponents from being able to dictate the play.

The heart Ace was led, and then a switch was made to ♣Q. Declarer won ♣A, crossed to ♠K and ruffed a heart. A club went to ♣J, a diamond to ♦A, and the ♣K was led. Declarer ruffed with ♠9 but the ♠J over-ruff put the contract off.

There are lots of ways to make this contract. The problem was not in the manner declarer denuded his own hand of a trump high enough to prevent the ♠J winning, or in his failure to draw trumps (a 3-0 break makes things a bit tougher), but in his general strategy: he saw two heart losers in his own hand and immediately attempted to ruff them in dummy. No ruffs are necessary. The strategy should have been to make the dummy the master hand and ruff clubs until they were all winners. Then whatever red card losers are left in the closed hand become irrelevant: you simply claim with the words, "The dummy is good!"

As you may not be able to safely ruff the third round of clubs when opposition trumps are out, you should cash a trump after winning ♣A, but it should be in the dummy - the ♠A. In practice on this hand, it is perfectly safe to draw all three rounds of trumps if a 3-0 break makes it necessary, and this will allow you to make the contract even when the clubs are 4-1. This is because the opponents did not continue with hearts to shorten the dummy's trumps.

That strategy is the usual defensive strategy when declarer is attempting to set up a suit in dummy - it is often called a 'forcing game', because it forces declarer to ruff in dummy - the very strategy that so many declarers assume is right for them! Note that this strategy is better than leading trumps, because the purpose is to shorten the dummy's trumps without also shortening the defenders' trumps. Force enough ruffs, and declarer may only be able to set up the side suit in dummy when dummy has no trumps left and the opponents still have one ... and that is curtains.

On this hand, declarer had ample leeway in all these factors to make the contract, but a failure in strategy cost all the matchpoints, as every other table saw a heart contract going off, making 9 tricks. Presumably all those declarers had

heard of "Eight Ever, Nine Never!" in terms of finessing for the Queen of your trump suit, but the Nine Never part is only marginally better than the finesse, and if West shows 10 cards in two other suits, the finesse should be preferred to the drop.

Fun fact: the Michaels cue bid is named after its inventor. Is his surname Michaels or his first name Michael? Answer: both.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

Holiday Operating Time and Events



Our clubroom on Goulburn Street is still open for F2F sessions the next two weeks before the Holiday Break from Christmas Eve 24th December 2021 - 2nd January 2022.

There will be F2F sessions every morning from Monday - Thursday, an extra Supervised session on Wednesday morning, night game on Tuesday (Open 7.15pm) and Wednesday (Supervised 6.30pm). BBO will continue to run through the holiday seasons on Monday morning (10.15am), Thursday and Saturday ARVO (1.45pm), including Xmas Day and New Year's Day.

Our F2F sessions on Goulburn Street will restart on Monday 3rd January 2022, [session timetable](#) remains the same. We will kickstart F2F sessions at Canada Bay on Monday 10th January 2022, with sessions on Monday morning and Thursday morning (10am start).

A lot of RED points sessions are scheduled during the Holiday Seasons! Please check out the **RED POINTS FRENZY** events to grab some RED masterpoints before the end of the year:

For Face-to-Face sessions:

- **RED** F2F Open on Monday 20th December 2021, 10am start
- **RED** F2F Open on Tuesday 21st December 2021, 10am start
- **RED** F2F Open on Wednesday 22nd December 2021, 10am start (There will be a separated field for Supervised players, Green masterpoints)
- **RED** F2F Open on Thursday 23rd December 2021, 10am start

Normal table money fee.

For BBO sessions:

- **RED** BBO Christmas Day on Saturday 25th December 2021, 1.45pm start
- **RED** BBO on Monday 27th December 2021, 10.15am start
- **RED** BBO on Thursday 30th December 2021, 1.45pm start
- **RED** BBO New Year's Day on Saturday 1st January, 1.45pm start

BB\$4 for 24 boards.