



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.

Where are Declarer's Tricks Coming From?

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 15th March 2022

1	♠ KQT87432	Dir: N
	♥ 4	Vul: Nil
	♦ A72	
	♣ Q	
♠ J6	♠ 95	11
♥ QT86	♥ J3	10 7
♦ QT83	♦ K9654	12
♣ AJ8	♣ K964	
	♠ A	
	♥ AK9752	
	♦ J	
	♣ T7532	

One of the most difficult features of Pairs defending compared to defending a Teams or rubber bridge hand is that you don't know how many tricks you need to get to get a good score. There's a lot of books out there that instruct you on how to look for 4 tricks against a major game, for instance, but in Pairs grabbing three quick tricks might prove to be worth 80% of the matchpoints if declarer has a source of tricks he can access.

Sometimes however, a hand comes along where you can see declarer's tricks pretty easily and you can work out that there is not an option for him to find many more. Such a hand occurred on Board 1 of the 15-March Tuesday night face-to-face game at the Sydney Bridge Centre.

In all cases, North either opened 4♠ or opened 1♠ and rebid 4♠ over any other bidding. One pair optimistically found the bidding sequence 4♠ by North and 6S by South, and one pair nibbled at slam and settled for 5♠, with the rest playing in 4♠. In all cases however the defenders should have been aware that North had a huge array of spades that could play in game without trump assistance from South.

The opening lead at most tables was a diamond. Declarer should now have no trouble making 12 tricks: win ♦A, ruff a diamond, play the top two hearts to discard a club, ruff a club to hand, and draw trumps, losing only a diamond at the end. Two declarers did not find this sequence however. One of the important things about declarer play in Pairs is to take a trick when it is available, even if it means you MIGHT lose a different trick later. I suspect the two declarers who were held to 11 looked at the ♠A as too valuable to ruff with. After all, drawing trumps later with the ♠K and ♠Q will only work if the spades are 2-2 or the ♠J is singleton (total 52% chance). But the diamond loser that you can ruff with the ♠A is a 100% chance to lose! So it makes sense to ruff with the trump Ace and hope for the 52% chance of gaining a trick from it.

One other defender led ♥J. This might have scared declarer a little but should have produced the same effective sequence: ♥A, ♦A, diamond ruff with ♠A, ♥K to throw ♣Q, club ruff home and draw trump for 12. I suspect declarer was worried about the second heart being ruffed, but I think the line for 12 is too tempting to avoid, even though there is a risk of ♥K being ruffed, then a diamond to West and another heart producing a trump trick whenever East started with ♥J singleton and ♠J at least doubleton (declarer ruffing with the Ten is a higher percentage play than ruffing high and hoping to drop a singleton Jack from the three trumps remaining to the defenders).

The most interesting play from the defender's point of view however was when one defender (against the 6♠ contract) found the lead of ♣4. This went to West's Ace and declarer's Queen, and now West has some thinking to do. And the best question to think about is: Where are Declarer's Tricks Coming From?

Declarer presumably has 8 spades, hopefully not more, and will score the top 2 hearts. West would have led ♦A if both the two top diamonds were there, so declarer clearly has at least one of those, and to have any hope of making this contract, it would have to be the Ace. That is 11 winners. Where else could declarer have a trick?

You should always examine carefully a declarer's drop of an honour at trick 1, but in this case it seems likely that the ♣Q must be a singleton. Partner's lead would then be 4th-best from the King, a logical lead. If declarer had KQ doubleton in clubs, partner's lead would be an incomprehensible 4 from 964, so that can be ruled out. Declarers sometimes cleverly drop a Queen from Queen doubleton when they've been caught with two losing tricks in a slam, but that requires partner to have reached for a tripleton lead. In all likelihood, the ♣Q was singleton. So where is declarer's 12th trick?

It is not in hearts, West has those well stopped, and declarer cannot establish the suit by ruffing while still having an entry to the long cards. If declarer has ♦K as well as ♦Q, or has 9 spades, the contract is cold. There should be only one place for declarer to get that needed trick: a diamond ruff in dummy.

Does the fact that dummy's trump is the Ace put West off the scent? It shouldn't. Declarer has 8 spades, almost certainly to the KQ, and West himself has the Jack doubleton. West should immediately lead a trump to prevent that ruff. Declarer then can only ruff a club back to hand and run the trumps for a very lame double-squeeze, but ends up with only 11 tricks. In practice, West continued another club, and declarer made 12 by ruffing, playing ♦A and ruffing a diamond, cashing both hearts to discard the other diamond and then ruffing a club back to hand to draw trumps.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

F2F Easter Monday Matchpointed Pairs Congress



Let's have some real cards in hand and play in a F2F congress with real people!

The Sydney Bridge Centre is running a F2F Matchpointed Swiss Pairs Congress on Easter Monday 18th April at Level 1, 162 Goulburn Street, Sydney. It is a one-day congress with 24 boards in the morning, lunch break, then another 24 boards in the afternoon. A delicious light lunch is included.

An invaluable and meaningful prize for Overall Novice & Restricted winners and the Best Novice (or Restricted) Pairs will receive a meaningful prize – Over the Shoulder Mentoring by an advanced player in one complimentary SBC session (either online on BBO or F2F in club). To support our fellow clubs, the Open Winners will receive a Complimentary Entry to any one-day local congress in New South Wales in 2022.

RED masterpoints awarded. \$50 per person (a delicious lunch and snacks included)

[Enter in advance](#) required on the NSWBA website. We intend to run separate fields for Open and Restricted & Novice players, if number allows. Please nominate the field you would like to compete in.

F2F Night Game in the City

Yes most of our regular sessions are run during the day, however, the night game culture is not lost! The SBC evening games are run by our volunteers who contribute their time for the love of the game.

The **Tuesday PM (Tuesday Evening hosted by Phil and Martin)** has created its own special vibe which attracts a steady growth in table number. The session starts at 7.15pm, 24 boards will be played. Martin Clear will be your host of the session with Phil Halloran and the après in which drinks & snacks will be served. We are trying to avoid sit-out for a proper competitive night, so please [contact office](#) if you would like to join the group on the first time. Promotional table money fee at \$6 per person! Limited time only.

For players who have just started their bridge journey and are looking for a more social game night, please join our **Wednesday night Supervised session** instead. The session starts at 6.30pm, with a 20 – 30 minutes pre-game talk by Jake Andrew (on the current Supervised Play) and Wing Roberts (on the upcoming Beginners Supervised Play). The session is run on duplicate movement, so players can get to meet other people. We aim to finish at around 9pm, so only 12-16 boards will be played. Table money fee \$12 for member and \$15 for visitors. No need to book, walk-ins are welcome.

There are more sessions during the day, both F2F and online, please refer to our [session timetable](#) on our website.