



## Tuesday Night Tips

### The Sydney Bridge Centre mini lesson

The Tuesday Night at City has developed its own vibe – a group of bridge enthusiasts playing a friendly competitive game with Phil Halloran and Martin Clear as the hosts. Phil organises the session to make sure there is no sit-out, and Martin continues to lead the group for bridge discussion after the session. He will pick an interesting hand from the face-to-face session for the Tuesday Tips column.

### But I Don't Play McKenney

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022

<b>3</b>	♠ Q	Dir: S
	♥ AJ9543	Vul: E-W
	♦ 84	
	♣ A743	
♠ K92	♠ AJT87	11
♥ QT62	♥ K8	11 16
♦ KT9	♦ AJ75	2
♣ QJ6	♣ K5	
	♠ 6543	
	♥ 7	
	♦ Q632	
	♣ T982	

Today I am going to talk about a convention, one that a lot of people claim they don't play ... but they should! There are a number of conventions for defenders' discards in bridge: High Encourage, where discarding a high card asks for that suit to be led, and discarding a low card asks for the suit to NOT be led; Low Encourage, where those two signals are reversed; Odd/Even systems which rely on odd-numbered cards (eg. a 3 or 5 or 7 or 9) and even-numbered cards (eg. a 2 or 4 or 6 or 8) to signal instead of high/low. There is also another signalling system called McKenney.

McKenney consists of discarding a HIGH card to encourage a lead from partner of the higher of the two suits remaining (ie. not the suit led and not the suit

discarded), and discarding a LOW card to encourage a lead from partner of the LOWER of the two suits remaining. 'High' or 'low' is simply based on the bidding sequence where spades is higher than hearts which is higher than diamonds which is higher than clubs. Thus a discard of ♦2 on a heart lead requests a club because of the two suits not involved in the trick, clubs are lower than spades. The ♦9 on the same trick would request a spade lead.

This is a playable system, but has its drawbacks. The biggest is that there is no 'off switch': if you have to make a discard on the hearts, and you have no good cards at all, every discard you make gives the false signal that you want one suit or another; and you can't warn partner that you are unable to assist in any suit.

However there is one situation where everyone should play McKenney, because there is no usable alternative. When you are giving partner a ruff, you should use the McKenney system to indicate where you have a re-entry to your hand to give a second ruff. An example came up on on Board 3 of the 29-November Tuesday night face-to-face game at the Sydney Bridge Centre. Against a 4♠ contract by East, the lead was ♥7, won by North's ♥A. ♥2 was returned for a ruff, the low card asking for a club back. Winning trick 3 with the ♣A, North can lead another heart. Declarer then has to guess where ♠Q is, and most declarers ruffed with ♠A to finesse ♠Q in the hand with the probable longer trumps (South), making only 9 tricks.

However at one table South did not know the McKenney system and played a diamond at trick 3. Declarer won the diamond cheaply, played ♠A and drew trumps, losing only the ♣A. Ten tricks got 100% of the matchpoints.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

### Christmas Parties on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December!



A get together for the Sydney Bridge Centre players and friends! There will be TWO Christmas Parties on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December AND Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022. There will be 2 sessions on each parties – morning 10.00am – 1.15pm and/or afternoon 2.15pm – 5.15pm.

\$50 for members and \$60 for visitors. Same price per person per party (either one session or two sessions). Fees include bridge, lunch and drinks. Lots of FUN programs and spot prizes, please check details and book on the SBC website.