



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.

Which Touching Honour to Play ... and Why

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 22nd November 2022

18	♠ 97	Dir: E
	♥ 4	Vul: N-S
	♦ AQ942	
	♣ K8652	
♠ KQJT53	♠ 4	9
♥ AQ53	♥ T9762	13 9
♦ JT8	♦ K76	9
♣	♣ AQ43	
	♠ A862	♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ NT
	♥ KJ8	N 2 - - -
	♦ 53	S 2 - - -
	♣ JT97	E - - 4 4 3
		W - - 4 4 3

Making the transition to being a competent club level player involves a lot of learning, and sometimes that can seem to the aspiring player to be 'rote learning' - dreary pumping into the memory banks of what the 'rules' of good bridge are. However it is important to remember that most of those 'rules' have very good reasons behind them.

Part of the reason this can be lost on improving players is that bridge also has 'conventions'. When partner leads a suit we like, we play a high card in response to show we like it. Except ... some people play a LOW card to show they like it. That's a convention - a meaning of a card play that you have AGREED to play with your partner. Experienced players sometimes forget that

the difference between a convention and standard card-play methods may be lost on the less experienced.

I was made aware of this when partnering a less experienced player in the 22-November Tuesday night face-to-face game at the Sydney Bridge Centre. On an early board I had led a club against a suit contract, and my partner won with Ace, later play revealing possession of the King as well. After the hand, I pointed out that winning with the King is correct because it shows partner that you have the Ace as well. My partner had apparently received instruction that the reverse was correct.

We played other boards, eventually coming to Board 18. Our opponents bit off too much with a vulnerable Unusual No-Trump, ending in 4♣x by South and my partner led the Spade QUEEN. We took the obvious 5 tricks for -500 and a top on the board, and then I queried the lead of the Queen instead of the King. My partner referred to my previous advice on the other hand!

Correct card-play is to lead the HIGHEST of touching honours. Correct card-play is to win (or attempt to win) a trick in third hand by playing the LOWEST of touching honours. The difference may cause head-scratching to those learning correct card-play by rote, but there is logic behind these methods - these are NOT conventions. In both cases, you are effectively 'bragging': on lead, you are saying "I can afford to lead an honour because I have the honour/s beneath"; while when winning a trick in third seat, you are saying, "I can win with a card THIS weak." To demonstrate the latter, the classic example is an opening lead away from the King against a no-trump contract: if partner plays the Jack, and this is headed by declarer's Ace, when you win a trick, you should lead LOW to your partner's Queen ... because if declarer had had the Ace and Queen, he would have won with the Queen. Thus partner's Jack shows the Queen, in a way that playing the Queen could never show the Jack, even if you had attempted to agree such a system with your partner.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

Christmas Parties on Friday 9th and Wednesday 14th December!



A get together for the Sydney Bridge Centre players and friends! There will be TWO Christmas Parties on Friday 9th December AND Wednesday 14th 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.