



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.

Don't Discard in a Way that Exposes Partner's Holding

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 7th February 2023

13	♠ QT73	Dir: N
	♥ AKT	Vul: All
	♦ Q7432	
	♣ 4	
♠ K4	♠ AJ952	11
♥ 82	♥ J94	15 9
♦ AK	♦ 9	5
♣ AJT9653	♣ K872	
	♠ 86	♠ ♠ ♠ NT
	♥ Q7653	N - 2 1 - -
	♦ JT865	S - 2 1 - -
	♣ Q	E 5 - - 3 2
		W 5 - - 3 2

I wish there was a simpler way to describe the defending issue I'm bringing attention to today, but hopefully the hand itself will help. On Board 13 of the 07-February Tuesday night face-to-face game at the Sydney Bridge Centre, one lone champion of the "always bid No-Trump" philosophy insisted on playing in 3N after the opponents had bid and raised diamonds. A heart lead would have sunk the contract with the defenders taking the first five tricks, but after the orthodox diamond lead, declarer was set to make 11 tricks in a risk-free manner, for a nice cold top.

However a funny thing happened on the way there. After winning the first diamond, and cashing seven rounds of clubs, declarer then played off the other diamond winner and prepared to cash ♠K and ♠A. But after the ♦K, South had discarded down to a diamond and Queen-tripleton in hearts. North had discarded one spade along the way which would not have been fatal, as the finesse of the spade Jack would have been overkill. However when the ♠K was played from the closed hand, South was unable to follow suit, revealing everything to declarer. North, an experienced player, quietly packed up his cards and put them back in the tray, wordlessly conceding all thirteen tricks as declarer would obviously take the marked finesse of SJ and then run dummy's holding which was all spades.

I see this kind of discard a lot - a suit holding like 86 doubleton seems useless sitting over AJ9xx, but it is important to hold a spade so that partner's stopper is not exposed, as happened here. And it can never hurt to hold that spade. After all, declarer is always going to cash ♠A first if he is cashing out, so why not keep a spade for that instead of whichever red card you plan to throw on ♠A when it IS cashed?

It is important as a defender to remember that declarer cannot see through the back of the cards. You may know that you have no stopper in a suit, but if declarer is going to be losing a lot of tricks if he finesses and loses, he may not take the finesse you know is working. Make sure you keep a card to keep the possibility of having a high card alive, because you have to protect partner's holding from being exposed.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

Next Sunday Funday – 19th February and 5th March 2023



Sleep in on a Sunday and enjoy a relaxed game in the afternoon! We hope you enjoyed the classic cucumber sandwiches, cheese platter and everything makes a Sunday great. The next few Sunday Fundays will be held on:

- 19th February AND 5th March 2023, 1.30pm - 4.30pm

No need to book in, visitors and walk-ins are welcome. \$18 member (\$15 concession member)/ \$22 visitor. Refreshment throughout play and join us for a glass at the end of the session.