



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.

Picture the Hidden Hands to get Timing Right

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 11th July 2023

8		♠ 96	Dir: W
		♥ AQ986	Vul: Nil
		♦ J8	
		♣ 8732	
♠ QT4	♠ AJ	7	
♥ J753	♥ KT4	15	10
♦ AK	♦ T97532	8	
♣ AJ64	♣ Q9		
		♠ K87532	
		♥ 2	
		♦ Q64	
		♣ KT5	

	♠	♥	♦	♣	NT
N	-	-	-	-	-
S	-	-	-	-	-
E	2	4	2	1	2
W	2	4	2	1	2

All too often when defending, players make automatic plays without thinking of the consequences, when picturing what the two hidden hands might actually have would lead to a better defence. This opportunity occurred on Board 8 of the 11-July Tuesday night face-to-face game at the Sydney Bridge Centre.

The hand produced the interesting bidding situation where West opened 1N and North showed a heart suit, with no-trump being raised by East. The opening leader knows his suit is held by the hand sitting OVER him, a rare situation in a no-trump contract. My partner correctly decided not to lead his anaemic heart suit and found (fortuitously? brilliantly?) the spade lead. Declarer played ♠J, I

won ♠K and knocked out ♠A at trick 2. Declarer cleared the two diamond honours and should have tried a heart to the Ten, as it seems likely that North holds Ace and Queen given that he bid hearts and then failed to lead them. Regardless of when North takes the ♥A, this play gets declarer to 10 tricks, as the defenders are unable to knock out ♠Q and then get the spades going, as South only has one entry. In practice, declarer failed to appreciate the necessity of taking the low finesse. Winning ♥K gave no hope, and declarer fell away to only 6 tricks.

However, the Deep Finesse analysis shows the 3N contract being beaten: how? The answer is at Trick 1. When North leads the ♠9, South should think about the arrangement of the spades. It is highly likely that the lead of the 9 is from a doubleton, leaving declarer with QTx. That means that declarer has two spade stoppers, and it is not necessary to play the ♠K on the ♠J. Holding up means that declarer wins the first and second rounds of spades, not the second and third. This means that when the defenders get in (they will twice, with ♥A, and with ♦Q), they can knock out ♠A on the first time in, and cash the spades on the second time in. Declarer cannot arrange to lose to South first, as knocking out ♦Q can only happen after entering dummy in hearts. After ♠J is ducked and declarer cashes ♦A and ♦K and leads a heart toward dummy, North jumps up with ♥A and still has a spade to knock out ♠A. South is then waiting with the good ♦Q and spade tricks. I missed this as South at the table and was lucky declarer did not capitalise.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

Upcoming Events (please check SBC website / What's on...)



Sunday 30th July
1.30pm – 4.30pm



Friday 28th July, 10.00am
Making the most of Weak Hands



Over 3 Thursdays on 13th, 20th & 27th July
SBC State Open Pairs Qualifying