



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.

Why you should sometimes NOT cash the long suit

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 27th June 2023

12	♠ Q53 ♥ AQ9 ♦ K6 ♣ KQJ84	Dir: W Vul: N-S
♠ AK62 ♥ 7632 ♦ Q87 ♣ 72	♠ T98 ♥ KT84 ♦ J9432 ♣ 6	17 9 4 10
♠ J74 ♥ J5 ♦ AT5 ♣ AT953		

When playing Pairs bridge, it is always important to make as many overtricks as possible. Sure, don't take too many risks to lose the contract, but always remember that the task is not over simply by making the required number of tricks.

Every single declarer was in 3NT on Board 12 of the 27-June Tuesday night face-to-face game at the Sydney Bridge Centre. The 9 required tricks are easy: 5 clubs, 2 diamonds, ♥A and either a spade given to you, or a heart generated by the ♥J and ♥Q combined. Most declarers got a bonus however: the lead of ♦3

by East went to the ♦5, the ♦Q and the ♦K. Now you have the additional trick likely from finessing the Diamond Ten, as declarer has probably led from the Jack. So what should you do?

Most declarer saw that juicy long club suit and cashed it immediately. Unfortunately by the time you get down to the last one, you don't have enough entries back and forth to try to find other tricks. If you try the heart finesse and it loses, and then the diamond finesse loses as well, you would be unable to get to the ♦A ... and would embarrassingly have to play spades, going off if the honours split. Most declarers decided not to tempt this fate, and took their 9 tricks.

It is quite safe to look for 10 tricks without risking 9. Don't cash the clubs, because you need them as a communication suit. Cross to the ♠A, and run the ♥J. East wins, but if he tries a diamond, you can finesse, easily able to get to the ♦A when cashing the clubs. Ten tricks. Note that even if East switches to a spade, you make 10 tricks as well: the opponents get KH and the top two spades, but then you have 5 clubs, 2 diamonds, 2 hearts and 1 spade.

Some of you may have smelled a rat at trick 1. Perhaps West should play the ♦7 instead of ♦Q? This gains when partner has led from a suit headed by J9, but is hard to explain to partner if his suit is headed by KJ.

Ten tricks was worth 93%; 9 tricks scored 50%.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

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



Sunday 16th and 30th July
1.30pm – 4.30pm



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



Tuesday 11th July, after session
Topic: Balancing the Weak Auction