



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.

Protecting the High Card you Don't Have

F2F at City – Tuesday Night 8th August 2023

20	♠ T8762	Dlr: W
	♥ 87542	Vul: All
	♦ A4	
	♣ 5	
♠ AJ3	♠ KQ4	4
♥ QJ3	♥ AT96	19 13
♦ KT5	♦ Q6	4
♣ AKJ6	♣ Q982	
	♠ 95	
	♥ K	
	♦ J98732	
	♣ T743	

Most defenders know that it's necessary to keep small cards to protect your high cards. For instance, if you have a King when defending a no-trump contract, you will need to keep small cards as well so that your King does not fall under the Ace. If finessed, you need to keep enough small cards so that either your length in the suit is longer than the suit length of the Ace sitting over your King or two cards longer than the suit length of the hand leading toward the finesse position.

So far so good. But sometimes you need to anticipate what high card PARTNER has and keep small cards in that suit ... because you would have kept them if you DID have that high card. Otherwise, declarer may sniff out that the finesse is not

going to work. A valuable lesson on this concept occurred on Board 20 of the 08-August Tuesday night face-to-face game at the Sydney Bridge Centre. West played in 6NT, not the greatest slam. A spade was led, and 8 winners were immediately ready to go: 3 spades, 1 heart, and 4 clubs. Diamonds can't help, so repeated heart finesses have to be taken. Four heart tricks and then conceding the diamond Ace to get a diamond will bring in 12 tricks.

So you finesse in hearts, right? Not so fast. It is OK to cash the four club tricks first, and you may get valuable information. South follows to all four clubs, but North makes three discards ... and all of them are hearts.

Then you lead the ♥Q, and North follows with another heart. Now ... are you still going to finesse? Surely if North held the ♥K and four or five small hearts, throwing away the small hearts seems highly unlikely! So the Ace is put on the Queen, and the bridge gods smile: South's King is indeed singleton, and declarer needs to only concede ♦A to make 12 tricks.

The key here for declarer is to put themselves in the shoes of the defender. Even though the finesse is much more likely than dropping the King singleton offside, the defender's play in throwing all those hearts is not consistent with holding the ♥K. And for the defender, the lesson is to keep the small cards that defend the King ... even when you don't have the King!

Making the slam was worth 100%; going one light would have been worth only 14%.

Martin Clear (SBC Tuesday Night host)

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



Sunday 27th Aug & 10th Sept
1.30pm – 4.30pm



Friday 25th August 10am – 3.30pm
The Main Rules of Bridge
Saturday 26th August 10am – 1pm
Two-Over-One



Thursday 31st August, 10am – 1.15pm
City and Canada Bay
Results will be ranked nation-wide